

Fashion Design for the Emerging Creative Economy of Sri Lanka

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Ruwandika Senanayake

25 March 2013

9 May 2012

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Dear Ruwandika,

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On behalf of the DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network I wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely,



Lisa Mann
Ethics Officer
DSC College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN)

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ABSTRACT

For many years, Sri Lanka's textiles and apparel (T&A) industry practices were dependent on labour intensive manufacturing for export orders. In the late 1990's, both government and private industry sectors identified that for Sri Lanka's T&A industry to expand and to further create revenue there was a need to add value to the production supply chain via fashion design. However at the time, there were no design courses of adequate level to train fashion designers. Identifying the gap in the education system, in 2000, the University of Moratuwa and several private institutions initiated fashion design education, in order to prepare fashion designers to suit the country's developing creative industry system.

A decade on since the introduction of tertiary level fashion design education, it is estimated that approximately seven hundred fashion/textile designers have graduated. Yet, to date, there has been no investigation conducted or data collected to examine the role of the fashion designer within Sri Lanka's T&A industry and what their value is to the country's developing economic system. Therefore, the aims of this research are to address the key questions of: What is the role of the fashion designer in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka? How can Sri Lanka achieve a sustainable economic development via fashion design? And is Sri Lanka's fashion design education meeting the needs of graduates as they transition into the T&A industry?

To address the key questions and discuss the potential of fashion to be a vibrant sustainable creative industry in Sri Lanka, two phases were undertaken with the research. Firstly, a review of existing literature was undertaken, focusing on examining theories of the creative economy and industry, the global fashion system and Sri Lanka's position within this system. Secondly, data collection was carried out, namely a questionnaire and three case studies. The collection of data was aimed at examining what the fashion designer's / design education providers' / private fashion business sector's contributions would be towards the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

Drawing together all the research and data analyses, this research work has identified that the fashion designer within the Sri Lanka's system has multiple tasks in applying fashion design in order to build a sustainable fashion industry system for Sri Lanka. A decade on since the initiation of fashion education in the country, the curricula of the education sector has to be reviewed under a common goal and revised to meet the new challenges in the system to adequately prepare future fashion designers to suit the emerging creative economy of the country.

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the new millennium, Sri Lanka's creative industries and practices have gained significant attention as a potential way to further enhance and sustain the country's economy. Of these creative industries, fashion design was specifically identified as offering great potential to be developed and support the well established strong and dynamic textiles and apparel (T&A) industry.

For many years, Sri Lanka's T&A industry practices depended on labour intensive manufacturing for export orders. There had been little or no focus on fashion design as a means to expand this industry and create revenue. In a review of the industry in 2000, the T&A industry alongside government identified the need of adding fashion design to the T&A production supply chain. It was considered that fashion design could generate many system advancements for Sri Lanka. In order to address this goal, both government and private business sectors realised there was a significant gap in Sri Lanka's then education system. There were no adequate level design courses to train fashion designers.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

A decade on since the introduction of tertiary level fashion design education, there are now many qualified fashion designers across the island. Since 2004, when the first batch of creative fashion designers graduated it is estimated that approximately seven-hundred fashion/textile designers have qualified up to 2011.

To date, there has been no investigation conducted or data collected to examine the role of the fashion designer within Sri Lanka's T&A industry and what their value is to the country's developing economic system. Therefore, this is the first time such research has been conducted. The research will provide a timely opportunity to review the system and aims to contribute to a better understanding of the progress of Sri Lanka's emerging fashion design system.

Specifically, the research aims to examine the locally qualified fashion designer's creative practice, how their creativity has been nurtured and what their contribution is to the emerging creative economy. In doing so, the objective is to understand how the interconnections between educational, industrial and relevant government policy and initiatives contribute to the 'fashion designer' on his/her transition to the creative industry.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Sri Lanka's clothing industry needs a sustainable change to be a strong participant in the emerging creative economy of the country. The key research questions are:

- i. What is the role of the fashion designer in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka?
- ii. How can Sri Lanka achieve a sustainable economic development via fashion design?

- iii. Is Sri Lanka's fashion design education meeting the needs of graduates as they transition into the T&A industry?

RATIONALE

'Fashion' is a highly creative industry in the global context. Many nations enjoy economic benefits for being a participant in the global fashion industry system. Sri Lanka was exposed to the system from the export-oriented manufacturing end, at a time when apparel manufacturing was considered as a significant contributor for national development. Since the initiation, Sri Lanka moved up the apparel value-chain in manufacturing and today, it is renowned for quality and ethical T&A production. At present, the industry's challenge is to achieve a sustainable economic development. Both government and the private sectors have identified the potential need for fashion design to be developed into current systems.

Creativity of fashion design has to be nurtured to suit a country's need; with an understanding of local markets, industry developments and global trends. Required skills and knowledge must also enable sustainable development of social, environmental and/or economic factors. The fashion designer who qualifies through such a systematic learning process should be able to create a sustainable change.

Fashion design education does not have a very long history in Sri Lanka. But the institutes have completed considerable number of years to review their curriculum approaches to revise for future trends and demands. At present, so far locally qualified fashion designers are applying fashion design in many unique ways according to each individual's need. This research will identify their experience and practices. In doing so, the research will assist to understand the current position of the fashion designer within Sri Lanka's fashion industry system to address the key research questions.

METHODOLOGY AND OVERALL THESIS STRUCTURE

The research has been addressed in two phases and is reflected in the overall structure of the thesis; Part One includes the background for the research and Part Two examines the data analysis.

As part of the background research work, a review of literature was undertaken. Specifically, research focuses on examining theories of the creative economy and industry, the global fashion system and Sri Lanka's position within this system. A background discussion is also presented to highlight and contextualise Sri Lanka's emerging fashion design education. This research aims to support the data analysis conducted in the second phase.

In the second phase, data collection and analysis was undertaken, to understand fashion designers past experience, current standing and future direction. The data collection consisted of two methods; (i) a questionnaire and (ii) three small case studies. Ethics was sort and approved to conduct both research methods.

The questionnaire was aimed at locally qualified fashion designers who have completed their preliminary fashion design studies between 2002 and 2011 from three selected design institutes of Sri Lanka: (i) Department of Integrated design, University of Moratuwa (UoM), (ii) Department of Textiles and Clothing Technology, UoM and (iii) Academy of Design. The questionnaire aimed to collect information to make a qualitative analysis on the applicability of the Sri Lankan fashion design education at the qualified fashion designers' transition to the industry.

Since the introduction of fashion design tertiary education in Sri Lanka in 2000, it is estimated that an approximate total of five hundred fashion/textile designers have qualified up to 2011 from the above three places. Out of the total group, fifty-six undertook the anonymous questionnaire online. The Qualtrics web-based survey software was used to prepare and distribute the questionnaire and ultimately the answers were collected from the software itself. A first set of participants were selected via personal contacts and further distributed via snowball sampling technique. Questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The participants were given the option not to answer any question as they wish.

The second data collection was through three case studies. The case studies allowed for more in-depth analysis on potential sustainable fashion industry development based on local fashion design. Two out of the three case studies are based on two successful fashion designers who are working both within local and international markets. They belonged to the same group as questionnaire participants. Both designers demonstrate the potential of Sri Lanka's creativity economy to be vibrant and sustainable. A review of their work was collected from available public resources of which their work was published on their personal web pages and on news articles. With their consent, they were contacted directly for further clarifications on the collected data. Copyright permission to use several images at the documentation of the research has been approved by the two individuals.

The third case study is of a prominent fashion event in Sri Lanka which aims to support local fashion designers and showcase their work locally as well as internationally. Information was collected via available public resources to understand the value of the event's contribution to the emerging fashion designers, the local fashion industry and emerging creative economy.

The data analysis of the questionnaire and case studies mainly focused on the objective and potential of fashion design training in the country to adequately prepare students for transition to the industry to develop a designer focus beside the mass production for export focus that currently exists.

The final part of the thesis; the conclusion, draws together all the research, to address the research questions and discusses the exploration of the potential of fashion to be a vibrant sustainable creative industry in Sri Lanka.

PART ONE: BACKGROUND

Sri Lanka is a lower-middle-income developing economy. Its main economic activities depend upon industry, agriculture and services. Within this mix of the national economy, the industry of the textile and apparel (T&A) manufacturing sector plays a pivotal role producing export-oriented mass scale apparel. The fashion industry of textiles and apparel products is a globalised system. Over the past decade the Sri Lankan government and fashion business agencies have recognised the potential to build sustainable economic development via the T&A industry and that one way to achieve this is for Sri Lanka to enter the creative economy system by the use of fashion design excellence.

With this in mind, the main aim of the research is to address three key questions:

- i. What is the role of the fashion designer in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka?
- ii. How can Sri Lanka achieve a sustainable economic development via fashion design?
- iii. Is Sri Lanka's fashion design education meeting the needs of graduates as they transition into the T&A industry?

To discuss the potential and to analyse the existing systems and trends to answer the key questions, it is essential to understand the current background and the context to the research. Therefore, 'Part One' is an exploration of concepts, definitions, literature and trends of the fashion industry system from a global perspective. As a worldwide system, the fashion industry encompasses activities of people, institutes, policies and nations of both the developed and developing economies. As this research aims to discuss the impact of global trends on the developing economy of Sri Lanka, this Part will also highlight the key aspects and current practices of Sri Lanka's fashion industry and its place in the global fashion scene.

'Part One' is divided into three chapters:

- Chapter 1 – Creative Economy with Specific Focus on the Creative Fashion Industry
- Chapter 2 – Fashion Designer and Future Directions
- Chapter 3 – Current Positioning of Sri Lanka

Specifically, Chapter 1 will highlight and define the key concepts of creativity, creative industry, creative economy and apparel industry practices. As well the chapter will discuss the involvement and the relationships between developed and developing economies in the global system of fashion. Chapter 2 will discuss the fashion design practices, current trends and future potentials that could have sustainable impacts on a developing economic system like Sri Lanka. It focuses on highlighting the future perspectives and responsibilities of a fashion designer. Both Chapters 1 and 2 will take the contextual approach to support Chapter 3. Chapter 3 will discuss the background of the Sri Lankan fashion industry system, especially the textiles and apparel industry. As well this Chapter will outline the current fashion design education system and the curriculum approach that train the fashion designer in Sri Lanka to face its future challenges.

1. CREATIVE ECONOMY WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS ON THE CREATIVE FASHION INDUSTRY

Today, the model of sustainable economic development based on creative assets has become popular in many economies. The fashion industry is an example of a creativity based global industry system. Since Sri Lanka is at the manufacturing end of this system, it identifies its current industry system as the 'textiles and apparel' (T&A) industry. To gain a sustainable economic advantage within the T&A industry, Sri Lanka is now looking towards the possibilities of applying creative practices.

In order to understand the current T&A system in Sri Lanka, it is beneficial to know the background of the creative practices attached to the global fashion system. Hence, this chapter will discuss the economic benefits, definitions and literature based on the involvement of creativity around a global T&A industry system.

Key words:

Creativity, Creative Economy, Creative Industry, Cultural Industry, Fashion Industry, Apparel Value-Chain

1.1 ECONOMIC SYSTEM BASED ON CREATIVE PRACTICES AND ASSETS

An economic system generally encompasses a commercial structure of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services attached to a country, which comprise people, institutions and policies. A new economic system can be developed via changes in any of the above areas. This section will discuss the fusion of creative practice into an existing economic system in the hope of creating economic advantage.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, the development of information technology has changed human lives immensely and has had a great impact on many economies. Apart from knowledge and access to information the next most influential factor that motivates economic growth is 'creativity' (Florida, 2002, UN Agencies, 2008). '**Creativity**' refers to the creation of original ideas that are related to knowledge, through "imagination, inspiration, ingenuity and inventiveness" (UN Agencies, 2008, p.3) and the implementation of these ideas to create new products. Creativity might be an artistic, scientific, beneficial and/or challenging approach. In the twenty-first century there is always an economic aspect to creativity. It is the source for new inventions, a way of contributing entrepreneurship, an element to enrich productivity as well as a promoter of economic growth (UN Agencies, 2008, p.3). Richard Florida in '*The Rise of the Creative Class*' (2002) stated that the "economy is powered by human creativity" (p.xxii). He also stated that this new concept of economy development based on creativity emerged in 2000 (p.46). This was a decade when developed economies were strengthened with a balanced combination of information, knowledge and creativity. In 2008, at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), this new economic

approach was highlighted as a growing concept built on creative assets that possibly cause economic growth and development of a country's system (UN Agencies, 2008). It was called as the '**creative economy**'. The creative economy refers to a country's pattern of development in which its economy and culture are linked intrinsically to advancement (UN Agencies, 2008, p.3). A creative economy is dependent on creative employment and the businesses that handle them.

Every country has their own nation-state specific challenges in achieving economic development. Even though they look similar each nation addresses the challenges differently according to how they understand the challenge and realise what national assets they have as a response. They build their own mechanisms to manage their resources. The type of main economic system is identified according to its economic approach to managing these resources. Apart from traditional systems, the main types of economic systems are the market-oriented economy and the command-oriented economy (Prybyla, 1969). A traditional economy is a system that is formed by tradition, with static living standards and following long-established patterns of production, consumption and exchange of goods and services. A command-oriented economy is generally known as an economic system where all the decision making and the total control of resources distribution, employment, market prices, wages, etc. are taken by a government. In contrast, in a market economy, all such decisions are made by individuals and/or companies (Prybyla, 1969, p.139, 225). However, the common factor in all the systems is that every economic system must address what to produce, how to produce it and how to distribute it among the system's members. As a country this has to be done to gain economic advantage, and to ensure the survival of the people of a country within the continuously evolving world system. However, for the development of a national economy, which also has to address social, economic and environmental development, a country has to be sensitive to global changes, as well as receptive and adaptive to the consequences of major economic change. Based on such requirements, new economic concepts can be developed. At this point, the concept of creative economy can be considered as a good example.

To date, most of the attention about creative economy is focused on developed countries, where industries based on creative resources – 'creative industries' (refer to section 1.2) – are well established. At the same time they are the economies whose creative products play a major role in the global market. For example, the U.S. has invested immensely in creative strengths "such as in higher education, scientific research and culture" to foster new industries to become the most powerful and the dynamic economy of the world (Florida, 2002, p.xxiii).

Generally, the developed economies sense, adapt and respond to global changes rapidly whereas the developing economies try to follow their patterns. A developed economy is an economic system belonging to a country, which basically has high living standards and a developed industrial base. In contrast, a developing economy is one associated with a country having relatively low levels in national development indexes. Since the first introduction of a creative economy, many developed countries especially the US and Europe have developed creative economic practices. By contrast, many developing countries have not been able to gain economic advantage through adaptation of creative assets to their systems. "The obstacles preventing these developing countries from

enhancing their creative economies are a combination of domestic policy weaknesses and global systemic biases ...” (UN Agencies, 2008, p.5). At UNCTAD in 2008 six development goals were defined where the creative sectors have significant potential to contribute to economic growth in developing countries. These goals are;

poverty eradication and reduction of inequality, gender equality, sustainable development strategies, global partnerships for development, strategies for the social inclusion of youth and spreading access to new communication (UN Agencies, 2008, p.33-34).

Many developing nations that have creative industry resources have the potential to gain economic advancement by addressing these goals. In order to achieve these, a developing economy must identify its potential creative industry assets and how they might build on existing traditional production systems already in place.

It is important to consider that for many developing economies such as Sri Lanka, by the 1980's, the creative industries of developed economies began to significantly shift their manufacturing to developing economies. Therefore, several developing economies began to enter the production end of globalised industry systems. Developing economies entered the creative industry practices from the manufacturing end as a way to gain economic advantage while it was a good deal for the developed economies where they got their productions manufactured at very low costs. As an example, China as a developing economy, has become one of the biggest exporting countries in the world since 1990's (Gereffi & Memedovic, 2003), which, as a result, has had a great impact on its social and economic development via entering the creative industries.

Today, there exists and is emerging a wide range of creative talents in developing economies too. Their talents are enriched by a significant level of intangible cultural capital such as traditional and cultural expressions of creative production for both local and international markets. These developing countries who are the participants in the creative industry system primarily from the manufacturing end are now trying to reposition themselves to develop their systems to re-enter the sector from the creative end hoping for more economic advantage. At this stage, each developing economy has unique mechanisms and infrastructure in relation to each industry practice and their country's system. Their goals are very different to that of developed economies as well as between similar economies. However, their moves to achieve their development goals are the timely topics for every sector in this globalised system.

1.2 PRESENCE OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Industries that involve in production of economic goods and services create a vast impact on economic systems. Each country has its own mechanisms of staying excellence in industry operations. Industries that are dependent on creative processes or systems have their unique features in gaining economic advantage. This section will bring out the key aspects of creative industries and how they are placed in both developed and developing nations as an economic parameter.

With the identification of the creative economy, Hall (2000) placed the creative industries at the 'heart' of the creative economy. The economics of the creative industries are different from the agricultural or industrial economy. As Potts et al (2008) argued, the main economic concern of creative industries is not only with the nature of inputs or outputs in production or consumption as such, but with the nature of the markets that coordinate these industries. More simply **creative industries** can be defined as industries of intellectual property outputs with an attendance of creative input (Potts et al, 2008). Accordingly, Potts, Cunningham, Hartley and Ormerod (2008) defined the creative industries as "the set of economic activities in which production and consumption outcomes are predominately determined by market-like processes on social networks". They claim that it is the "origination, adoption and retention" of new ideas that are the main reasons for economic growth and development (Potts et al, 2008, p.182). This extended and refined definition built on earlier definitions by researchers; Howkins (2001), Hartley (2005) and Cunningham (2006) (cited in Potts et al, 2008) who had defined creative industries as an advanced version of 'cultural industries' (refer to section 1.3). Yet, creative industries engage in design, creation and supply of "tangible goods and intangible intellectual or artistic services" that deal with various creative activities, have an economic value and fill the market objectives (UN Agencies, 2008, p.4). These industries attracted much attention during mid-to-late 1990's (BOP Consulting, 2010). Two significant examples were '*Creative Nation*' from Australia in 1994 and the introduction of the '*Creative Industries Task Force*' in the United Kingdom in 1997 (UN Agencies, 2008, p.11). In fact, the creative industries concept was an adaptation of the New Labour government of UK in 1997 (BOP Consulting, 2010).

Today, industries based on creative assets have gained a prominent place in the global economy due to its substantial market value and the impact on the national gross domestic product (GDP) (Potts et al, 2008). These creative industries are among the most influential sectors in the world trade, ranging from;

Traditional arts and crafts, publishing, music, and visual and performing arts to more technology-intensive and services-oriented groups of activities such as film, television and radio broadcasting, new media and design (UN Agencies, 2008, p.4).

All of them nurture income-generation, export ventures and create jobs while encouraging community involvement, cultural mixture and human development (UN Agencies, 2008, p.4).

The creative sector has a flexible and modular market structure that ranges from independent artists and small-business enterprises at one extreme to some of the world's largest conglomerates at the other (UN Agencies, 2008, p.4).

In 2008, the '*Creative Economy Report*' stated that in 2005 the total creative industries accounted for 3.4 per cent of total world trade by that time, with exports reaching US\$ 424.4 billion. But during 2000-2005 it has shown on average an annual growth rate of 8.7 per cent (UN Agencies, 2008) with creative industries being an influential factor in world trade. Yet, the occurrence and survival of the creative industries differs among countries according to the national resources, expertise, investments, economical status, government initiations and policy advancements.

At the UNCTAD of 2008, the United Nation's classified creative industries under four groups. These were: Heritage, Arts, Media and Functional Creations. Of the four groups, 'Functional creations' contains more demand-driven and services-oriented industries that produce practical commodities and can be divided into three subgroups: design, new media and creative services. Each subgroup comprises of several industries with related creative activities. For example,

- Design: industries of interior, graphic, fashion, jewellery, toys,
- New media: industries of software, video games, and digitalized creative content, and
- Creative services: industries of architectural, advertising, cultural and recreational, creative research and development (R&D), digital and other related creative services (UN Agencies, 2008).

Each and every creative industry primarily acts individually, but they also amalgamate at specific stages for economic, social or environmental advantages. For a country like Sri Lanka, which has an established role within the manufacturing of T&A within the global system, there is significant opportunity to encourage and develop design related industries such as fashion.

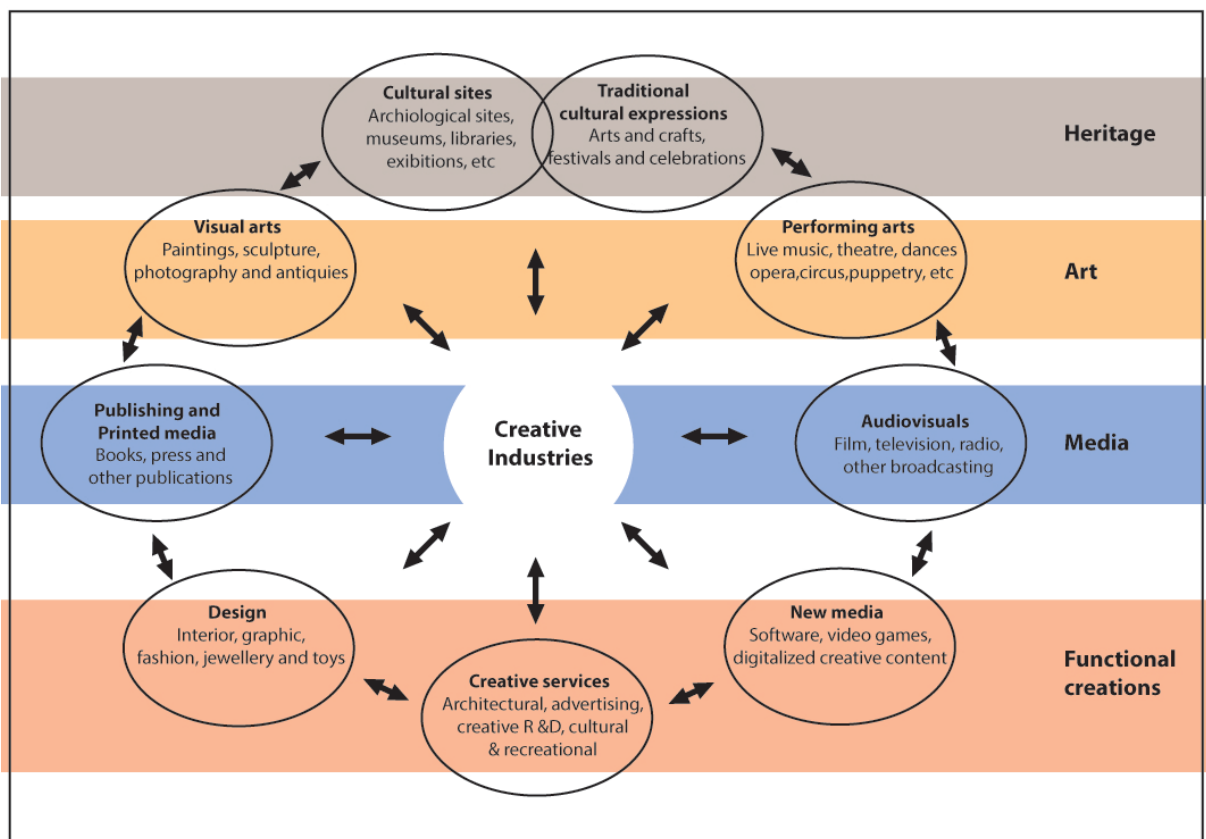


Diagram 1.1: UNCTAD Classification of Creative Industries

Source: UN Agencies, 2008, p.14

1.3 CULTURAL INDUSTRIES AS FIRST TIER CREATIVE INDUSTRY PRACTICE

This section will discuss how the creative industry system came into existence by adopting a cultural industry model. It is vital to know the comparison between the two industry systems. While some creative industries are built based on cultural industry practices, some have just abandoned them. But for many nations, having cultural industry practices amalgamated with creative industry systems may bring much advantage to achieving sustainable development.

The UN Agencies in 2008 (p.11) defined the **cultural industries** in their creative economy report, as the industries based on:

... a set of economic activities that combine the functions of conception, creation and production of culture with more industrial functions in the large-scale manufacture and commercialization of cultural products (UN Agencies, 2008, p.11).

It is a term first introduced by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer in 1947 (Adorno & Rabinbach, 1975, UN Agencies, 2008). According to their explanation, the culture industries are simply known to combine the old and familiar nature of products and services into a new perspective. Prior to the term 'creative industries', it was the 'cultural industries' that carried similar characteristics. The cultural industries were the first generation of creative industries for economic and social development. The products manufactured within the cultural industries were custom-made by masses, possibly according to a plan, but at the end govern consumption behaviour (Adorno, 1975). In 1975, the relationship between the culture industry and the customer in Adorno's words is; "the customer is not king, as the culture industry would like to have us believe, not its subject but its object" (Adorno, 1975, p.12).

In cultural industries, mass production was "not the measure but the ideology". It "misused its concern for the masses in order to duplicate" where the creators of the commodities hunted after profit (Adorno, 1975, p.12). To date, cultural industry practices can be differentiated from the creative industries. Allen J. Scott (1996), in his research on cultural-product industries of Los Angeles, states that the common features all cultural-product industries share are; 1) a production process that formed by strong features of crafts which depends highly on manual human labour, 2) a market place which is subject to prompt changes according to consumer taste and external trends and 3) products of which act along the system of cultural reference even for profitable demands.

Today, there are manufacturing based and service based sectors within the cultural industries. The manufacturing sector of the cultural-product industries covers clothing, furniture and printing to publishing where a majority of the work-force comprising of blue-collar workers, and the service sector covers motion pictures, television productions and advertising to music where the main labour force is almost white-collar (Scott, 1996).

Cultural productions are more nation/state specific. The boundaries of productions and even policies cover according to a national expectation (Cunningham, 2002). Many developing economies with a long cultural heritage have practiced cultural production and gained economic and social advantage

for many years. They may have not mapped and accounted accurately for not having proper policies for productions and marketing. Many such nations have identified the cultural industries as craft industries and/or village industries (eg: Sri Lanka) or cottage industries (eg: India). Formations of communities together at one place of those who are skilled at a particular craft have created the village industries. For many years their creative practices have been done only as a leisure time activity. More recently, these creative practices have been recognised as part of the cultural industries due to the development of production systems, consumer demands and the expansion of the market place.

Creative industries cannot survive with out-dated knowledge. In spite of everything, creative industries as Potts et al (2008) states are based on the coordination of new ideas. Creativity has to be nurtured while put into practice to gain many advantages. Hall (2000, p.642) states, if creativity is not nurtured and renewed, a city will only flourish for a very small period of time and thereafter only be suitable for 'cultural tourism'. By contrast to this idea, there is a significant contribution of the place of cultural industries. Both cultural and creative industries have common significance for industry, theory and policy analyses (Cunningham, 2002). Yet, it is true for any context that the cultural-products generate their own markets. Consumption is not the only objective for the buying pattern of cultural-products, but also it encloses the pleasure of possession (Sassoon 2006: xvi cited in Potts et al, 2008). It is common to see the consumption of cultural products not for any good reason of use, but just as souvenirs or artefacts, anywhere in the world. Moreover, Cunningham (2002, p.3) states, creative industries also have associations with "commercialisable applications of creativity". It means creative industries always focus on an existing need for its products. Or sometimes creative industry products create the need within a target market for the consumption. In a broader perspective according to John Howkins (2001) (cited in Cunningham, 2002, p.3), the creative industries within the creative economy consist of a design authority of "patent, copyright, trademark and design industries" where these aspects may not be maintained in cultural industries. Creative industries try to keep the authenticity of its products while cultural industries do not bother about copying where they tend to be more focused on copying existing cultural designs. While, "Creative industries are less national and more global ..." (Cunningham, 2002, p.6), cultural industries are more local or regional where there is not much design authority carried with the products.

1.4 THE GLOBAL CREATIVE FASHION INDUSTRY

The above sections of this chapter discussed the background of creative industries and the economic advantage for having them within a country's system. This section will emphasise the creative venture based on fashion industry practices. It will highlight how 'fashion' evolved as an industry and how it expanded to become a global system. In answering the key research questions it is important to understand the scope of this worldwide industry system. Therefore, this section outlines the big picture of the fashion industry and the mechanism of control bodies to identify new applications.

Fashion can occur in any field, from academic theory to furniture design or even to dance styles. However, it is generally taken, especially in its singular form, to refer to fashions in clothing. In contrast to the word clothing, which is usually defined as a more stable and functional form of dress that changes only gradually, the norm about fashion is that it succeeds on novelty and change. It has a cyclical, seasonally shifting styles of silhouettes, each different from the next. Fashion is often also seen as value adding to clothes to make them desirable to consumers. According to the UN classification, 'Fashion' primarily comes under 'Design' as stated above in section 1.2. However, current day fashion has many faces;

a symbolic system, an aesthetic form, a global industry, a media phenomenon, an individual indulgence or sign of group membership and a technique of creating and re-creating a sense of self and persona (Craik, 2009, p.284).

Roche and Birrell (1997) speak of 'clothes' as the word best suited for the tradition of projecting the social status through what you wear. The history of clothing tells us much about civilisations; it reveals their codes (Roche & Birrell, 1997). Instead, 'fashion' talks about trends, follows styles, is associated with creative skill performance, is connected with technological advancements, and yet identifies the social class of the wearer. 'Fashion' is coupled with design authority. Fashion as an industry in a contemporary sense of following trends does not have a very long history.

The contemporary concept of 'fashion' started in the 19th century when Charles Fredrick Worth (1826–1895) the English born, French based designer, sewed a name carrying label into the garments that he had created. He was not merely a dressmaker. He succeeded among other dressmakers in creating a design consciousness within the customers. This became a trend and many across the western world started to follow his style. It was the time that the idea of clothing changed with a need to be designed by someone with fashion authority, and with particular skills in defining a silhouette, cut and decoration (Arnold, 2009). By this time, the Industrial Revolution was at its height. Along with the industrial revolution, garment production had grown to take in a range of different paths and became a popular industry practice within Europe and the US. Handmade, personalised garments either made at home or produced to order by a dressmaker or a tailor changed due to the development of the factory system. It was a system of mass-production in standard sizes. Over time, with the rapid increase of retail outlets that sold garments at fixed prices, the industry production cycles began to speed up and greater value was placed on originality of design authority and then the industry established its fame as the 'fashion industry'.

Even though the fashion industry was established first in Europe and the US, today it is an international and highly globalized industry. With the expansion of global capitalism, fashion has come to be an industry that involves many countries in the production of at least one fashion item. The global expansion has shifted the manufacturing end of production to low-wage developing economies while the decision factors, namely design, has remained within the fashion born developed economies. That is, apparel is often designed in a European or an American based fashion company, is manufactured in a low-wage paying country and then sold world-wide. The global apparel retail alone in 2009 has reached a value of US\$ 1,031.5 billion (Datamonitor, 2010).

Generally the fashion industry is made up of four levels: (i) the production of raw materials, mainly fibres, yarns, textiles, leather and fur; (ii) the production of fashion goods by the involvement of designers, manufacturers, contractors, and others; (iii) the retail including distribution and sales; and (iv) various forms of advertising which promotes the products. These levels consist of many separate but interdependent sectors. At each level, the main objective is to satisfy the final fashion consumer demand with an anticipation of an economic advantage. With globalization and advancements in information technology and communication the fashion industry has expanded to be a complex multifaceted system. Globalization is “about growing mobility across frontiers – mobility of goods and commodities, mobility of information and communications, products and services and mobility of people” (Robins, 1997, p.14). Therefore, within these four layers there are many nations and billions of people involved and cross-connected. The formal records indicate the low and middle income economies alone have had more than 25 million employees in the sector by 2005 (ILO, 2005, cited in Fernandez-Stark et al, 2011).

Various nations across the world have identified their capacities and have got involved in the fashion industry value-chain. (The global apparel value-chain is further discussed in the next section of 1.4.1). While much of the industry has expanded selling apparel world-wide, it is important to note that the main creative portion is still concentrated in Europe and the United States, and, to a far lesser degree, in Japan. In Paris, Milan, London, New York, Tokyo, and Los Angeles, where there are large concentrations of designers and retailers as well as the head offices of major fashion creators (Raustiala & Sprigman, 2006). In contrast, the developing economies contribute to the global fashion industry system from the manual labour-intensive production end rather than the glamorous white-collar creative venture end. However, the developing economies entered the T&A industries at the first place as a solution for the national unemployment. For those nations this high end elegant industry has been a path way to achieve socio-economic advances. Their prime intension has not been satisfying the consumer demand (Dickerson, 1991, pg.85).

Professor Roy Green, in the ‘*Review of the Australian Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) Industries*’, claims that currently many developing nations are supporting their TCF industries development and “growth of such industries has traditionally been a first rung on the ladder of industrialisation for” them (Green, 2008, p.10). This will be discussed and analysed in the later parts of the thesis, which will highlight how Sri Lanka could enter creative endeavours to gain further economic advantage in relation to the world fashion system.

1.4.1 The Apparel Value-Chain

The system of having developed and developing nations along a common apparel production line is generally known as **the apparel value-chain**. It is a joint venture of several departments, companies, and nations in achieving a common goal of producing garments to fulfil consumer demands anywhere in the world.

The apparel value-chain describes all the stages from planning and design up to manufacturing and distribution till the apparel products reach the end-user (Gereffi & Memedovic, 2003, Pan & Holland, 2006). Many lengthy processes are involved at each stage of the value-chain. Within the production process itself, there are “series of screening and selection of design options and combinations from ideas and trends to palette, fabrication, and fabric, to the final merchandise mix” (Pan & Holland, 2006). The apparel value-chain typically begins with the design process where research and analysis are done to understand the upcoming production line. However, the total process is a blend of “art, aesthetics, creativity, strategic project management, worthy research, ideal analysis and mind-blowing execution” (Sarkar, 2011). According to Secor (1992) (cited in Pan & Holland, 2006) the design process includes all the stages from idea generation to prototype development.

Thirty years ago, there was a very different apparel industry in the UK, the USA and other western countries. Apparel manufacturing was almost completely done within an individual country system. There was a very large, semi-skilled labour force working for each company (Lane & Probert, 2009). Economically developed nations, such as US, UK, Germany, etc. in search of completing the production for a lower cost, made the system enter a global platform. Therefore, the segment of manufacturing was transferred to low-wage countries while keeping the design process within their countries.

Decentralizing the process to several countries reduced the price but expanded the production time. Today, time is the factor that every company and country is trying to overcome as well as ethical and environmental issues that have resulted from the complex value-chain system. Much literature (ex: Kaplinsky & Morris, 2000, Gereffi & Memedovic, 2003, Pan & Holland, 2006 and Gereffi & Frederick, 2010) is written about value-chain models (or in some literature identified as supply-chain) in order to understand the structure of the system and how to advance the operational skills of individual labour, shorten the production time, incorporate customer demands and overcome the market entry barriers. In the end it is all about “industrial upgrading” (Gereffi & Memedovic, 2003) and gaining economic advantage for all those who are involved.

According to the workforce involvement and the apparel production system, the apparel value-chain is recognised in four stages. The T&A companies focus the economic upgrading and workforce development along these four phases. These stages are;

1. **Assembly/Cut, Make, and Trim (CMT):** Apparel manufacturers cut and sew woven or knitted fabric or knit apparel directly from yarn.
2. **Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM)/Full Package/Free on Board (FOB):** The apparel manufacturer is responsible for all production activities, including the CMT activities, as well as finishing. The firm must have upstream logistics capabilities, including procuring (sourcing and financing) the necessary raw materials, piece goods, and trim needed for production.
3. **Original Design Manufacturing (ODM)/Full Package with Design:** This is a business model that focuses on adding design capabilities to the production of garments.
4. **Original Brand Manufacturing (OBM):** This is a business model that focuses on branding and the sale of own-brand products.

(Fernandez-Stark, et al, 2011)

Most of the countries that entered the global apparel industry from the manufacturing end started from the CMT level. Gaining excellence in one stage helped many companies to move-up the value-chain. It has not only been technological advancements that have caused the move up, but more recently there has been a shift to consider ethical conditions, workforce wellbeing, absorption of new trends and techniques to productions have caused the developments for many companies and economies.

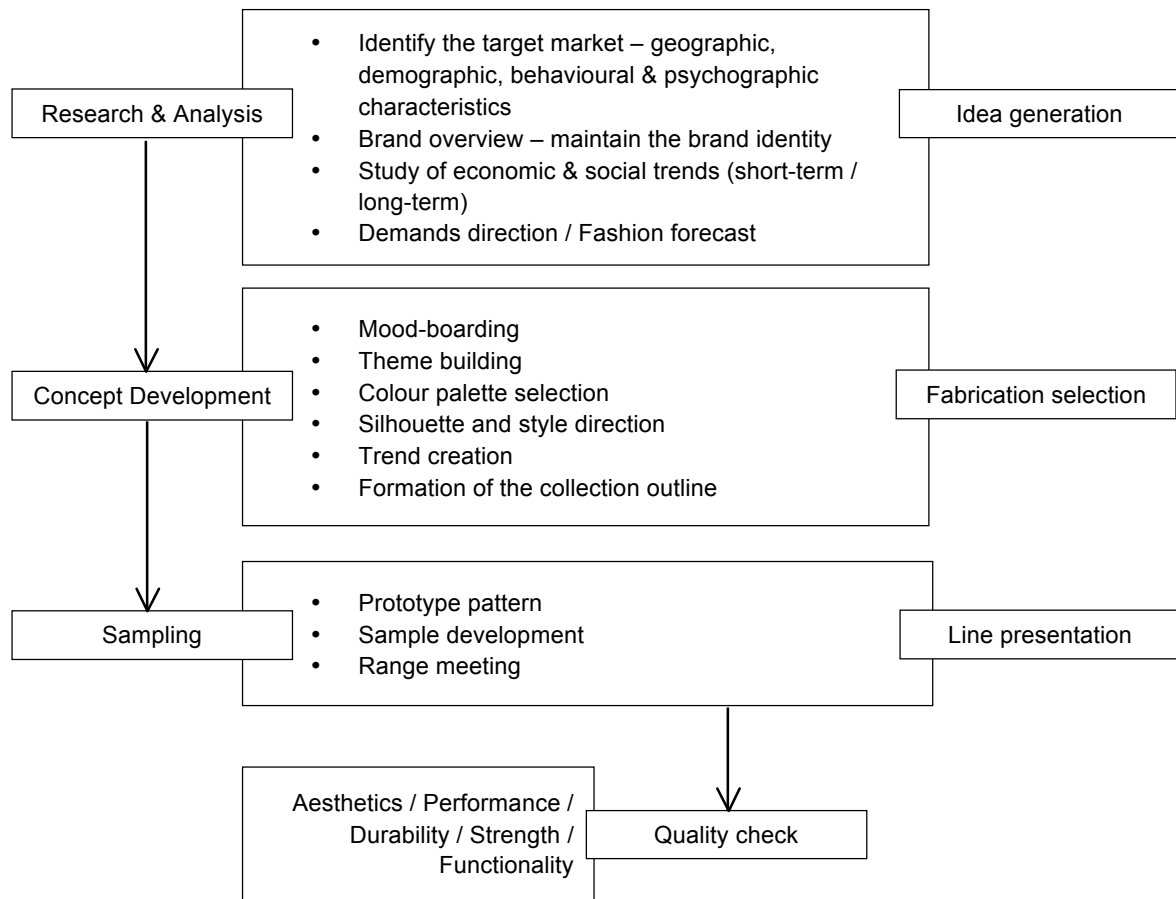


Diagram 1.2: Design Process

Reference: Pan & Holland (2006), Gaskill (1992) cited in Pan and Holland (2006) and Sakar (2011)

1.4.2 The Uniformity in the Global Fashion System

With the fashion industry entering a global trade platform, many policies were introduced by countries involved in exports and imports to promote and control their market share. In particular countries, with developed economies, introduced trade policies and barriers to regulate the global system. To maintain fair collaborations among the manufacturing countries and the buyers, all follow a common system of relevant policies and regulations. Therefore, “more and more, trade policy reform requires

the development of institutions, rather than merely the reform and streamlining of border barriers” (Martin, 2001, p.1). These policies and regulations have control mainly over the volume of the imports and exports. The most common trade barriers were the import and export tariffs, technical barriers, export subsidies, and quotas. However, the next most important economic policy introduced in recent times to improve the trade liberalisation of economies is the “reduction or removal of these trade barriers” (Herath, n.d.). This caused many new products as well as nations to enter the global trade system.

In the past few decades, the world textile and apparel industry have been impacted by many common agreements, the most influential being; the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA), World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Textile and Clothing (ACT), North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). They primarily controlled the quotas that go to the developing countries for manufacturing. However, the world textile and apparel trade is a complex area of negotiations and agreements where all try to build a more effective system by minimising the issues that restrict sustainable industry development.

Industry centred issues are not the same for each country. Although there are common policies within the global platform each nation has to interpret these differently depending on their local conditions. It is not very successful only to look at data analysis and solutions given, based on diagnosed problems of one nation and apply it directly to another national system.

Each country and geographical region has its own very effective methods of dealing with the way it makes and uses clothes.... These local methods of production and disposal should be investigated and analysed from a national perspective rather than borrowing rationale and solutions from a disastrous place where methods and data may be wholly inappropriate (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.21).

Each national system has to address their issues wisely to fit into the international development system and to become a sustainable industry.

1.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter One discussed, (i) how creative practices changed economic systems, (ii) the key aspects of creative industries, (iii) how creative industries came into existence by adopting a cultural industry model, (iv) how creative industries are placed in country's system as an economic parameter, and (v) the key aspects of the fashion industry as a major sub-section of the global creative economy. The main aim was to understand the relationship between creative practice and economic value attached to the global fashion industry system. As developing economies such as Sri Lanka look to adapting a creative industries approach as a means to gain economic advantage, broader issues and challenges must also be addressed.

Fashion producers are generally divided among developed and developing economies, as fashion creators and manufacturers. Yet, both economies enjoy the economic benefit they achieve as participants in the evolving global fashion industry system. Not all the nations that are exposed to the

system benefitted from fashion design excellence. The developing economies mainly entered the industry from the manufacturing end. However, today all these participants are trying to adapt sustainable industry models to achieve higher advantages.

The global fashion industry system is built on consumer demand. The continuous consumption keeps the whole system alive and influence constant advancement in the creative practice. Today, “the fashion consumers are hungry for fashion goods, yet need to feel absolved from the responsibility of the constant refreshing of their wardrobe” (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.21). The fashion producers are beginning to respond to this and supply accordingly. For many years the fashion suppliers justified their act of not following sustainable practices and producing massive collections on the grounds of meeting consumer appetites for newness. However, increasingly over-supply of fashion is now considered a significant environmental and ethical issue. Therefore, for sustainable economic development to be achieved via fashion design excellence, the broader consideration of shifting consumer demands and a recognition of patterns of consumption must be built into the economic development plans of a country. With the introduction of sustainable practices, current production and consumption trends may be adopting more socially and environmentally friendly practices.

The next chapter will discuss models of sustainable systems, which encompasses socially and environmentally friendly practices in the fashion industry. And fashion designer being a prominent figure in the whole fashion industry system, the next chapter will also highlight the role of the fashion designer in a common industry set up.

2. FASHION DESIGNER AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Today, creativity is nurtured and a young generation of individuals is being educated to become 'fashion designers' under various aims and objectives, around the world. Within a fashion industry practice, the fashion designer plays a prominent role. The fashion designer is now a part of the industry system which supports the creative economy. A fashion designer, just as any other professional in a society has to deal with a set of unique aspects which falls across his/her future directions. Therefore, the chapter tries to discuss these aspects of social, economic and environmental value, of the venture of a fashion designer of any context.

Key words:

Creative Career, Fashion Designer, Sustainable Fashion Industry, Fashion Movements, Cultural Aspects, Fashion Associates, Brand, Fashion Entrepreneur

2.1 CREATIVE CAREERS IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

Career paths are created and defined generally according to national needs. Therefore, there is always socio-economic value to all the careers. This section will discuss the social and economic value of the careers and emerging careers in the creative industries, and highlight the importance of careers based on fashion design practice. This will support the identification of the role of the fashion designer.

2.1.1 Economic and Social Aspects in Creative Careers

Florida (2002) explains the **creative career** holders via his book, '*The Rise of a Creative Class*' which he named as a group who are employed in doing creative work for a living. The creative careers he considered were the scientists, engineers, artists, musicians, designers and other knowledge-based professionals as a whole. He claims that the "human creativity is the ultimate economic resource" (Florida, 2002, p.xiii). The world development pattern has come from agricultural age through industrial age to the current pattern centred primarily on "human intelligence, knowledge and creativity" (Florida, 2002, p.xiii). Therefore the creative careers play a major role in the current society. Due to globalization, this applies to almost all the countries in the world.

At the early stages of development of the creative industries during the first half of the 20th century, the US and the European countries, where the creative industries were born, were afraid of other countries entering to the industry. But, due to the rising competitive pressure for creative products in the markets of these nations and the realization that it is economically more feasible to move the production away from themselves and placing it in low-wage countries, career paths too waved among other nations. However, the intention of the well-off industrialized nations is to have the authority of manipulating the world market of creative products for themselves. Therefore, these developed countries try their best to hang on to the knowledge-based creative careers and give away the labour force of low cost manufacturing to under-developed countries. From developing countries perspective,

this was a good opportunity for them to enter the creative economy. But at the same time, apart from having difficulties of capital investments and technological advancements, developing countries hesitate in creating trends due to the framework built by the developed economies.

As for the individuals, employment is necessary to ensure a basic standard of living; “people work to make money” (Florida, 2002, p.87). Groups of individual employees create economic value to the employer and in turn contribute to the country’s economic position. But from the creative individual’s perspective they “require more than compensation for their time” (Florida, 2002, p.88). Florida also quotes from the book, ‘*The Cathedral and the Bazaar*’ by Eric Raymond;

You cannot motivate the best people with money; money is just a way to keep score. The best people in any field are motivated by passion (Florida, 2002, p.88).

But ‘passion’ is an uncertain factor according to each individual. If not for the salary, then what every employee needs is at least the appreciation by the management for the efforts they make towards the company (Florida, 2002, p.111). The bottom line of this appreciation covers a salary increase as well.

People who are involved in creative careers are those who love to practice creativity. Within a company the creative positions are limited. At the higher levels of the corporate ladder there are always the decision makers who are involved in the management. It is a known factor that, when the creative positions climb the ladder of job positioning, they do not get much chance to practice their creative design ability. Therefore they become specific characters in the particular creative practice. Examples from the vast creative industry for such identified practices are the fashion designer, layout designer, visual merchandizer, stylist, musician, sculptor, etc. In parallel, according to Barley (cited in Florida, 2002, p.114), “those in authority, no longer comprehend the work of their subordinates”. This is meant because; the creative class is a group of people who are specialized in a particular skill and knowledge around its practice. And unlike in the olden days, now the superiors do not know what their juniors do in their own company. Therefore, apart from salary and lack of appreciation there are many other reasons for the creative people to change their careers. Florida (2002) states this as the “horizontal labour market”, where he claims as the then popular system of chasing for careers is “horizontally rather than vertically” (Florida, 2002, p.113-114). They may change the career not for a higher position but for a better environment, economic advantage and social appreciation.

At present, all over the world, the creative careers are held by those who have spent lot of money and time on supporting and nurturing creativity. Spending money and time to gain knowledge is always an investment (Florida, 2002). As identified in the first chapter, there is economic value for the creative performance within a company where there is no precise way of judging the value of the work done. This can be a good reason for those creative career holders to practice freelance work where they can get satisfaction from each and every job they carry out. They get paid for the every single work separately as well as receive the satisfaction of seeing the final outcome in the client’s hand. And this ultimately encourages the designers to become entrepreneurs if they have the necessary business management and marketing knowledge and leadership qualities.

2.1.2 Significance of Fashion Careers

As fashion design has extended to postgraduate level education, many employers look for creative people who have successfully completed a well-recognized fashion course from a reputed institution. The normal procedure is that the potential employers visit the graduation shows and the exhibitions to pick the suitable candidates by judging their work on display and portfolios while talking to the graduates. They can be considered as the lucky ones. Then their career is defined. Yet, "first jobs can be critical, but the value of a good start and a good reference when you move on cannot be overestimated" (Jones, 2005, p.203).

Creative careers in the fashion industry are associated with the design and product development stage, merchandising phase that involves buying and selling of fashion products and accessories, and at the sales, publishing and marketing stage. The first two stage career paths include the 'designer' for concept development, 'sketcher/sketch-artist' to draw the design, 'patternmaker' to bring the design into three dimensional forms, 'colour forecaster' to detect the colour palette, 'textile designer' to design and create or select the fabrics and the 'technical designer' to negotiate with the manufacturer. Photographers, art directors, graphic artists, models, makeup artists, hair stylists are included in the final stage of advertising, publishing, runway shows and promoting ventures. But the career paths, responsibilities attached, the mode of getting promotions and all other aspects affiliated with each and every role differs according to the context; especially the country. As an example, the recognised work of a designer in an industrialized economic context differs from that in a developing country. The position title may be 'fashion designer' at both the places, but the tasks can vary from concept development stage to works of product development.

There can be a variety of roles which the **fashion designer** can take on; namely (i) in-house designer, (ii) product developer for manufacturer, (iii) freelance designer and (iv) fashion entrepreneur. The main type is working full-time in a fashion house as the in-house designer. A fashion house generally owns the designs the designer creates. The designer's tasks include idea generation which is the most crucial part of a fashion house. They first of all need to understand the company's style and have a respect towards its vision and mission (Jones, 2005). They may work individually or as a team member. Fashion houses are in general a feature of the industrialised part of the world.

Another set of roles for fashion designers is to work for apparel manufacturers within the mass market. The recruited designer's job brief is defined according to the company standing in the global apparel value-chain, the types of products they produce, the technology they use and the buyer accounts they have. Therefore, when the manufacturing companies move up the value chain, the designers' job briefs potentially changes from just product development to a role with greater emphasis on idea generation (refer to diagram 1.2 for Design Process).

The other job role category fashion designers undertake is freelance work. In this role they are self-employed and often work as individuals. Such freelance designers usually sell their designs to fashion houses, shops or clothing manufacturers. After selling the designs, the buyer owns the design; therefore the buyer controls the production and the produced garments hold the buyer's label. Within

this context, fashion careers success depends on the ability to sell. Debbie Hartsog (2007, p.viii) writes, it is “not selling their work, but selling themselves – their designs, concepts, thoughts and ideas”. Then, those designers who have the ability to market and sell themselves along with extended skills of business management emerge as fashion entrepreneurs: “Beyond creativity and technical ability, solid business-skills help define success in fashion careers” (Hartsog, 2007, p.viii). The fashion designers who have extended their careers as entrepreneurs have the advantage of holding the design authority including the label name of the produced garments, control the production and distribution, oversee the marketing aspects, and as a consequence also bear the risks, costs and if loss or profit is made.

The fashion designer who follows any of the above career paths is a key part of a fashion industry system. In today’s industry system, the economic value is not the only concern of its practices. But, it also tries to gain a sustainable development, through its evolving practices. Designers, those who are the creators of new experiences therefore carry a great responsibility to understand and practice within a given context. Their practices might cause positive as well as negative impacts on the society and the environment. Apart from nurturing creativity and learning business and marketing skills to move-up their career ladder, the fashion designers must also have awareness on how to act ethically and maintain the ecological balance.

2.2 SUSTAINABLE FASHION MOVEMENTS

Today, the notion of sustainability is connecting strongly with the fashion industry practices, especially within the developed economies. Identifying of the sustainable strategies applied in the fashion industry is an advantage for the new entrants to follow. Therefore, this section will discuss the most highlighted sustainable movements occurring in the fashion sector in consideration of building better industry practices. This knowledge is important to understand for any developing economy who aims to enter the fashion industry from the design end and value-add.

A significant trend for the fashion industry is to consider how the industry will move towards adopting sustainable strategies. To date, the fashion industry becoming sustainable is mainly discussed in the developed, industrialised part of the world. Alison Gwilt and Timo Rissanen in their book ‘*Shaping Sustainable Fashion*’ (2011) talk about sustainability as a term that has more than 70 definitions.

What do 70 plus definitions of the meaning of sustainability mean for practitioners in the fashion industry now? Which one of these 70 definitions and counting, affect the way we think about how we make and use clothes? (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.20).

A **sustainable fashion industry** is subjective to the context. However, it encompasses environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the applied context. Therefore the identification of a system as sustainable is primarily a responsible act of the people who are involved in the system. Any product can be a sustainable design with much consideration on the above aspects. But it is not the final product that matters; the whole process has to follow the sustainable standards according to

the particular field and context. Therefore, within the fashion industry it is the ‘sustainable practice’ throughout production, distribution and consumption system that has to be considered as sustainable.

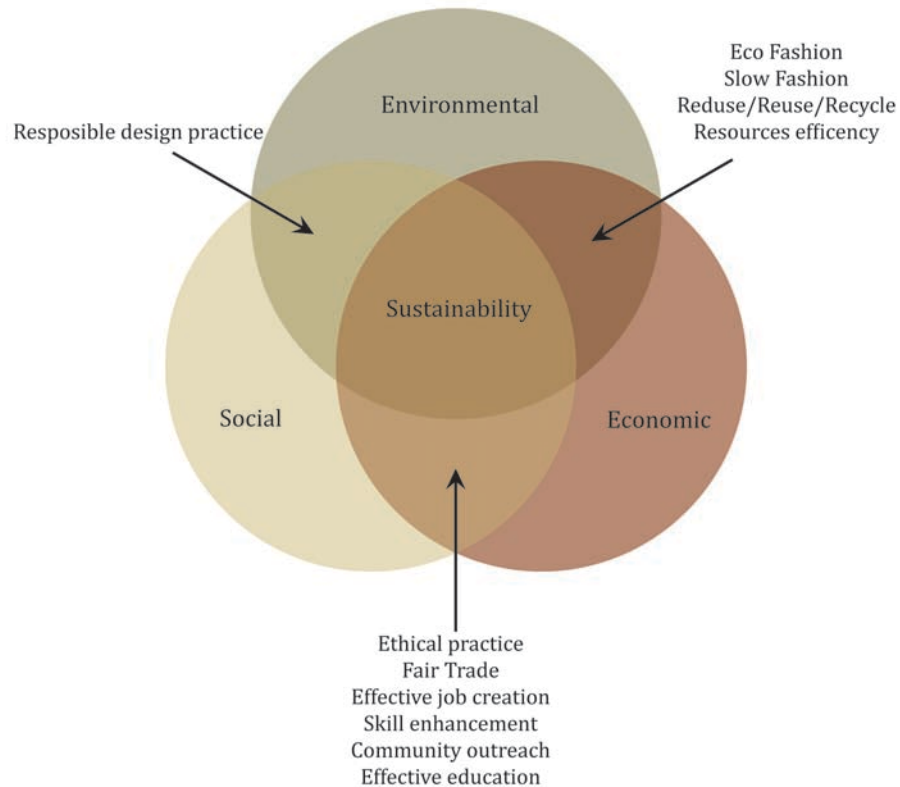


Diagram 2.1: Triple Bottom Line of 'sustainability' discussed in the research

The clothing industry is the second largest water consuming industry in the world, where agriculture is the first. It also causes pollution of water-channels with the chemicals used for bleaching, dyeing, and finishing fashion products (Stockinger, 2006, cited in Ulasewicz, 2008, p.31). Most of the sustainable **fashion movements** were therefore introduced in to the fashion industry as “a response to the environmental degradation” (Ulasewicz, 2008, p.31) caused by the fashion system itself. Today, much literature is written to justify the notions of sustainability. However, it is the fashion designer who acts as the intermediates of the product and the consumer desire. Therefore, it is critical for designers to be aware of the consequences that might arise from their design actions. If the right decisions at the right places are not made it might lead towards overproduction and unintentionally the formation of fashion clothing waste (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.22).

Other than the environmental concerns, the next most important aspect is the livelihood and wellbeing of the workforce involved in the industry. ‘Fashioning an ethical industry’ has been a key driver in the UK with regard to educating the staff and student body on some associated ethical and empathetic

issues, which has led to an interest in alternative production and consumption of clothing (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.22). With the assumption that this notion will lead towards a sustainable industry system another set of terms such as 'fair-trade', 'ethical practice' are being introduced into the industry. It is hoped that every sustainable fashion movement will ensure the future of the global fashion industry, will minimise ecological hazard, will improve labour standards and bring economic advantages to all players within the fashion system.

2.2.1 Eco fashion

'Eco fashion' is a term introduced to identify garments, textiles and accessories that have been manufactured using environmental friendly methods. 'Organic fashions' which is identified for being made with minimum use of chemicals and minor impact on the environment, 'recycled clothing' and garments made of environment friendly fabrics, all fall under 'eco-fashion' (EFF, 2012d). When reviewing the sustainability of 'Eco-fashion' products, the consideration starts from where the raw materials are coming from (Quinn, 2008, page 369). Other key considerations are; what are the raw materials and their contents, material waste as a percentage, the source of energy used throughout the production process, the chemicals and methods used at different stages, the method of discharging chemical waste, and the environmental threats caused during the production and distribution.

Environment pollution through gases released, use of toxic chemicals and pesticides at the production process, causing of illnesses on the workers who use chemicals and pesticides, destroying of the ecosystems due to release of chemical waste to water channels and non-biodegradability of the final product are main factors of consideration to support eco fashion strongly. The environmental destruction of the synthetic raw materials of Nylon and Polyester alone is significant in scale. They are made of petrochemicals, which cause for global warming due to the release of nitrous oxide during the production process. Nitrous oxide is a greenhouse gas that is 310 times stronger than carbon dioxide. They are non-biodegradable as well (EFF, 2012d).

To provide the consumer with knowledge about the product they consume, many eco labels are being introduced to the fashion industry. They have been "developed by either public institutions (national or supra-national), private certification agencies, NGOs, industry federations, or by retailers themselves" (EFF, 2012e). The most common of all of them are 'Oeko-Tex Standard 100' and 'European Eco-Label for Textile Products'. They particularly look at health standards and it is at present a compulsory label in several European countries.

There is now a 'Global Organic Textile Standards' (GOTS) which resulted when a number of certification and standard bodies formed a working group. This group is working towards bringing their respective labels under one umbrella, thus making it less confusing for the consumer (EFF, 2012d).

Having such a label on a product provides the consumer faith on the product and obligation towards its usage.

The practice of eco fashion in the market may not bring instant economic advantage. But, there is a long-term benefit in addressing environmental impact and therefore an economic gain for those who are involved in buying, selling and manufacturing of fashion products.

2.2.2 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

For many years, around the world, garments were produced with an expectation that they would be kept for a long time, even after many number of washes. More recently this consumer behaviour changed due to many reasons, where the influence of fashion media and the fast-fashion trend being the most prominent. Some fashions do not last for a long time. Fast fashions show much staying power. Today, the competitive fashion brands and retailers try to minimize the lead time to less than two weeks. Several years back many fashion brands produced a maximum of four collections a year where as today it has increased up to eighteen collections per year. And the number of styles released per week has extended to over three-hundred. This type of trend is very true with the UK's 'Topshop' and Spanish brand 'Zara'. Some consumers are addicted to this continuous newness. Vice-versa garments were produced to fulfill this consumer demand.

Consumers started purchasing more as a result of the attractive low prices and increased ample choice. However, many of these consumers are not aware of the environmental damage being caused by this pattern of consumption, production and consumer behaviour. In UK alone the textile waste is estimated as more than one million tonnes per year which is about 3% of total country waste (DEFRA, 2011) and in US it is nearly 13 million tonnes per year which is a total 5.2% of total waste (Bourland, 2011). The 'Ethical Fashion Forum' claims at least 50% of the textiles the UK throw away are recyclable, but "the proportion of textile wastes reused or recycled annually is only around 25%" (EFF, 2011)

'Sustainable consumption' as a term comes into prominence in the early 1990's. It aims to be a consuming pattern of fulfilling the material and other needs, "without causing irreversible damage to the environment or loss of function of natural systems" (Jackson, 2004, cited in Birtwistle & Moore, 2007). As a result scholars, researchers, academics and environmentalists now talk highly about the concept of 'reduce, reuse, recycle' for the massive destruction they see before their eyes because of the fashion system. However, 'reduce, reuse, recycle' (the 3R's) in its raw meaning, is a concept to take our complicated lifestyles back to a much simpler version of where wants were limited. People purchased what was necessary and needed.

Reduce, reuse, and recycle; if the three words are taken separately each convey a practice for both the product users and producers. 'Reduce' is to minimize waste. It also extends to mean; prioritize the needs before consuming, consume what is very much needed and consider quality over quantity. And when producing, again it is very relevant for the manufacturers to consider the quality over quantity and produce what is much needed other than having excess productions. All these basically mean 'live more sensibly'. Many systems in the fashion industry depend heavily on a production system that defines a minimum quantity. From business perspective, the fashion producers maintain this number

based on the profit margins. However, the production side of the industry gains their profits even though they leave a certain amount as waste after selling proceedings. 'Reduce' concept can carry a control over production and consumption which benefits waste minimizing. Mainly it then reduces the impact on environment by reducing landfills and lessening the energy need.

Majority of fashion garments are made to be usable more than once and possibly many times. Generally clothes need washing. Therefore the number of washes counts the life of a garment. At this point the quality of the fashion product plays a key role. Use of quality fabrics, stitching, dyes and other treatments may cost the products somewhat higher. But from the consumer's perspective they get a more durable garment which has a longer lifespan and therefore more cost effective. 'Reusing' garments for as many times as possible not only saves money, but also helps the 'reduce' concept as well where it cycle back and help prevent environmental hazards.

After reduction of production and consumption, and at another stage reusing the produced materials and consumed products to the maximum, recycling comes as another step towards environmental benefits. The third 'R'; 'recycle' basically means remaking of a waste garment into another wearable garment or any other useful product. But when it is searched in the internet, this is mainly identified as 'upcycling' where as 'recycling' means a process which needs much energy and resources. However, upcycling of second-hand clothing into another wearable garment is almost like making a customised garment. When used clothing are recycled to make another product they may end up as different products such as other dress items, bags, toys, accessories, household linen etc.

Apart from having the advantage of technology the recycling process can end up producing fibre which will again be at the starting point of clothing manufacturing process. Another type of recycling (upcycling) includes using unwanted factory surpluses, offcuts or other material waste. They still can be used to make new clothing and other products. Kate Fletcher discusses the principles behind Jill Danyelle's web-based fashion project of 'FiftyRX3', which is,

to reuse – not bought new; to reduce – by choosing products made with environmentally friendly production process; to recycle – making garments from a previous existing item. The results show a lavish, creative, sociable and very human exploration of cyclical living (Fletcher, 2008, p.95).

However, 'reduce, reuse, recycle' is a trendy movement which can be considered as an eco-style.

2.2.3 Slow Fashion

The term of 'Slow Fashion', is a reaction to all the fast systems of practicing fashion. It was introduced by the author cum researcher Kate Fletcher. Thorpe (2007, p.159) states, "the fastest layers innovate, while the slower layers maintain stability". Similarly, 'Slow Fashion' is a movement that helps to reduce the pace of fashion system over seasonal trends and conveys the idea of 'quality over quantity' to maintain the stability within the industry. Traditionally there were two collections released to the markets as Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. The fashion houses and the manufacturers who are in an accelerating trend in releasing garments to the market now at least target 18 collections per year. The ample availability of low price garments in the market,

increase the amount of clothes people consume. A survey in UK denoted “1.2 million tonnes of clothing has gone to landfill in the UK alone in 2005” (EFF, 2012c). If this pace is continued, the environmental disaster is unthinkable. Therefore, ‘slow fashion’ is a timely effort –

to slow down the supply chain to reduce the number of trends and seasons, to encourage quality production, and return greater value to garments removing the image of disposability of fashion (EFF, 2012b).

It is a very positive reaction towards the environmental impact created by the entire garment industry.

However, a “system that grows fastest is considered best and is sustained because people believe in it” (Fletcher, 2010). This was inevitable with people embracing many fast fashion trends during the past decade. Fast trends are connected with short production time, short-term life span, disposable material, itemized function, low cost, mass production, machine-made, etc. In contrast, ‘slow’ trends are connected with, extended production time, long-term life span or multiple lives, durable material, higher cost, limited production, hand-made, etc.

During the last decade, fast fashion was very prominent across the world and every manufacturer’s challenge was to supply low cost garments within a very short production time. There is a saying, ‘the faster you run the more exhausted you become’. Therefore adopting a ‘Slow Fashion’ approach to the fashion industry could be a way forward for the industry to ensure both sustainable economic development without negative environment and ethical impacts.

Fast Fashion	Slow Fashion
Short production time	Extended production time
Short-term life span	Long-term life span or multiple lives
Disposable material	Durable material
Itemised function	Multifunctional
Machine-made	Hand-made
More technology usage	Less technology usage or using of more traditional methods
Mass production	Limited quantity or customised production
Standardised size range	Size diversity according to the context need
Low cost	Moderate to higher cost
Low price	Higher price
Less or not environmental friendly	Environmental friendly

Table 2.1: Fast fashion vs. slow fashion

2.2.4 Ethical Practice

According to the Ethical Fashion Forum (EFF) explanations, ethical fashion denotes “an approach to the design, sourcing and manufacture of clothing which maximises benefits to people and communities while minimising impact on the environment” (EFF, 2012g). The ethical practices in the fashion industry do not only end if the clothing is made based on ethical standards, but it also extends towards fair trade and ethical consumerism. However, ethical practice throughout the production, marketing and consumption process in the current fashion industry is a prime need for a sustainable industry. Therefore a sustainable fashion industry does not mean only having an environmental friendly production and consumption system, but which also holds sustainable business practice, which are more likely to be a responsible business practice.

Currently, a major percentage of global apparel manufacturing is done in developing countries and there is a massive number of people involved at every stage of the apparel supply chain. At a time where the competition is very high in reducing the turnaround time and cost of production, many companies face a challenge to do so without dropping the wages (Bhattacharya et al, 2005, cited in Saxena & Salze-Lozac'h, 2010) of those who are in the system. From the manufacturers' perspective, reducing the labour wages is a means to high economic gain. Yet, when maintaining ethical standards, reducing labour wages at the production stage is not the answer to reduce cost. Because of increasing consumer awareness of the ethical manufacturing and trade, solving all these issues have become necessary to market any production. Therefore, maintaining an ethical practice within a country's manufacturing system offers a great advantage for that country's economy development. Having workers in the system who get a reasonable wage for their efforts provides sustainable social development as well as critical economic advantage. It is especially so for a developing economy such as Sri Lanka.

At present, the participants in the fashion industry try to maintain ethical standards and create policies to enter the sustainable trend and gain much advantage based on that. On top of paying a reasonable wage, much consideration is given for the human well-being which highlights poverty reduction, creating sustainable livelihoods, developing skills and supporting women. All the networks around the world built on fair ethical practices, have their own common central standards which are reflected in their annual global campaigns (Micheletti, 2003), yet all of them try to maintain an ethical practice that is most suitable to the geographical context each branch is located. Issues that cater for human well-being need to be context related. Therefore, each nation needs to have their own policies and standards maintained within a global ethical system.

The famous movements and policies such as 'no-sweatshop practice', 'ethical buying policies', 'fair trade', labeling, and 'clean-clothes movement', comes as a result of conducting practices within the global fashion industry ethically. According to the 'Fairtrade Foundation', the mission of fair-trade is:

to connect disadvantaged producers and consumers, promote fairer trading conditions and empower producers to combat poverty, strengthen their position in world markets and take more control over their lives (Fairtrade Foundation, 2011).

'The World Fair Trade Organisation' and 'the Ethical Trading Initiative' are another two 'transnational advocacy networks' (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, cited in Micheletti, 2003) which speaks of labour, citizens and human rights, to maintain ethical standards.

The World Fair Trade Organization:

The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) is the global representative body of over 350 organisations committed to 100% Fair Trade. The WFTO operates in 70 countries across 5 regions; Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and North American and the Pacific Rim, with elected global and regional boards, to create market access through policy, advocacy, campaigning, marketing and monitoring. WFTO has developed 10 principles for fair trade organisations, which members must adhere to. These principles are concerned with reaching the economically disadvantaged, transparency and accountability, capacity building, promoting Fair Trade, and improving the situation of women, child labour, working conditions, the environment and the payment of a fair price (EFF, 2012e).

The Ethical Trading Initiative:

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade union organisations. The purpose of the ETI is to promote and improve the implementation of corporate codes of practice which cover supply chain working conditions. The ultimate goal of the ETI is to ensure that the working conditions of workers producing for the UK market meet or exceed international labour standards (EFF, 2012e).



The FAIRTRADE Mark is a registered certification label for products sourced from producers in developing countries. Having the FAIRTRADE Mark on a clothing label 'means that it was made with at least 50% Fairtrade-certified materials (non-cotton materials such as accessories or elastic fibres do not have to be Fairtrade) (EFF, 2012e).

Figure 2.1: The FAIRTRADE Mark

However, fair-trade is mainly about reasonable pricing as well as ensuring proper working conditions. Apart from the above organizations, there are many other groups, corporations, organizations, institutes and academics etc. worldwide working towards this common goal of excluding unfair labour conditions in the garment industry.

The 'Clean Clothes Campaign' (CCC) is a well-known social movement on ethical practices in the fashion industry started in 1989 from Netherlands. It is a global campaign formed to end the sweatshop practices. As Liesbeth Sluiter (2009) stated, the CCC is not a typical labour movement, nor a representation of the workers in the workplace. It only has a supporting role (Leitch, 2010). It is mentioned in the CCC web page that since the inception of the campaign it "has worked to help ensure that the fundamental rights of workers are respected" (CCC, n.d.). Yet, it covers the issues relating to women's rights, consumer advocacy and poverty reduction. However, it is also an awareness movement to educate the consumer, the companies and the governments to support the

workers to achieve their rights and gain better working conditions. CCC is carried out by an association of organisations in fifteen European countries; Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. At present the CCC works with a partner network of more than 250 organizations around the world. All-together the CCC is working towards identifying issues of apparel manufacturing countries and its workers, and to help them achieve their goals.

Other than doing a business within ethical standards, there are some companies and individuals who have involved in the fashion industry as an ethical practice. It is by serving a community through fashion practice, which they aim on social developments other than an economic advantage. One such example is the works of the Bangladeshi designer Bibi Russell who designs for development, with the main intention of empowering people. Her venture can be identified as “designing for” other than the usual way of “designing with” (Chick & Micklethwaite, 2011, p.148). Bibi has completed her fashion education from London School of Fashion in 1975 and at first was a fashion model, where she has worked with Yves Saint Laurent, Kenzo, Karl Lagerfeld and Giorgio Armani. But when she returned to Bangladesh she focused on design incorporating work of local artisans. ‘Bibi productions’ of fashion goods started in 1995, and today it shelters for more than 35,000 Bangladeshi weavers providing a great opportunity for them to work on their skills and talents and create a sustainable livelihood. Ultimately, all the works she initiates goes to both local and international markets under the slogan ‘Fashion for Development and Positive Bangladesh’. For her great sense of design and ethical practice,

her work has been internationally recognized having received among others, the ‘Honorary Fellowship’ of the London Institute in 1999, title of ‘Designer for Development’ by the UNESCO in 1999, the title ‘Artist for Peace’ by the UNESCO in 2001 and the Peace Prize 2004 by the United Nations Associations of Spain (Jawahar Kala Kendra, 2007).



Figure 2.2: Bibi Russell



Figure 2.3: Bibi Russell collection for CFW 2012

Source: www.facebook.com/bibi.russell/photos_albums

Bibi’s mission is to encourage people to move beyond limitations and reach for their dreams (Faylasuf, 2006). With all these, Bibi Russell for Bangladesh is a great asset as all her work is committed totally

to the welfare of the local weavers and the productions are dedicated to promote the traditional crafts globally “in the cause of dignity, development and the eradication of poverty” (Jawahar Kala Kendra, 2007).

Therefore, the ethical practice behind each and every stage of the system needs to play a major role in the future sustainable fashion industry.

2.3 CULTURAL ASPECTS AND FASHION

Clothing varies according to different cultures. The creative authority changes clothing habits belonging to these cultural practices. This section will highlight how creative practices and cultural practices can come together and thereby give identification to cultural aspects that need to be considered when new fashions are created.

It is important to understand that gaining economic advantage from cultural-products is different from applying **cultural aspects** into fashion goods to achieve the same goal. Culture is nation-state specific identification. Creativity is a knowledge-based universal application. But creativity amalgamated with cultural aspects is again a nation-state specific declaration. Therefore, any application of cultural aspects in a national fashion industry can create much diversity within the global platform. Use of cultural aspects does not only mean the incorporation of traditional or craft elements to the new designs, but also the understanding of the culture to make an effective change. Therefore, the knowledge and the essence of a culture can influence much on any new creation.

However, ‘culture’ is given a prominent identification in the current creative practices. Therefore, a country with a long history of traditions and rich in cultural heritage can rely on cultural assets to gain advantage in their national creative economy. When it comes to the global fashion arena, one nation with its own vibrant cultural inspirations and style on their creations can influence the global fashion map scene. Turkey is an example of such a country in Europe. ‘Turkish textiles’ carry its own style and inspiration of the country. Generally, fashion with a deep rooted cultural base can be an ambassador for a nation and that can bring much advantage for the economy. As an example, the Turkish fashion designer; Atil Kutoglu is a cultural ambassador for Turkey as identified by the Turkish newspaper ‘*Today’s Zaman*’ (Demir, 2011). He has developed and promoted his label since 1990’s in USA with collections of which carry ethnic and cultural traces of Turkey. For having Ottoman influence Kutoğlu’s collections were referred as ‘Turkish delight’. “I get nourishment from my culture, and because of this, I am different from my American colleagues,” Kutoğlu said at the same interview given for the *Today’s Zaman* in December 2011.

The traditions, religious beliefs and political acts, all are aspects of a culture. Merging one culture’s features in fashion is a development for the global fashion system where it can expand the fashion vocabulary. From the receiver’s perspective of any new trend, the receiver must be vigilant about the suitability of the adaptation. In the present day it is a known factor that the fashion industry has no

boundaries in absorbing new foreign trends as desired. Many see the welcoming of new trends as a development. Yet, the suitability of new trends is context related; nation-state-individual specific. But once a trend is absorbed, the acts are almost unchangeable. However, the new changes always tend to engage with the localness. A new trend in any fashion system of a country definitely mingles with the traditional, religious and political behaviours.

The contemporary fashion system uses traditional features of cultures and has created a value-added cultural industry. This was discussed in an earlier section (refer to section 1.3) where there was a relevance to the craft practices of cultural communities with latest fashion trends. At this point, use of traditional production methods and use of traditional motifs into contemporary practice is the most common trend. Other than that there are instances where traditional costumes get caught up with new styling of fashion. This action is specific among those who belong to the traditional costume practicing community.

As an example, the sari is a very common traditional attire of most south Asian women. Sari is just an open cloth of six yards. However, it gets its uniqueness through the material, colour and the design. Sari is used as daily office-wear through to bridal-wear. At other instances where the sari is not worn for very formal occasions, new styles of final looks are evolving with individual taste and practice each has on how to drape the cloth around the body. Then, there is a body fitted blouse that is worn before the sari is draped around the body and the blouse may follow a myriad of styles according to individual taste. Today, the most original style is rarely seen anywhere. Yet, the sari as a culturally rich practice is still considered highly valuable as a national dress code.



Figure 2.4: Few Sari drapes from India



Figure 2.5: Unconventional sari drapes

(Pop group Pussycat Dolls on the red carpet for the Fashion Rocks concert in New York City in Sep.2008, wearing black and gold saris by Indian designer Rocky S. The bikini tops and unconventional drapes make it clear that this is a very modern take on the sari by the group of individuals according to their perception)

Source: <http://www.asiaone.com/Just%2BWoman/News/Beauty%2B%2526%2BFashion/Story/A1Story20081024-96101.html>

Turkey is a Eurasian country with vast majority of the population being Muslim. Veiling is a religious principle for Islamic women. The two established meanings for veiling are,

as a sign of adherence to the Islamic principle of covering the female body to conceal it from the male gaze and as a sign of political Islam (Kiliçbay & Binark, 2002).

Kiliçbay and Binark have examined the awkward relationship of those two traditional meanings to 'the fashion for veiling' within the context of Turkey in 2002. They claim the new meaning given by adding 'fashion' to a religious practice is the expression towards the contemporary consumption culture.

Though it is a religious practice of Islamic women's attire, modernizing of the traditional way of veiling is seen as an inseparable action from the ever-changing global trends. Identifying this potential, some clothing companies in Turkey has started fabricating new designs and proposing options for veiling having a clear identification of an apt target group, which is the urban middle and upper class woman. These new designs were mainly introduced through fashion shows, which "promote the habit of purchasing" (Kiliçbay & Binark, 2002). Other than those who carry orthodox ideas, others generally have accepted the incorporation of new accountable ideas in to prevailing practices. This is happening around the world among people of other religious beliefs and traditional practices.



Figure 2.6: Veiling fashions in Turkey

Source: <http://kootation.com>

In contrast to new trends getting absorbed into old practices and surviving harmoniously, there is also a contradiction when fashion creates irresponsible acts without knowing cultural roots of the participants. As an example, Lord Buddha's image for one set of Buddhists is very holy where they do not accept any representation of Him on clothing and if done so is considered as a very offensive religious act. This happened in Sri Lanka in recent years where there were T-shirts, under-garments and socks in the market with prints of Lord Buddha and many Buddhists of the orders of Theravada considered this as an aggressive action of people of other religions. As the majority of the Sri Lankans are Theravada Buddhists, this act was deeply offensive, and they would not purchase any such products. Through lack of understanding the cultural beliefs and sensitivities, conflicts can arise in fashion.

Clothing has always been a social manifestation in any society. Clothing displays the social hierarchy, the power, status, beliefs and behaviors of the individual wearer. Therefore, clothing can be considered as a necessity of a society to maintain vividness. Therefore, in the contemporary context, the use of clothing or fashion can have a political agenda. As a direct example, politicians create a public image through what they wear. As an example, in 2005, at the presidential election of Sri Lanka, the two main candidates of the two prominent political parties had the usual political battle first in projecting their image to the people whose vote they valued much. They projected themselves to the public with two very different costumes. One candidate wore the full-suit of the Englishman and at other times wore a trouser with a tunic collar white shirt. His opponent projected himself by wearing the Sri Lankan national costume all through his campaign. The later candidate won and on top of other

reasons the majority embraced him saying 'he is one of us', 'he is a common man from a village', 'he is local' etc. Apart from all the other strategies the costume did play a role at the political battle.

Fashion is more or less a choice of the human being. Culture is not a choice but it is a devoted practice for the majority of them. As a result of the globalization one cultural practice is no longer a hidden or restricted performance. It is open to the whole world. The East have adopted Western practices for many years and since recent times Western fashion is taking inspiration from Eastern cultural features. Within Europe which is the capital fashion region, the admiration and valuing of all types of cultural aspects and international influences in fashion is evolving and it is a good advantage for emerging creative economies to get advantages via their unique cultural aspects.

2.4 FASHION ASSOCIATES

Fashion industry is inseparable from technological advancements and many other industries around the world. In this section these are identified as 'fashion associates'. The relationship between fashion and its associates is a complex interconnected area to discuss. Therefore, this section is only a very brief introduction to the fashion associates to identify the correlation they have on one another.

Fashion is an evolving concept and the main **fashion associates** for this development are the technology and other fashion fusing industries; for instance film, music, sports, media and tourism. Since the industrial revolution the technological development is a never ending globally evolving concept. At present new research in technology is carried out everywhere in the world and has a significant impact on the fashion industry. In addition, the other fashion associates such as music and film also affect the development of the fashion industry.

The main fashion associate; 'technology' is the most inseparable area of fashion industry. The fashion industry today is a result of the revolutionary act of the industrial development. Changing the phases from manual productions to mass manufacturing of a global supply-chain with the participation of automated machinery was the outcome of the technological advancement. The first types of machinery were developed to increase the speed of productions where they were considered as a replicate to the fully manual labour system. But today, the advancements in the fashion industry together with technology mean generating of new ideas. The technology changes textiles, and then the textiles change the fashions. Therefore the developments in the textile technology primarily drive the changes of the total fashion industry. In addition, the inventions of new machinery as well change the possibilities of new design detailing to fashions. It is then the technology that changes the whole production method, pace, and even gives suggestions to the next level of designers to come up with new design ideas.

Fashion plays a key role in all the industries of film, music, sports, and media. Each of these industries have their own characteristics and way of using fashion in their productions. Ultimately the fashions within these contexts create new trends and practices within the society of the audience. The

audience gets caught up with what they see through media and are directly influenced by this. Specially, the actors of these industries form a niche segment of people as 'celebrities' in each and every society and they significantly influence the fashion industry. Styles of such as Celebrities', what they wear, which designer they choose, etc. are in the daily news especially in the western world. "Celebrities do play a major role in bringing fashion to our awareness" (Hartsog, 2007, p.xiv).

Tourism and fashion together is a highly spoken topic in recent times. For many years tourism helped nourish the fashion industry and today the fashion industry is playing a great role in supporting the tourism industry as people now travel to places in search of new fashions. All types of tourism; recreational, leisure or business, help the fashion industry to develop as each has specific requirements on clothing at the venture participation. Therefore, people tend to travel to buy their fashion needs. Other than that there are particular instances such as shopping festivals or trade fairs, fashion weeks and the global system of fashion merchandising and retailing which create many opportunities for both fashion and tourism.

Apart from the traditional types of traveling, the recent act that is identified as another specific type of tourism is the 'Fashion Tourism'. This new concept is a direct participation of tourism in fashion. At the moment, it has built a small niche market around the world, but is projecting an evolving image. In the fashion blog of '*Girl with a Banjo*', tourism industry specialist, Yazmina Cabrera (01/10/2012) posts her interpretation to 'fashion tourism' as a "phenomenon of people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment to enjoy, experiment and possibly consume fashion". This new concept is backed by the hotels of fashion cities or emerging fashion cities where they provide many benefits to the tourists who come to shop fashion. The benefits as identified by Cabrera among many other are the hotels providing full-time personal shopper service, style advice, discounts from selected shops, and a bottle of champagne after shopping. Tourism and fashion are very closely knitted industries where each can gain much economic advantage on top of the other.

2.5 BRAND PRESENCE

A fashion 'brand' denotes the belonging of fashion design excellence. The vast variety of fashion brands in the market represents the different phases of fashion. Today, the brand presence is a very necessary act in the fashion business. Therefore, this section will give a brief understanding to the different phases of fashion brands in the market and the unique features closely knitted with a fashion brand.

In current fashion industry practices, the brand or a fashion label tag is commonly used as an essential feature for a garment to be sold in a market place. The **brand** is today a business, marketing and advertising element. In the fashion industry it all started when the English fashion designer or the fashion entrepreneur Charles Frederick Worth, had a tag of his name sewn to the couture dresses he produced in Paris in the 19th century. But in the current practice, brand is no longer just a name of design authority, but it is a vast area in marketing a product. Just as all human beings

need a name for identification, every product needs a brand name for its identification in today's global product and service market place. Following the action of Charles Fredrick Worth, fashion products are usually named by the designer itself. A brand name holds a personality; it identifies the design, quality, and even a story behind the production and consumption practice. The brand personality builds the faith upon the consumer audience. Thereafter, consumers buy the 'brand' instead of the product. Proper maintenance of the overall quality of the brand name may result in continuous fame and sales of any product under it.

A consumer may find out about a brand via media and advertising, and to a very lesser degree from word of mouth. From the brand owner's perspective advertising is done to stay high in the market and maintain the consumer awareness, through introduction and recall. But from the today's consumer perspective, they value the prior given knowledge about a brand to be able to select the most suitable product as desired through advertising. Branded fashion products are usually known for high price. Today, the consumer is adjusted to pay even this high price to a branded product than paying a lesser amount for an unfamiliar product. Branded products may mark high for many reasons and it is mainly the brand personality, the reputation of the brand owner and apart from that it adds the cost of advertising spent to gain all that consumer awareness. A successful brand for the brand owner counts on the amount of sales whereas a successful brand for the consumer counts on the market retail price (MRP). Today, the price has become a consumer psychological factor and the branded products are getting most of the advantage out of it in marketing.

Almost all the fashion brands that have conquered the fashion world are the namesake brands of fashion designers such as Chanel, Versace, Jean Paul Gaultier, Yves Saint Laurent. Following the Western practice, designers like Issey Miyake, Yoji Yamamoto carried their own name as a fashion label to the branded fashion world from Asia. A local name is a nation-state familiar feature. A familiar name to a local context may easily get hold of the nation-state awareness. A foreign brand name has to gain the trust of the particular consumer when entering to a non-local market. Owners of a foreign brand may need to find the correct marketing strategy to achieve this consumer confidence to succeed in foreign markets. Today, anywhere in the world new fashion labels are being introduced by the designer's name itself. Even the designers from the countries belonging to the manufacturing end of the fashion industry are trying to build their own brands by their names. For example, designers of developing economies who are trying to take fashion brands from their nations to the world platform include Kofi Ansah from Ghana (Africa), Bibi Russel from Bangladesh, Manish Arora, Ritu Kumar, Rohit Bal from India and Anggy Haif from Cameroon (Africa).

As well as fashion designers developing fashion brands, retailers also are presented in the market place with fashion goods carrying the store name; the retail brand. To succeed however a retail brand needs to form a retail chain. World-famous fashion chain-retail brands are Marks & Spencer, Next, Zara, TopShop, H&M, Primark to name a few. They are specialized to carry a large quantity production, a much bigger consumer market and a lower MRP than many high rated namesake fashion labels. In the recent years, the development of the retail brands around the world has

accelerated as they are providing a much cheaper value added product than of the strongest brand leaders.

While the retailers became brand names, from the production end the manufacturers have also become retailers and brand name holders in the current day fashion scenario. Identifying the consumer trend of having a faith on a 'name' have made this attempt and it is known in the manufacturing world as moving up the apparel value-chain. For the manufacturers, they have the advantage of having the production process within their control and to enter the retail system they only have to add the design value to their productions as a way to reach the end user.

While individual manufacturers try to build individual fashion labels, manufacturers of a specific country as a collective have already built a broad brand name for their nation, by the label of 'made in (country)'. For a nation, it is the nation brand, and yet it encompasses all the above said individual brand personalities. Therefore, it is in the interest of a nation's manufacturers to build and maintain the reputation of the nation branding.

Today, a brand name means a promise to the consumer. To climb the ladder of brand success, new marketing strategies are needed at all times even to the most famous brands to ensure they are not overtaken by a competitor. However, the brand presence through marketing strategies in the fashion industry is critical in the current market place as the consumer can quickly switch their preferences and be selective on what they purchase.

2.6 FASHION ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This section discusses the path of 'fashion entrepreneurship' for a fashion designer's future directions. It will highlight the key features of a fashion entrepreneur, the skills they should carry, and the responsibilities and the issues they have to face when entering the venture.

A **fashion entrepreneur** can be identified as a person who invests in a new business based on products or services in the fashion industry. They make business decisions while having to weigh up the consequent potential risks. Starting a new fashion business or social venture is the most common form of fashion entrepreneurship. Businesses of fashion entrepreneurs are focussed from manufacturing to retail and marketing, and include the areas of creativity, innovation, production, merchandising, distribution, sales, advertising, marketing and management. A single fashion entrepreneur according to their expertise may be involved in several or all of these areas in one business. However, the fashion entrepreneurship is a revolutionary action emerging especially since the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Any person with a sense of the fashion market can develop a fashion business. But the ideal person to handle a fashion entrepreneurship is a person who is trained with creative skills, knowledge to identify

the consumer demands, identify a niche market, manage the productions and knows how to market the products successfully. Entrepreneurs have to have a watchful eye on new strategies. The very latest effective missions lie upon sustainable practices of the fashion industry. Yet, it is always the design-based product ideas that conquered the fashion market. Throughout the history of the fashion industry, such designer products have been the forces of change of the industry. However, for the contemporary fashion entrepreneurship, the design involvement; the value-added concept is the driving force towards success. Therefore, the ideal fashion entrepreneur is the fashion designer who is creative and has gained a proper training, receiving knowledge of all the above and has the ability to challenge for a better sustainable industry.

The fashion designer is responsible for the many changes that occurred in the fashion industry in the past.

The image and success of each house (in Paris) was closely dependent upon the creative power of its designer, who was also in charge of running the business.' The fashion designer; specifically the Parisian, is 'a cult figure, around whom everything seemed to revolve, and upon whom everything seemed to depend. As artist and craftsman, s/he ensured that the process as a whole, from creation to manufacture to distribution, would be fully integrated (Djelic & Ainamo 1999, cited in Villette & Hardill, 2010, p.466)

Therefore, the fashion designer who enters the fashion business is a considerable influence in the fashion industry.

Having skill and knowledge of entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage ventures is not sufficient to carry out or even start a business. Financial backing is an absolute necessity. As fashion is an evolving industry, the most enthusiastic group of people who want to enter the fashion entrepreneurship is the fashion designer. The majority of them want to come up with their own fashion labels. Yet the financial support is a major issue for many. Those who do not find any external investors allocate their own finances and try to at least to step in to the small-medium enterprise (SME) system. Thereafter, the challenges for the development of the venture are nation-state specific. Designers who themselves can fulfill the internal services attached to the business have to tolerate the current systems of external norms and policies to succeed as entrepreneurs.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The profession of the 'fashion designer' is a highlighted career in the global creative industry. Therefore, the value of the fashion designer's creative career was discussed giving a brief understanding to the role of the fashion designer within the global fashion industry. In the early sections of this chapter, it was highlighted how the fashion designer becomes a successful character in the job market and how s/he brings economic advantage through the practice of creativity.

However, the fashion designer's role does not end only by helping to gain an economic advantage for the fashion industry. Their role extends up till they help to develop an overall sustainable fashion

industry system, which caters to the social and environmental development apart from economic advancement. Therefore, the main global sustainable fashion movements were highlighted as an indication of the viable aspects the fashion designer has to consider along their creative career path.

In addition to the social, economic and environmental consideration, there are many other features in a successful fashion system. A fashion industry cannot achieve its sustainable goals without identifying these many other aspects that have direct relationship to fashion. Therefore, in a later section the significance of cultural aspects of fashion was discussed in brief as an area, which fashion design cannot be separated from. Apart from that, the concepts of having fashion brand presence in the market and fashion entrepreneurship were highlighted as prominent features in the successful fashion world. These two concepts are not yet a common feature in the Sri Lankan context but are possibly developing areas when entering the creative economy.

This chapter was brought in basically to understand two aspects: the global sustainable trends the fashion designer has to absorb into his/her creative practice in the venture of building a sustainable fashion system for a country like Sri Lanka, and the setup the fashion designer has to become a part of in building a creative economy for any country.

The next chapter will discuss how Sri Lanka being a developing economy was initially exposed to textiles and apparel industry practices and how it is now looking towards the possibilities of applying creative practices to gain sustainable economic advantage.

3. CURRENT POSITIONING OF SRI LANKA

This chapter will discuss the background of the Sri Lankan economic system, how the country entered the textiles and apparel (T&A) industry in gaining economic advantage and the first generation of its creative industry practices, namely the cultural industries the country is still holding to. The aim is to show how the economy and industries of Sri Lanka have shifted to a service based structure. A later section will discuss how the country sees a shift towards creative practices within the current T&A industry and identifies an emerging fashion industry. This chapter will further support a discussion on how fashion design practices can build a close relationship with rich cultural industry practices in the country, in bringing economic advantage.

A later section of this chapter will provide information to understand how fashion designers are being brought up under different curriculum approaches in Sri Lanka. It will highlight the key aspects of fashion design education in Sri Lanka in order to develop a generation of fashion designers who suit the context, and speculates on the future directions the 'fashion designers' may take in their creative endeavours. This background understanding of the country's economy, clothing industry, fashion design education and the notion of Sri Lanka's emerging fashion designer provides a framework for contextualising 'Part Two' of the thesis.

Key words:

Sri Lanka, Textiles and Apparel Industry, Garment without Guilt, Emerging Fashion Industry, Bachelor of Design, Curriculum Approach



Figure 3.1: Sri Lanka in a world map

Source: <http://world.umka.org>



Figure 3.2: Sri Lanka map

Source: <http://geology.com/world/sri-lanka-satellite-image.shtml>

SRI LANKA	
Socialist republic of Sri Lanka was established in 1972. Before that, the country was known as 'Ceylon'. Independence from Britain: 1948	
Land area:	62,705 sq.km.
Climate:	Tropical climate Low country – min. 24.2° C & max. 31.6°C Hill country – min. 18.2° C & max. 26.6°C Number of Rainy days: 88 (2010), 103 (2011)
Mid-year population (July 2012 est.)**:	21,481,334 (21.48 million)
Population density (2011):	333 persons per sq.km.
Urban population (2011)*:	15.1%
Urban annual growth rate (2010-2015 est.)*:	1.36%
Literacy rate**:	91.2%
GDP per capita (PPP) (2012 est)**:	\$ 6,100
Employment (June 2012)**:	Agriculture – 31.8%, Industry – 25.8% and Services – 42.4% (Labour force: 8.2 million)
Most dynamic industries:	food processing, textiles & apparel, food & beverages, telecommunications, and insurance & banking
Unemployment rate (June 2012)**:	5.1%
Major commercial city:	Colombo
Ethnic groups (2001 census provisional data)**:	Sinhalese 73.8%, Sri Lankan Moors 7.2%, Indian Tamil 4.6%, Sri Lankan Tamil 3.9%, other 0.5%, unspecified 10%
Languages**:	Sinhala (official and national language) 74%, Tamil 18%, other 8%. [Business language: English]
Religions (2001 census provisional data)**:	Buddhist (official) 69.1%, Muslim 7.6%, Hindu 7.1%, Christian 6.2%, unspecified 10%
Natural resources:	gems, phosphates, limestone, graphite, mineral sands, clay, hydropower
Internet users (2011)***:	15.13% of the total population

Table 3.1: A brief outline of Sri Lanka

*Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations

Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision

(<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/index.htm>)

**Source: The World Factbook, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the US

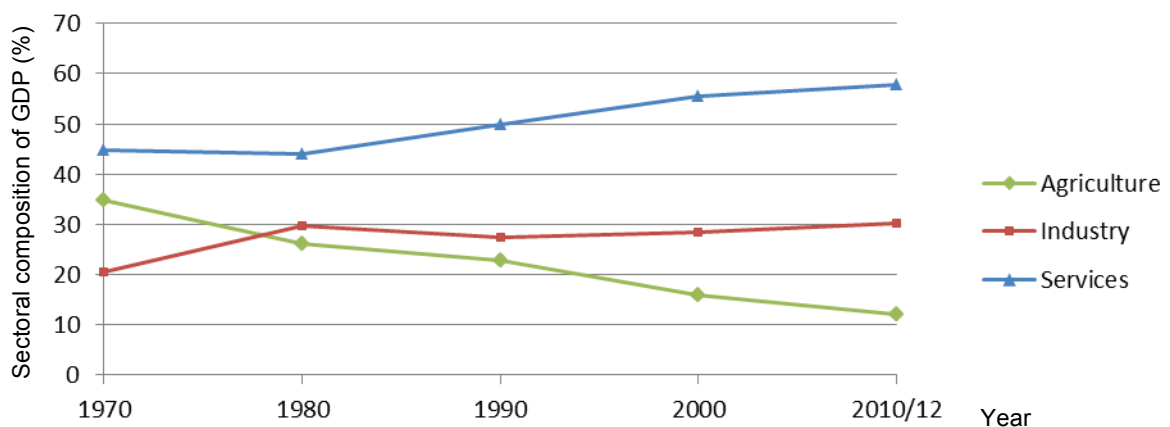
***Source: World Bank (www.google.com.au/publicdata)

3.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPING ECONOMY OF SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka as a developing economy is showing a significant development after ending the civil war that lasted twenty-six years. Even while the country was in conflict, there was a growth in industry and services as economy sectors. This section will highlight how Sri Lanka changed from being an agriculture based economy to industry and services based system over the past thirty years.

In the past, the economy of **Sri Lanka** had been primarily based on agriculture. Manufacturing has been an insignificant activity in the economy since the time the country was under the British rule (1815-1948) and the first three decades even after gaining independence in 1948. Development strategies that formed the Sri Lankan economy after independence mainly distinguished two eras; the first era from 1948 to 1976 and the second was the post-1977 period. The first phase was dominated by agriculture. The second phase saw open economic policies introduced largely depending on trade.

Since 1977 with the introduction of open-economic policies, the setup of the country changed immensely and Sri Lanka became a mixed economy, in which both the government and private sectors were involved in the production process. New policies were created, several free-zones were established and foreign investments were encouraged to accelerate national economic growth. Because Sri Lanka began trade liberalization policies in the late 1970's, it was well ahead of the rest of South Asia. Since then the country's economy has mainly depended on trade. Today, the main income generating factors are Services (57.9% of GDP), Industry (30.1% of GDP) and Agriculture (12% of GDP) (CIA, 2013). The services and industry sectors have increased its share since 1970's while the agriculture sector has declined.



Graph 3.1: Economic Performance: Sectoral composition of GDP (%) vs. year
Source: Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka

Today, Sri Lanka is a lower-middle income developing economy with a gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$ 59.7 billion according to the 2012 World Bank records. In the same year, the country's GDP

per capita on purchasing power parity (PPP) was recorded as US\$ 6,100 (CIA, 2013). Since 2010, the country has shown an 8% growth rate in GDP (CIA, 2013). This relative high rate of growth has emerged after putting an end to the armed conflict the country had for nearly three decades in 2009. While staying on the track in meeting most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG-8) that were identified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sri Lanka displayed the fastest growth in South Asia in 2011 (World Bank, 2013). Although there was a decline in the growth rate in 2012 to 6.8% (World Bank, 2013), the country has “outperformed other South Asian and lower-middle income countries overall with respect to a range of social indicators” (Dutz, & O’Connell, 2013). Just like any other developing economy, Sri Lanka has been trying to reach the key economy development objectives of improving living standards of people, raise economic and social empowerment at community level and ultimately bring about sustainable social and economic development of the country (CBSL, 2011).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG-8):

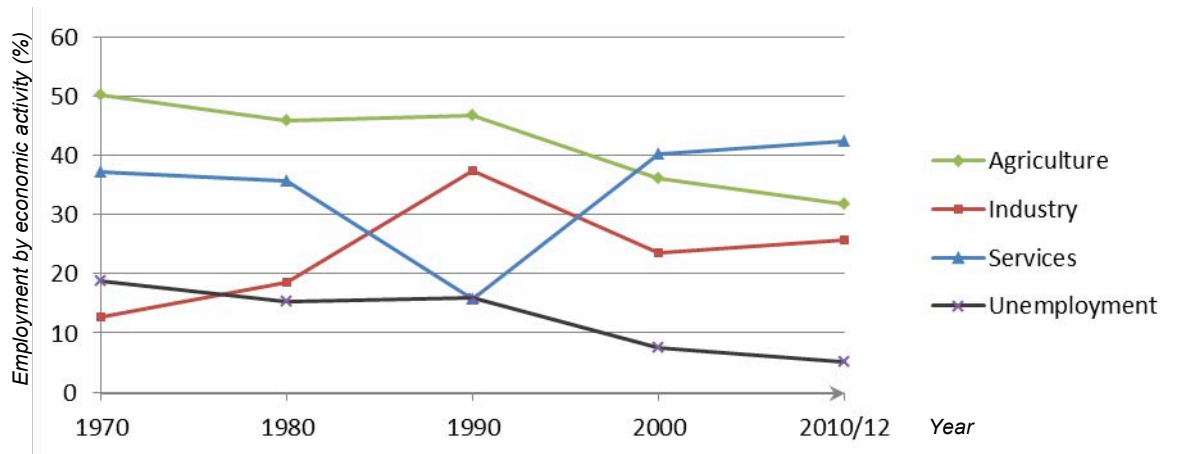
1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
2. Achieve Universal Primary Education
3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
4. Reduce Child Mortality
5. Improve Maternal Health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability
8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development

*Table 3.2: The Millennium Development Goals (MDG-8)
Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)*

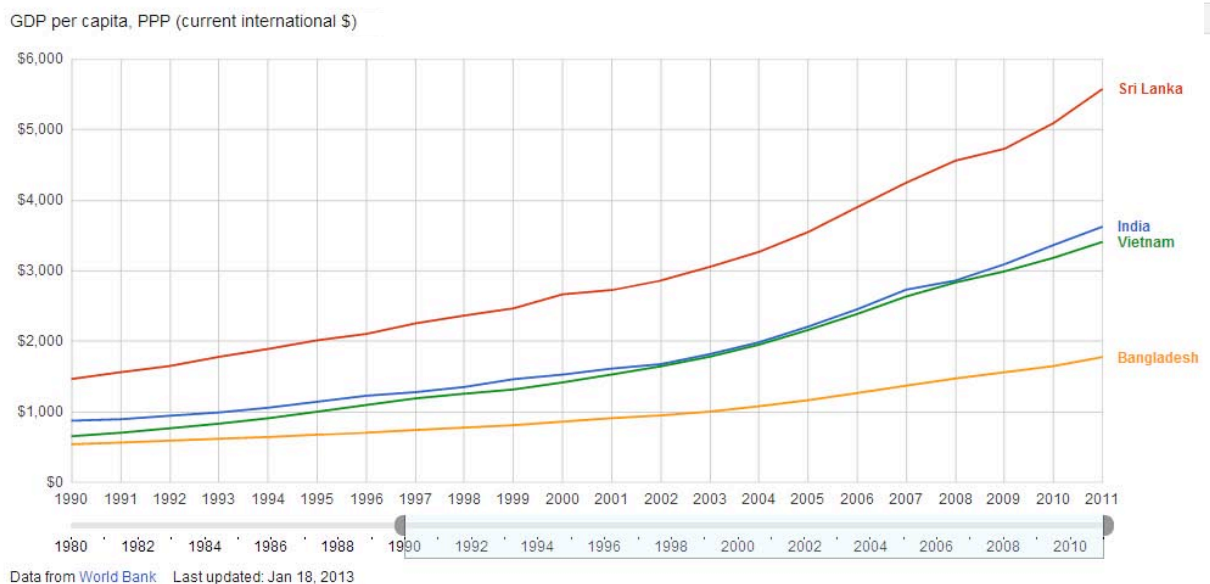
The terms, developed and developing is used to classify countries “according to their levels of economic and industrial development”. Developed countries are those that with much technological advances, industrial developments and enjoy a higher living standard. In contrast, developing countries “are limited in their economic progress and may have little or no industrial advancement”. They are the much poorer countries (Dickerson, 1999, p.21). At the stages of economic development, nations always identify the next level of advancement and keep on shifting their efforts to achieve their goal.

Currently, the Sri Lankan economy significantly depends on trade activities. According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) annual report and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) records the recent foreign trade was an estimated US\$ 10.5 billion exports and US\$ 19.8 billion imports in 2012. Exports are mostly of textiles and apparels (40% of the total) and tea (17%). The rest mainly consist of spices, gems, coconut products, rubber and fish. The CIA records (2011), the main export partners as the United States (19.8% of total exports), the United Kingdom (9.2%), Germany (5%), Italy (5%) and

Belgium (4.4%). According to the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (BSCAA) records, a larger portion of imports are of vehicles, spare parts and woven fabrics. The imported fabrics cover for both domestic uses and for apparel order manufacturing within the country's T&A industry. Though there is a decline in the agricultural sector, the development of both the services and industry sectors has positively reduced the country's unemployment from around 19% to 5% during the last forty years. (refer to graph 3.2).



Graph 3.2: Employment by economic activity: Employment by economic activity (%) vs. year
 Source: Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka



Data from World Bank Last updated: Jan 18, 2013

Graph 3.3: Sri Lanka's GDP per capita (PPP) vs. year
 Source: World Bank records

According to Sri Lanka's economic development records, economic growth has not been even. But the economy has always shown a resistance to shocks like the ethnic conflict (till 2009) and the devastating tsunami (in 2004). However, currently, Sri Lanka is showcasing a positive trend in economic development.

Today, the global hierarchy of economies are less fixed than it once was. Now, it is always a question as to know who will rise next. However, currently, the wealthiest nations are Canada, France, West Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. These seven economies formed a group as 'the G7' in the 1970's and still maintain its high position in the global economy. In 2001, Jim O'Neill, the British economist identified Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC economies) as the next big-four economies and showed potential to shifting the global economic power away from the G7 economies by the 2020's (O'Neill, 2001). In 2010, South Africa was included in the group and the new acronym given has been 'BRICS' (Roberts, 2011). Apart from the clearly identified G7 countries and the fast transforming BRIC economies, analysts have created other groupings for developing countries to identify the next economies that show a high potential of becoming BRICs. A decade later after the identification of BRIC economies, Jim O'Neill identifies the next eleven (N-11) nations which show the next high potential of economic development. They are Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines and Vietnam. However, the economic rising power of BRIC changed the whole idea about the developing economies. Yet, the state of developing power is very complicated and depends on the internal as well as external factors that are even beyond any nation's control.

In order to measure countries' capability to create sustainable growth, O'Neill has come up with a set of 13 variables (from education to rule of law to fiscal health to Internet penetration) that combine to make what he calls a growth environment score (The Mark News, 2012).

According to O'Neill, the next emerging economies would be the nations that perform well in telecommunication and information technology, have better forms of governance, maintain a low degree of corruption and consist of a well-educated population (The Mark News, 2012). The educated population is comprised of skilled labour where each nation does not want to outsource their labour force. Having said this, the positive economic development trend in Sri Lanka could be a projection to enter as another fast transforming economy as an addition to the N-11.

3.2 AN OVERVIEW OF SRI LANKAN TEXTILES AND APPAREL INDUSTRY

With the open-economy policy in 1977, the T&A industry secured a high profile position in the Sri Lankan economy. Since 1986, the industry has been the largest export earner and supported the country immensely in socio-economic advancements and achieving the country's development goals. The incorporation of ethical practices in the export oriented apparel manufacturing has enhanced its reputation in the global T&A/fashion industry. Though Sri Lanka is a quality apparel manufacturing destination, its local consumption mainly rely on imported textiles and garments. To give a clear understanding of this background, this section will first discuss the country's T&A manufacturing industry; its initiation, evolution and new strategies towards its advancement and then outline the nature of the

local retail system and the consumption behaviour of the local apparel consumer. A later sub-section will highlight the emerging concept of a fashion industry as an extension of the current local T&A practices.

As Dheerasinghe (n.d.) states, the **textiles and apparel (T&A) industry** in Sri Lanka was initiated in the 1950's when the government took steps to promote locally manufactured textiles as an import substitution industry. There were few government initiated large-scale textile mills which produced yarns as well as fabrics. The private sector too got involved in textile production. However, at that time all the textiles were made for domestic use. At the time,

domestic industries were highly protected by the government by controlling the imports of finished products. Importation and distribution of raw material too were controlled by the government (Dheerasinghe, n.d.).

During the post-1977 phase, the T&A industry established a very prominent position in Sri Lanka's industrial structure. As Fernandez-Stark, et al (2011) states in their report, it was an era when apparel manufacturing was measured as a significant facilitator for national development,

and often it is the typical starter industry for countries engaged in export-oriented industrialization due to its low fixed costs and emphasis on labour-intensive manufacturing (Fernandez-Stark, et al, 2011).

However, in 1960's and 1970's the development of the textile industry was encouraged by then-governments as an option for imports. In contrast, in the 1980's, the textile industry became an export-oriented apparel sector under the world quota regime, having a massive impact on the country's economy. The world quota system was an initiative of developed economies to impose the limits on imports of a wide variety of goods, which were manufactured in low cost developing economies (Geraffi & Memedovic, 2003). Sri Lanka's main buyers are the US and Europe. They had Sri Lankan T&A imports controlled under the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) in the Sri Lanka's early stages of the T&A trade. Since 1995 quotas were imposed under the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ACT), which was regulated by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Since 1986, Sri Lanka's T&A industry became the most prominent manufacturing and export industry in the country. As a result, small, medium and large scale factories were initiated around the island. At present there are more than 800 garment factories, of which approximately 19% are small (up to 49 employees), 53% are medium (50 – 249 employees) and 28% are large (above 250 employees) in scale (CBSL, 2011, ITC, 2011). The industry produces around 600 million units per annum worth over US\$ 4bn and of which woven garments account for 60% and knitwear for 40% (CBSL, 2011). The industry is strengthened by having a skilled direct local workforce of more than 300,000.

Sri Lanka manufactures garments for many major brands mainly in the US and European markets. The entire ranges of garments are produced. According to the records of Export Development Board (EDB) of Sri Lanka, the brands include, Tommy Hilfiger, Victoria's Secrets, Triumph, Next, GAP, Van Heusen, Bhs, London Fog, Marks & Spencer, Abercrombie & Fitch, Liz Clairborne and Jones New York. The country has gained a reputation as a quality apparel manufacturer having built up a prestigious international customer base. Over the past years, the US\$ 4 billion worth clothing industry in Sri Lanka has been transformed from CMT manufacturing level to ODM level of the apparel value-

chain (refer to section 1.4.1) where the industry is now focusing on adding design value to the production. Having the strengths of human and technology in quality manufacturing, this developing nation is trying to transform the industry from being a mere manufacturer to a provider of “fully integrated services and penetrate premium market segments” (EDB, 2010).

In the effort to move-up the apparel value-chain, several leading manufacturing companies have initiated their own brand presence in both local and international markets. For example, ‘L.i.C.C. jeans’ the Sri Lanka’s premier designer denim label from Hirdaramani group of companies, ‘Amanté’ lingerie brand from MAS Intimates (pvt) Ltd. and ‘Aviraté’ women’s-wear brand from Timex Garments. The initial markets of L.i.C.C. jeans in 2008 and Aviraté in 2010 were Sri Lanka and then expanded to the Indian market while Amanté started with India in 2007 and then introduced to the Sri Lankan market in 2012.

Sri Lanka has focussed on being more professional, productive and efficient, as a way to be better than the competitors in the textile and apparel exports. A way to achieve this has been through focussing on improving the working environment. For example, eco-friendly manufacturing practices, wellbeing of the workers with high labour standards, ethical trading under the concept ‘Garment without Guilt’, sustainable development are considered of the key importance in the industry.

An example of these initiatives according to Professor Hansjürg Leibundgut is the clothing factory of MAS Intimates at Thulhuriya in Sri Lanka (MAS Intimates Thurulie) opened in 2009. This factory is an example for the whole manufacturing industry where not only environmental issues are addressed, but much focus is placed on ethical standards and social equity of the employees within the factory. It is not just a building to manufacture foreign garment orders, but it is a sustainable system, which contributes to the local economy and employees’ wellbeing (Leibundgut, 2009). Leibundgut (2009) reports, that the system provides indoor thermal comfort, has ‘passive cooling’ which reduces energy consumption, maintains energy efficiency, has productive water management, uses clean energy and overall, qualifies as green manufacturing. Having such environmental, social and economic performance “MAS Intimates Thurulie claims to be the world’s first clothing factory powered solely by carbon-neutral sources” (Leibundgut, 2009, p.10). This factory was modelled on Marks & Spencer, one of the main buyers of MAS Intimates. It is considered that this factory is the exemplar for eco-initiatives in the apparel industry. In fact, as “the flagship factory of MAS Holdings, the building is a globally recognised icon that symbolizes the company’s commitment to sustainable development” (Leibundgut, 2009, p.10).

The expansion of the local apparel industry in recent years placed much emphasis on building or upgrading manufacturing plants to ‘green’ factories. All such advancements claim to have achieved their sustainable goals of environmental, social and economic developments. As social development, the companies focus on workers’ wellbeing where they aim to create a comfortable, healthful, attractive and a productive environment to work. Apart from that, there are company policies to maintain the safety standards of the employees. It should be noted that the standards are generally

maintained regularly within large scale manufacturers but there can be loopholes in the systems of medium and small scale factories since a large number of factories can be difficult to monitor.

Sri Lanka's leading trade body; Joint Apparel Association Forum¹ (JAAF) whose membership represents all the textile and apparel businesses in the country, initiated the concept; '**Garment without Guilt**' (GWG) in 2006 to promote the local industry and define its ethical practices. The aim of the JAAF is to address issues of low unfair wages and unsafe, unethical working conditions that still continue in many countries. GWG has defined ethical practice as;

- Ethical working conditions
- Free of child labour
- Free of forced labour
- Free of discrimination
- Free of sweatshop practice

In addition, GWG encourages sustainable development practices, empowerment of women and development of eco-friendly solutions for the national apparel sector. According to a statement given by the Brandix; Sri Lanka's largest apparel exporter,

The ethical positioning through the GWG campaign has not brought in higher margins for made-in-Sri Lanka garments, it has pulled in more orders. It has also allowed Sri Lankan garment factories to differentiate themselves in international markets (Fibre2fashion, 2012b).

The JAAF of Sri Lanka has much authority in the apparel sector in policy making and monitoring the development. Even before the introduction of the GWG concept, Sri Lanka "had signed nearly twenty-seven International Labour Organization (ILO) Core Conventions which cover areas such as exclusion of forced labour and child labour" (JAAF, 2006)

In 2013 Europe, even with its economic slowdown, is still the major buyer for Sri Lankan manufacturers. Sri Lanka continues to hold the apparel export demand for its ethical practice, more factory investment, and thereby the arrival of new international buyers. Aimed at raising more international awareness of the export industries, in March 2012 the biggest ever national post-war trade event; 'Expo 2012' was launched by the country's Export Development Board (EDB). EDB is the apex state organization for export development, which was established under an Act of Parliament of Sri Lanka. The key sectors included in the Expo exhibition were Apparel, Rubber, and Rubber Based Products, Gems, Diamond & Jewellery, Food & Other Beverages, Spices & Allied Products, Ceramic & Porcelain Products, Electrical and Electronic Products and Footwear & Leather Products etc. (EDB, 2012). With apparel holding the major share of national exports, the event was a good opportunity not only for the key manufacturers but has also been a platform for the small and medium enterprises (SME).

¹ **Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF):** JAAF was formed in 2002 with six separate industry associations to speak as one voice to the government and other sectors, civil groups and multi-national initiatives, in setting country policies and initiate JAAF programmes. The six associations are namely; (1) Fabric and Accessories Manufacturers' Association, (2) Free Trade Zone Manufacturers' Association, (3) National Apparel Exporters' Association—200 Garment Factory Program, (4) Sri Lanka Apparel Exporters' Association, (5) Sri Lanka Chamber of Garment Exporters (SME's), and (6) Sri Lanka Garment Buying Offices Association (Loker, 2010, p. 2).

After putting an end to the civil war Sri Lanka had for twenty-six years in May 2009, the government is looking towards new development strategies. In the '*Development Strategy Plan 2011-2015*' published by the EDB in 2010 (p.43), sixteen key action areas are included specific for the apparel industry to achieve the main goal of becoming "the most sought after destination for global sourcing" in the apparel sector (EDB, 2010, p.1). In developing these strategies EDB has taken the role as a promoter, a knowledge provider and a facilitator for the apparel sector. It has not taken the role as a policy advisor or a monitor which EDB has done for other sectors in the Strategy Plan 2011-2015.

EDB as a 'promoter' has promoted the 'Garment without Guilt' message. It has organised trade exhibitions and events within the country, carried out promotion/advertising campaigns to highlight the strengths of 'Sri Lanka Apparel', organized selected market promotional activities and encouraged the development of the fashion industry. EDB as a 'knowledge provider' aims to,

implement design/product development programmes and overseas design training for local designers, implement assistance schemes to upgrade production lines of SMEs for industry compliance, analyse and disseminate market intelligence, provide training and skills development programmes for workers on high-tech production systems and design development, conduct awareness programmes to promote the dignity of the profession and thus encourage workers and conduct specific training programmes for improving technical/managerial skills (EDB, 2010, p.43).

As a 'facilitator' EDB stated that they planned to,

set up a fashion/design centre to facilitate industry players in product and design development and brand management, negotiate with financial institutions to provide financing at concessionary terms for exports, coordinate with relevant agencies to expedite the EDI (electronic data interchange) system to rationalize import/export procedures, facilitate and provide utilities at rates through which companies can be competitive in terms of cost vis-a-vis regions (India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Pakistan), initiate discussions with relevant institutions to introduce the use of alternative energy sources and facilitate to encourage investment for backward integration (Set up textile mills and accessories manufacturing plants, etc.) (EDB, 2010, p.43-44).

Through these strategies, EDB was able to develop the trade event of Expo 2012, becoming one of the very successful events for the industry.

In August 2012, the Business Times (of Sri Lanka) reported a boost in the apparel industry. US\$ one billion was allocated to the JAAF to establish hundred factories mainly in North and East of the country. This region was the war-affected area. The aim of the investment is to serve a share of the export orders that are going to countries like Bangladesh. At the same time local investment is aimed at addressing the region's unemployment issue. Having plans to establish factories in comparatively underdeveloped areas in the country, the apparel industry is contributing to national development in all three economic, social and environmental areas.

By 2009, the share in the world market for Sri Lankan apparel was just 0.9%, its world ranking being twenty-three. According to the government strategies, Sri Lanka is aiming for a growth of 3.1% in the apparel sector by the end of 2015 (EDB, 2010, p.71). Yet, 60% of the export earnings are again spent on imports of raw materials for the apparel productions. In the budgetary announcement made for the year 2012, the government has eliminated duties for yarn imports, and proposed to remove customs

duty and value-added tax levied on importing textile machinery and other equipment, to extend long-term tax holidays for new investments and to reduce income tax on large investments in existing textile mills (Fibre2fashion, 2011). This is a positive incentive with the aim of attracting foreign investors especially to invest in and modernise the textile sector where the country can see a huge saving by dropping the amount spent on yarn and textile imports and thereby creating economic development.

Compared to the other South Asian countries that are in competition with textile and apparel exports, Sri Lanka is not the least expensive country for apparel productions. But its competitive advantage within the region is the socially and environmentally accountable production. After interviews with Sri Lankan industry professionals Suzanne Loker (2010, p.2) summarized the industry's strengths as reliability, innovativeness, good quality, ethical compliance, social and environmental initiatives and the design/product development capacity. Having gained these strengths, Sri Lanka is now trying to move-up the global apparel value chain and gain sustainable economy development for a long term industry.

3.2.1 Local Consumer Behaviour and Buying Patterns of Clothing

At present, the majority of the country's population are Sinhalese – approximately 74% of the total. The next largest ethnic group is the Tamils (approx. 18%). The rest comprise of the Moors (7%), Burghers and other minority groups. The population distribution by religion shows 70% Buddhist, 15% Hindu, 7.5% Muslim and another 7.5% Christian. Individually, each group has their own unique cultural and religious dress traditions which they have been practicing for many years. In fact, clothing has been a marker of Sri Lankans social identity, particularly caste distinctions throughout history. Strong clothing cultures based on the caste system changed under the influence of Portuguese (1505-1658), Dutch (1656-1796) and British (1815-1948) colonization. Even today, Indian dress plays a major role in Sri Lankan clothing behaviour since India is the strongest and closest neighbouring country.

Before the 1977 free-market economy, when ample new products were available in the market, people used to make their own clothing within their family unit. At least one member of a family knew how to sew. Sewing skills regarding making, altering and repairing of clothes were passed down through generations. Even lower class people had their own way of making clothes, or each family had their own channels for receiving clothing from more privileged acquaintances. (Pre 1960's families consisted of an average of seven to nine children, whereas after 1980's, it is almost three children as the maximum). In those days it was a shame for a family to buy a 'ready-made' garment from an outside dressmaker. Fabrics were available in the market, designs were taken from foreign catalogues and most of the European styles were copied extensively, especially within families living in more commercial cities. The home-sewing culture decreased with the increase of retail culture that occurred simultaneously with the initiation and development of the export apparel industry in 1980's.

Clothing has always been considered as a valuable product by the majority. Usually the clothing of local consumers was never thrown because of new trends. Fashion clothing may pass round within the members of the family, till it is found not suitable to wear. Clothes travel along many stages of use by a single consumer. The same outer garment may have been worn for different occasions before it is considered as waste. At the very last stage, they may be used for household cleaning purposes, or may be reworked as cushion covers, curtains, carpets, serviettes, pot-holders, etc. before finally thrown away. Or at a middle stage they were given to charity for less fortunate people. Therefore, clothing has always been used via a sustainable system where waste was very low.

After 1977 with the initiation of open-economy policies, clothing behaviour changed totally to become a statement of class, due to retail culture, and the unlimited, unrestricted access to clothes. While the export industry flourished, so too did imports which had fewer restrictions and many goods flooded into the country. As a result, the once strong local textiles manufacturing industry declined especially affecting the local hand-loom industry. Today, the hand-loom industry has become an industry that needs to be revived and identified as a traditional craft industry which should be preserved for the future. There are definitely more uses for local hand-looms than merely as a traditional craft industry. However, people have got used to a retail clothing culture instead of making their own clothes at home. Going to a seamstress was limited to custom-made garments, especially sari blouses and school uniforms. Conversely, tailors are still used by men to have custom-made suits made for special occasions in their life. Otherwise, most men have one suit in their wardrobe which is worn at weddings.

At present, the local clothing retail collectively does not have a focus. But a vast development has occurred during the last two decades. The chain retail outlet system came into existence during this period. Sri Lankan retailers, 'Odel', 'Fashion Bug' and 'NOLIMIT' play a key role island-wide following modern retail practices. Individual shops are all over the country and offer factory-surplus, imported garments or locally made garments. Within this retail culture, brand presence especially for women's wear is not an identified character. It is definitely the women's wear market that has a vast diversity and strong reputation anywhere in the world.

The Sri Lankan consumer has been influenced by Western lifestyles and hence now demands greater convenience. The majority of consumers patronising the modern trade outlets are upper income and upper middle income consumers (Perera, 2010).

Due to the awareness and westernisation, local consumer has become more brand conscious. Today, the Sri Lankan consumer tends to embrace any vibrant change in the retail market.

However, the large scale apparel manufacturers in the country govern the exports and the local retail controls the local clothing consumption pattern. Yet the biggest question is whether the retail environment is targeting the consumer demand?

3.2.2 Sri Lanka's Emerging Fashion Industry

Having a strong manufacturing system for clothing in Sri Lanka, the industry was known as either a textiles and apparel industry or garment industry within the country. But since the beginning of the new millennium, there are signs that a design oriented fashion industry may be emerging in the country. Firstly, there was a need to apply design and product development in the export oriented T&A manufacturing industry in order to move-up the apparel value-chain within the global fashion industry system. Secondly, to do this, tertiary level fashion design education for the local young generation was introduced. Thirdly, many fashion events, specifically fashion shows by companies, organisations and even by individuals have been introduced around the island.

Parallel to the global creative industry concepts, and the consideration of gaining much economic advantage via the absorption of creative practices in to the manufacturing systems, Sri Lankan T&A industry identified the lack of qualified fashion design excellence in the local skill market. As a result, tertiary level fashion design education was initiated in local government funded universities as well as via private institutions in 2000. (refer to section 3.4, for fashion design education in Sri Lanka). Qualified fashion designers with high academic performance were ultimately absorbed into the T&A manufacturing industry. Since then, within the industry system the design component has been incorporated. Subsequently, the 'fashion designer' profession started to appear in the local job market.

The presence of qualified fashion designers in the local skill market created the enthusiasm of incorporating design authority in the existing local T&A system. All those involved at each stage of production, distribution, sourcing and consumption started to be more conscious of their practice. Local retailers and manufacturers, realising the changing trend of the consumer demand for clothes with design excellence, started to employ fashion designers and change their image in the market.

Since the 1980's there have been several fashion events, but it was since 2003/2004 that many fashion events have come into existence. Throughout the year, organisations as well as individuals started to hold fashion shows and fashion design competitions around the country. Fashion shows were also attached to other events, for example, exhibitions, seminars, forums. Among many fashion events the commencement of the Colombo Fashion Week in 2003 was a significant change (refer to section 5.1). Getting an invitation to a fashion show is a privilege. Otherwise, usually all the tickets get sold out weeks before a show. It was not always what is on the catwalk that is of importance, but to be a part of the elegant audience that matters for most of the attendees.

Today, the retail industry of Sri Lanka is becoming more conscious of what they sell. The consumer is becoming more aware of fashion design practices and the excellence of the garments they buy. Therefore, today, the local T&A industry's concern is not only moving-up the global apparel value-chain, but also supplying the local market with fashion design excellence.

3.3 CULTURAL INDUSTRY PRACTICES IN SRI LANKA

Today, the T&A industry is a macro level system in Sri Lanka. The discussion in the above section was a clear introduction to this large-scale creative practice within the country. At this point, the cultural industry practices as the first tier creative practices in Sri Lanka cannot be ignored, when the research aims to discuss an emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

Crafts can be the spirit of a country. Crafts of Sri Lanka are the cultural industry source for its economy. Sri Lanka is rich with many crafts. The long practiced crafts have brought economic value to the country. Out of the many, several crafts have direct association with the fashion industry. Apart from bringing economic advantages, they can be the fashion or part of fashion. However, identifying of the essence of these cultural practices within the country is the key advantage for the emerging fashion industry of Sri Lanka. Therefore, this section will highlight the background of the Sri Lankan cultural industry practices, precisely the crafts of the nation, and discuss changing craft practices in the fashion industry system of the country.

Sri Lanka has a long heritage of cultural practices. In the past, the country had all the lifestyle needs produced within the country. Such production methods and practices carried-out for centuries decreased with the coming of foreign trade, invasions and colonisations in Sri Lankan history. However, the traditional production methods of some goods are still passed down through the generations to skill practicing descendants. These products of lifestyle needs are often handmade. Chick and Micklethwaite (2011, p.150) state that, such products are functional and culturally rooted. They are the crafts of a nation. The descendants belonging to one craft practicing community are usually a group of relatives. At present, there are many such craft communities scattered throughout Sri Lanka and they are identified and known by the craft they practice.

For many years, Sri Lanka gained a significant advantage via craft based production. Such crafts include 'dumbara' weaving, 'pethampil', handloom, batik, mat weaving, cane products, mask making, brass products, 'lac-work', coconut tree based products, rush & reed products, and wood carving, to name a few. Today, these crafts are practiced as village industries and help the local economy via employment and commerce. The practices that have a cultural significance and hold a long existence are commonly known as traditional crafts. What is identified today as traditional crafts must have been once an evolving skill practice. There must have been a time where the skilled manual workers have made innovations within their practices. Immense advancements within the practice must have for some traditional crafts to be identified at present as extraordinary creations. The practice was creative and the artisans; the skilled manual workers were the designers within that practice. At a certain point, the evolution of craft practices has weakened due to many social, economic and environmental reasons. Though the evolution diminished, many crafts are preserved till today with the knowledge passed down through the generations of the craft communities.

The craft communities take advantage of their practice in the local market via local consumer and tourism and export market via the government and NGO's initiatives. Even though they have very limited sales channels they have survived for many years. Over the years, each government has tried

to promote and develop the local craft industry. Today, the Ministry of Small Industries Development of Sri Lanka and the National Crafts Council (NCC) have initiated assistance schemes. For example, the NCC organises an annual craft award for the artisans of all the local craft categories and an annual exhibition to gain economic advantage. This motivates the craft communities to hold on to their traditional practices and pass them on to future generations.



Figure 3.3: 'Lac-work' making and products
 Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/kandyan_art_association

It is beneficial to consider the apparel and textile related craft practices that are most relevant for the fashion industry for further discussion. The main crafts are: handloom and 'dumbara' – the weaving based textiles, 'petampili', batik and tie-dye – the dyeing techniques based textiles, 'beeralu', 'tattling' and crochet – the lace with a knitting technique based products. Each as a village industry has its own small local markets, and has other channels of sales for tourists and some for exports.



Figure 3.4: A 'dumbara' weaver
 Source: <http://flextiles.wordpress.com>

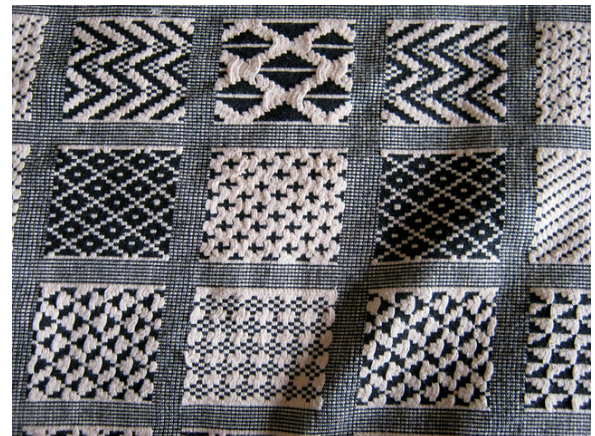


Figure 3.5: A sampler of many different 'dumbara' patterns
 Source: <http://flextiles.wordpress.com>



Figure 3.6: 'Beeralu' lace making
Source: www.thetripbag.com

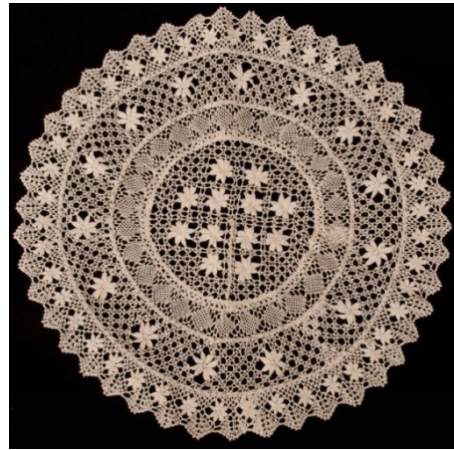


Figure 3.7: A jug-cover made of 'Beeralu' lace
Source: <http://www.cinnamonbee.com>



Figure 3.8: 'Tatting' lace making
Source: tinyinc.wordpress.com



Figure 3.9: 'Tatting' lace
Source: <http://morduededentelle.wordpress.com>



Figure 3.10: A handloom weaver
Source: www.comfyheaven.com



Figure 3.11: Hand-woven products



For many years, the village industry of handloom textiles has had a significant place in the country for social and economic advancements. Since the 1960's with the introduction of industrial textile mills in Sri Lanka, handloom production declined dramatically. But, with the initiation of the free-market economy policies in the late 1970's handlooms had the advantage of entering the export market. Identifying the opportunity few private investors entered the handloom industry and gained excellence in the export market as well as locally: 'Barefoot' (www.barefootceylon.com) – 1960's, 'Kandygs' (www.kandygs.lk) – 1971, 'Kelani Fabrics' (www.kelanifabrics.com) – 1980 and 'Selyn' (www.selyn.lk) – 1991 are the leading handloom market share holders in both local and export. Since its inception, the 'Barefoot' products especially of cotton and silk saris and sarongs created a trend via the upper-class society of the country. The 'Barefoot' clothing created a statement on the wearer, and the prestige of wearing or having a product still carries to the date. According to Theodor Adorno's definition of cultural industry, the 'barefoot' productions surely was an initiation of a 'Cultural Industry' practice within Sri Lanka. In section 1.3, it was highlighted:

“Culture industries are known to combine the old and familiar nature of products and services into a new quality. The products manufactured are custom-made by 'masses', possibly according to a plan and at the end they govern the consumption behaviour as well (Adorno, 1975)”

Another good example for a cultural industry practice transferred to the fashion industry is local batik productions. 'Buddhi Batik' (founded in 1970) is the today's leading batik designer-wear label in the country. Changing the usual use of cotton fabrics and same type of motifs, the 'Buddhi Batik' label took batik usage to a higher level in the fashion market. It introduced batik on silk with a significant change in design motifs. The label gained fame in the fashion market for vibrant batik silk saris with a high price. Today, the brand has even extended its collections to batik swim-wear with the support of local swim-wear manufacturers.



Figure 3.12: 'Buddhi Batik' collections

Source: www.facebook.com/buddhibatik/photos_stream

The above mentioned private companies and several other craft based product manufacturers saw the potential for economic advantage via craft practice. They were generally retailers. But canny marketing strategies and the use of design excellence in the long practiced craft made the retail

names become famous as fashion labels in Sri Lanka. Other than handlooms and batik products, other crafts as well are entering the fashion platform via emerging young fashion designers. Some students of fashion training institutes choose a local craft to do their final-year collection. Those who complete the project after working with a particular craft and a community for several months, end up having a strong bond with them. Extending the relationship, some designers have brought fashion labels to the market using the particular craft practice.

As an example, Anupama Nawalage who studied Fashion and Textile Design under the Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa did her graduation collection in 2008 using ‘dumbara’ weaving technique. ‘Dumbara’ hand-weaving technique was mainly used in producing household products, generally for cushion covers, tapestry and bags. They normally used thick yarns for this technique. Anupama’s final year research was to find a way to bring the technique to the fashion world. Today she has a label named ‘90F’, which mainly carries shawls, saris and bags made of ‘dumbara’ weavings. They are totally produced in the particular village famous for the technique. The village is named ‘Thalagune’ and it is very far from Colombo; the major commercial city of Sri Lanka. Yet her buyers are mainly from Colombo. After Anupama bringing this craft to the fashion platform via Sri Lanka Design Festival 2009, several other designers as well started following the trend. This young fashion designer’s attempt created a turning point for the ‘dumbara hand-weaving’ craft.



Figure 3.13: Anupama working with a weaver



Figure 3.14: Anupama's collection for SLDF 2009
Source: www.facebook.com/anupama.nawalage

Those who work with the craft communities have created their own policies to work with them. In Sri Lanka, other than the GWG concept, there are no other standards controlling bodies or any common government policy to those individual investors or buyers. Not working under established standards causes many issues for the craft communities. Generally, the craft communities do have their own selling channels for their usual products. For these channels the crafters do need to provide their products continuously. Therefore any interference of an outside buyer may cost their entire source of revenue. Short term but quick money tempts the villages to explore other markets. But the

irresponsible buyers who see only the economic advantage do not consider the ethical side of the practice. However, it is then the crafter suffers at the end of an external project by losing the usual selling channels. Therefore at present, there is a vacuum in the proper policies for investments, production, marketing and developments within the craft based cultural industry in the country.

3.4 FASHION DESIGN EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka initiated 'fashion design' education in 2000 via both government and private institutes. Each institute has its own curriculum approach of nurturing creativity of young individuals to become 'fashion designers'. Sri Lankan government has invested in educating fashion designers with the aim of gaining a return benefit of having a socio-economic advantage. The curriculum approach of one of the government-initiated programs will be highlighted in this section to understand the relationship, a locally qualified fashion designer can build within an emerging creative economy.

Today, the fashion industry is not only the production and consumption of fashion goods, but it also has developed to apprenticeships, and later to college courses up to postgraduate level (Arnold, 2009). Many courses are conducted world-wide to educate new designers, to educate and enhance skills of craftspeople and to give retail, promotional and advertising knowledge. According to Florida (2002, p.318),

Unlike traditional factors of production such as land or capital, creativity cannot be passed down from generation to generation. It has to be constantly fermented and reproduced in the firms, places and societies that use it.

Florida also claims that people invest a lot in gaining knowledge and skill of creative practices, knowing it is the "most effective and highest-return investment they can make" (Florida, 2002, p.319-320).

In contrast, Sri Lankan national universities provide 'free' undergraduate level education, enabling local students, the opportunity to gain world-class knowledge without having to pay for the gathered knowledge. Having the notion of economy development pattern on creative industry practices both government and private sector identified the need of a 'creative class' (Florida, 2002) and a significant gap in the education system in Sri Lanka. As a result, in 2000, both sectors initiated graduate level design education where fashion design education became one of the main streams within each system.

However, it was in 1983 the very first and basic level design education in the country was initiated through the National Design Centre (NDC). NDC was established under the National Crafts Council with the vision of making the local handicraft sector, a more vibrant and economically sustainable industry. The mission was to support the local handicrafts with design and development to keep up with local and export market trends. The key objectives were to, provide new creative solutions, better utilization of raw materials, improve the production methods, provide assistance in market research and conduct training programs for the skilled craft community with design, product development and

market promotion knowledge (Gamage, 2003). Today the NDC has developed to offer higher national diploma equivalent design education to school leavers. It targets the local handloom textile sector which is a main subordinate of the fashion industry and aims to take the handlooms to another economically sustainable level through design intervention.

'Fashion', having a more business oriented representation in the society, has a different focus in its educational practice compared to teaching and learning craft based design. Therefore, the design courses introduced through a national university in 2000 have different expectations. Generally, the main objective of the national university system is to develop courses of the highest quality appropriate to national needs and aspirations, in keeping with global trends. Therefore, each university aims to develop their own mechanisms of achieving excellence.

The University of Moratuwa (UOM), one of the seventeen national universities in Sri Lanka, with an established education for Engineering and Architecture studies, initiated integrated design education programs. Seeing the opportunity of providing design education, some private institutions were also formed around the same time. These private institutions included New York School of Visual Arts (today it is known as Academy of Design – AOD) and Lanka Institute of Fashion Technology (LIFT). Further discussion in this section will focus on UOM as an example of how higher education is reading the identified need of fostering creative talent.

In 2000, having two different objectives, UOM established two Design study programs; one within the Faculty of Engineering and other within the Faculty of Architecture. As the Sri Lankan national universities provide free undergraduate level education, the admission of students to the study courses is being done on the basis of an admission policy determined by the University Grants Commission (UGC) with the concurrence of the Government. Only full time students are admitted. Therefore, those who fulfil the main requirements of the UGC with local secondary level education can apply, but a very limited number of students are being selected to undertake the design degrees. This selection is done by the UGC together with each department after having an aptitude test to judge the applicants' critical thinking and creative ability to follow the course. The two design degrees under the two above mentioned faculties have focused on different objectives in educating a designer. The major identifiable feature is the **curriculum approaches** where one is focused to produce designers to suit the export apparel industry which enable the country to move-up the apparel value-chain and the other to produce a designer to enter the creative class to make a sustainable change in the production and retail in the local clothing industry. According to the current fashion, clothing and textile industry development pattern in the country, both the curricular can be considered as timely suitable approaches towards a creative economy.

The course with the curriculum approach to fill the creative positions in the export oriented apparel sector is carried under the Faculty of Engineering. It; the Bachelor of Fashion Design and Product Development (BFDPD), is a four-year honours degree, which nourishes under the Department of Textile and Clothing Technology beneath the said faculty. However, at the time of the BFDPD initiation it had support from the London College of Fashion (LCF) of UK and therefore the curriculum has been

developed according to the LCF prerequisite, together with the local apparel industry experts' requirement of creative people to fill the design and development positions in the export apparel industry in Sri Lanka.

In contrast, the curriculum of the course; **Bachelor of Design (BDes)**, within Faculty of Architecture is not a direct approach to the design and development positions in the export apparel industry. The overall curriculum approach shows a broader intention. BDes is a four year honours degree and it is conducted under the Department of Integrated Design within the Faculty of Architecture. BDes covers few major design streams as needed by the Sri Lankan context. These include Fashion and Textile (FT) Design, Graphics and Communication design, Furniture, Ceramics and Jewellery design. The BDes curriculum approaches to produce design initiators where they can involve in forming a creative industry in the country.

Both the BFDPD and BDes curriculums show a context relate approach and a strong reliance on the strengths the hosting departments had at the time of program initiation. The main strengths can be identified as the location of the course under each faculty and restoring all the benefits and strengths they have, the relationships the hosting departments had with the existing apparel industry, availability of suitable staff/studio space/technology within the department, confidence in finding appropriate teaching staff for specialised areas and the approved amount of government funding. However, the BFDPD curriculum follows the existing industry protocols where as BDes tries to stand on its own to make an almost non-existent local creative economy to boost within the country. For the purpose of this current research the BDes curriculum approach is highlighted as an example of how education system can contribute to creative industry development and support creative economy development.

With the BDes situated under the Faculty of Architecture, the teaching methods and curriculum approach sees close proximity to Architecture teaching and practice. Architecture is a profession that involves in shaping the built environment with special conglomeration, satisfying the social, cultural, functional and aesthetic needs of a society. The product is larger in scale, tangible and immovable. Similarly, Design is a professional field of problem solving methodology, satisfying function and aesthetic; it is also tangible but smaller in scale. Both fields possess common factors focusing specially on spatiality, creativity, function and aesthetics. In January 2012, the BDes course of study became a separate department, the Department of Integrated Design, the fourth department to be under the Faculty of Architecture. Prior to 2012 the course was an undergraduate study course in the Department of Architecture. Being a part of the Department of Architecture, the BDes course of study strengthened as an academic program for eleven years due to the common foundation they enjoyed with Architecture study course since its initiation. Therefore even today, it has been greatly influenced by Architecture.

The BDes curriculum and the teaching methods follow the common goal of producing a designer to cater to the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. The major fields of teaching; Fashion & Textiles, Jewellery, Ceramics, Furniture and Graphics and Communication are the currently developing creative industries in the country. In the current practices, the first year is a common design foundation year for

all the fields and in the later three years they share many common modules encouraging multidisciplinary teaching and learning environment to all the design undergraduates. The students are given a chance to understand the close knitted relationships each creative industry carries with one another. Understanding and having an exposure to the common creative ground in the country is a very positive factor for the emerging designers to face the common creative field challenges when they graduate.

The BDes teaching is not focusing only to upgrade the traditional craft industry, but the modern creative practices are taught having the traditional practices as a base for all the future trends and developments. Therefore, the department maintains close collaborations with local craft communities and their practices. The students are given live design projects in the craft villages where the students get to learn from the particular skill experts. In return students provide improved design solutions or design options for their current practices of production. Working with craft communities is a very challenging mission for the students for they have differences in values, beliefs and attitudes. Therefore, at the end of such projects students learn to respond to diverse people, situations and undertake action of such scenario together with user based and culture centric design approach. At the same time students have developed critical, analytical, speculative and reflective problem-solving skills in an integrated manner.

Compared to other fashion and textile design teaching courses, the BDes has a very limited number of technological resources within the department for the teaching and learning practices. Having minimum resources, the most intriguing fact about the curriculum is how it is designed to overcome the issue and take the maximum advantage of the available resources not only within the department but also taking the whole country as a context. Design projects are developed in such a way which enables to provide training in one or more of the skill or knowledge in creativity, art and crafts, technology, social needs and marketing aspects needed to cater to the current needs of the local creative industry. The projects are of local context based and therefore students are familiar with the project background. While learning to create innovative, functional or conceptual products of international standards, the outcome always tries to maintain the cultural identity of the given context. This cultural identity includes the unique behavioural patterns of people involved and the environmental factors of the context. Nature and Tradition are considered as the strongest inspirational sources for the designs. In contrast, the BFDPD curriculum focus on design projects that is international in outlook. Student gets to work with international brands having to understand and examine their identities, markets and trends and do the required design and developments according to a given international designer brand brief. This focus is a requirement in the T&A industry in Sri Lanka, where the industry deals with international brands.

The BDes students are given the freedom to select the topic for their final year Comprehensive Design Project (CDP), which can differ from arts or craft, based to conceptual idea projections. The background research for the CDP has to be presented as a dissertation which is another separate module and which encourages the students to think critically on the issues they have selected. Apart from learning and developing research and writing skills, writing a dissertation is seen as helpful in

identifying the purpose of the project, expressing originality and significance, setting appropriate goals, and in maintaining strong organization.



Figure 3.15: 'A Manifestation of Sinhalese Embroidery: through fabric manipulation' by Vidurangi Gunaratne (CDP 2010)



Figure 3.16: 'A Return to Sri Lankan Craft of 'Gok-Art' through fashion design' by Ruchira Dassanayake (CDP 2010)



Figure 3.17: 'Sustainable Use of Fabric Off-cuts' by Iresha Gunasekara (CDP 2010)



Figure 3.18: 'Minimum Waste: the module dress' by Dilum Silva (CDP 2010)

Though the country does not have fashion design houses or well established designers to provide training for the emerging designers, the existing apparel industry support the education institutions by providing industrial trainings to the students in their companies and manufacturing factories to gain experience and exposure to the real global fashion system as part of a credit gaining module in the curriculum. At the end of the four years students have a graduation exhibition to showcase their work of progress during the four years of study in the University, to the public. Holding an exhibition of student work is predominantly a marketing activity and gives the emerging designers the exposure of meeting the delegates of the industry, build an audience for their creative work and build relationships with those who are in similar creative practices. There is also a runway show but this is not a public event; instead it is undertaken as a part at the examination process.

Designers are the creators of new experiences. Designers should be active (Press & Cooper, 2003) and responsible participants of a society. According to Press and Cooper (2003, p.6) "to be a designer is a cultural option: designers create culture, create experience and meaning for people". They too mention three equally essential qualities that designers should possess; resourcefulness, innovativeness and suppleness.

Designers are a combination of craft maker, cultural intermediary and opportunistic entrepreneur... They are skilled researchers, life-long learners, who understand that design – as a very process of change itself – must be informed by changing knowledge (Press & Cooper, 2003, p.7).

It is a very positive aspect to see when the Sri Lankan fashion design courses aim to create a '**fashion designer**' who possesses these qualities.

In general, the education systems anywhere in the world and curriculum approaches need to be context related where the economy, technology, culture and environment are interlinked. Therefore, the education programs within each country need to be designed and updated in accordance to the changing aspects of the country's needs. For Sri Lanka a developing economy aiming to share towards a creative economy, it can be considered that the initiation of design courses of BFDPD and

BDes by the government is contributing to the country with graduates of fashion and textile design and development knowledge, skills and practice where the country can gain much social benefits and economic advantage within the local and international fashion system.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter Three has discussed how Sri Lanka being a developing economy was initially exposed to textiles and apparel industry practices with the country's new policy reforms in the 1970's. To understand the T&A industry's place within the country's economy, an overview of Sri Lankan economic system was discussed in an earlier section.

The country started its T&A industry practices in the 1980's from the manufacturing end. It has started from the very basic manufacturing level of 'CMT' of the apparel value-chain and by today, it has developed its practices to the 'ODM' level. The industry has looked at the possibilities of applying creative practices to gain sustainable economic advantage. With this notion, during the past decade, a vast change has occurred in Sri Lanka's T&A industry. The most visible development has been the incorporation of fashion design and development excellence into the manufacturing system.

The notion of applying fashion design excellence in the T&A manufacturing industry has had a massive impact on the country's job market. In relation to this, the major changes that occurred in the country were the introduction of fashion design education, induction of the 'fashion designer' as a profession in the local job market, initiation of many fashion events throughout the country and ultimate changes in the retail behaviour and consumer buying pattern of clothing. As a result to all these changes Sri Lanka is seeing an emerging 'fashion' industry.

Sri Lanka, as a country, which has a rich cultural industry practice, cannot neglect it when trying to embrace a creative economy. Therefore, this chapter as well introduced the cultural industry practices that have a close association with textiles and apparel and discussed how they have mingled with contemporary fashion design practices in bringing an economic advantage.

The need for skilled fashion designers was identified as essential for the country to create a sustainable economic development via the T&A industry practices. It was highlighted in the chapter how fashion designers are trained in Sri Lanka to be able to face the challenges of the emerging national creative economy. Key aspects of a fashion design curriculum approach within the tertiary design education system in Sri Lanka were highlighted to understand the capabilities of a locally qualified fashion designer. It was identified that the students are trained especially to face the local fashion industry challenges. Their creativity is nurtured having a careful consideration on ethical practice and cultural values when they are to put fashion design excellence in to practice.

PART TWO: DATA ANALYSIS

The aim of the research is to answer the key questions: what is the role of the fashion designer in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka?, how can Sri Lanka achieve a sustainable economic development via fashion design? and is Sri Lanka's fashion design education meeting the needs of graduates as they transition into the T&A industry? The answers rest upon the task of the Sri Lankan fashion design education, the readiness of the fashion designer qualifies via its training, the development goals of the current T&A industry and the local collaborative work related to fashion design excellence. The three chapters in 'Part One' gave the background understanding to these areas.

In order to address the key questions, data was gathered through two methods: a questionnaire and three case studies. Therefore, Chapter 4 examines the data analysis of the questionnaire, and Chapter 5 sets out in detail the case studies.

The questionnaire was aimed at fifty individuals who trained and qualified in fashion/textile design from a local institution, to understand the relevance of the Sri Lankan fashion design education and the qualified designers' readiness for transition to the industry. This is the first time any such data has been collected about fashion design graduates in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the data analysis will help to understand the locally qualified fashion designers' past experience, current standing and future direction.

One case study out of the three is on the most prominent fashion event in Sri Lanka; the Colombo Fashion Week. It is brought in to discuss the potential exclusive fashion platform the event aims to create for local designers to showcase their talents as part of the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. Other two case studies examine two successful Sri Lankan fashion designers. These further illustrate the findings of the questionnaire and explore each designer's experiences in seeking to find their place in the global fashion arena. The case studies collectively highlight the potential of sustainable fashion industry practices within the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

4. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is an attempt to examine how young fashion design (FD) talents in Sri Lanka are being shaped under the local higher education system to face the challenges and, how they are being given an opportunity to participate in the creative economy to enhance a sustainable local fashion industry for the country. The questionnaire (Appendix I) was prepared using Qualtrics web-based survey software to be answered online. It was carried out as an anonymous survey where the participants were given the freedom not to answer any question as they desired. Both open-ended and close-ended questions were included. However, online questionnaires are not very popular in Sri Lanka. Yet, the participants belong to the group those who are very familiar with global networking and have individual access to the Internet.

4.1 DATA COLLECTION THROUGH THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4.1.1 Identification of the sample

Since the introduction of FD tertiary education in 2000, not more than 700 have qualified from all the fashion institutions in Sri Lanka up to 2011. Knowing that a creative class for fashion has arisen in the country, the research intended to find their readiness for transition to the creative industry.

The intention of preparing a questionnaire to be given to locally qualified fashion designers was to understand how the target group has incorporated the creative practice; what they learnt, into their lifestyles.

At the beginning a sample of fifty participants from those who qualified from three selected FD courses were sought to take part in answering the questionnaire. The three initiatives are namely, (i) Fashion and Textile Design (BDes) – Department of Integrated Design, University of Moratuwa (UoM), (ii) Fashion Design and Product Development (BFDPD) – Department of Textiles and Clothing Technology, UoM and (iii) Fashion Design – Academy of Design. At the time of the sample identification stage, these three fashion education providers were selected deliberately as sub-groups because they were identified as the frontiers in creative education in the island (refer to 3.1). However, it was identified that this specific target group is approximately 500 out of the total of 700 mentioned above. The variables in the selected category are the age from 20 to 34 years and the year of preliminary fashion education completion from 2002 to 2011.

4.1.2 Preparation and Distribution of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was prepared under six sections; (i) personal details, (ii) educational experience, (iii) personal goals, (iv) work experience / personal achievements, (v) government collaborations and (vi) fashion industry awareness. Other than the personal details section, other five carry one open-ended question each to let them express their views at will. Yet, they were given the option not to answer any question that they did not wish to. The main focus was to do a qualitative analysis at this

exploratory research. When analysing data these sections were considered separately to get a more in-depth sense of their ideas.

To distribute the questionnaire, a snowball sampling² technique was used. Primarily, social-media was used to send the online questionnaire. It was only open for three months. Within the time duration the questionnaire had to reach more than fifty to be able to collect a minimum of fifty results. Through the channels the questionnaire reached approximately eighty and at the end of the given time period it was completed by fifty-six participants. Out of that there were two incomplete answers while a total of fifty-four carries useful data for the analysis.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

As the participants are from three different courses and from different batches there can be contradictory views about their experiences. Without projecting any bias towards the course they have studied, the analysis is particularly done in this section to discuss the common opinions of the majority.

Out of the six sections that was used to prepare the questionnaire (refer to section 4.2.1), four sections were considered to analyse data to understand the readiness of the fashion designer for transition to the industry and the relevance of the fashion design education in training a designer for the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. These four sections are: (i) educational experience, (ii) work experience, (iii) personal goals and achievements and (iv) fashion industry identification.

4.2.1 Educational Experience

In discussing the educational experience, main analysis is done based on the satisfaction level each claimed on the question being asked in the questionnaire, which is; '**how satisfied are you with your fashion design education?**' (Appendix I – Question #14). Apart from one participant saying 'very dissatisfied' with the local FD education received, with no particular reason all the others expressed views from 'neutral' to 'very satisfied'.

The reasoned out comments for saying **VERY SATISFIED** can be categorised mainly under four areas. They being due to;

- (a) the quality of the education,
- (b) the facilities,
- (c) how the education helped at personal achievements, and
- (d) personal desires

² *Snowball sampling: In this method, participants or informants with whom contact has already been made use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study. Snowball sampling is often used to find and recruit "hidden populations," that is, groups not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies. (Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide)*

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Very Dissatisfied	1	2%
2	Dissatisfied	0	0%
3	Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0%
4	Neutral	5	9%
5	Somewhat Satisfied	8	15%
6	Satisfied	24	44%
7	Very Satisfied	16	30%
	Total	54	100%

Table 4.1: Questionnaire responses to the question: "How satisfied are you with your fashion design education?"

The positive comments that highlighted the quality of the education are for having completed a study program, which 'met with international standards', where it was very much focused towards local industry and which shaped them to be able to face 'the fashion business world' challenges. Following international standards has been a privilege for another to continue higher studies overseas. Having 'enough resources', simple teaching methods and training under a 'qualified local and international' teaching staff are positive comments that satisfaction with good facilities. FD teaching resources are very limited in the country. Therefore it is very clear the respondent have carefully used the term 'enough resources' at the explanation.

The next most noticeable factor is that majority of the comments are on how much has the education had guided them at their personal achievements and desires. As individual achievements, the most common answer given is that they have been able to get a good job in the local export oriented textiles and apparel industry because they have qualified in FD. Among other reasons, the highlighted explanation that placed the education in higher position is,

the things and the subject matters I have learnt always helped me to polish my knowledge and sharpen my skills. It helped me to climb the ladder to my dream job.

Similar but at the same instance a simple justification for saying 'very satisfied' about the education received from a participant is, "now it is my occupation and also my main income".

Apart from commenting about the quality of the education, the facilities they had and how the education helped at personal achievements, many interesting comments came from the participants regarding personal desires when answering this question. One has mentioned, "I really enjoy my life for what I learnt". As if it is the reason another says, "As a fashion design student I never felt bored about studies". Another very positive comment is,

Fashion design was my passion. I define everything as fashion. Fashion... its limit-less. No barriers. And the way I learnt fashion is not just theory. I got an exposure to do what I love to do through my education.

They are happy for being able to apply what they have learnt, and as well for being able to work head-to-head with other designers of world famous brands. Apart from all this one intriguing answer was mentioning that he/she is thankful to the local free education system where he/she got the chance to become a fashion designer. All these responses, which are all positive aspects, show how much they enjoy studying a creative field, which is specifically fashion within the local context.

Out of the total number, majority of the questionnaire participants have claimed that they are **SATISFIED** with the fashion education they received in Sri Lanka (refer to table 4.1). Apart from reasoning out their preference on the (a) quality of the education, (b) facilities, (c) personal achievements and (d) following individual desires, there are explanations given,

(e) as suggestions, and

(f) negative aspects

for their answer. The positive aspects about the quality and the facilities are based on gaining a 'very competitive' knowledge which is enough to start on own or to work for a company, having a practical education throughout and having a very supportive staff to help understand the vision while develop the creativity. This group of participants as well carry similar views as those mentioned above on achieving personal goals and succeeding on individual desires.

The next important comment, which carries as a suggestion, is that, "if the fashion market was more developed (in Sri Lanka) it would have been so much easier to understand cycles of the fashion world". There is always a starting point for everything in this world. It is clear by this comment that this person specifically a fashion designer who thinks that there should be a 'fashion industry' in Sri Lanka but at the same time has not realised that the starting point could be initiated through him/her.

There are few negative aspects that were in about the fashion training, and they can be useful when revising the curricula in due course. The respondents mentioned not having enough resources such as, material, equipment, technical knowledge and teachers. And few other comments collectively conveys that, learning about fashion as a general design field has not covered very important aspects that specifically relates to fashion. And these knowledge gaps were identified only after starting working in the industry. Because fashion is a globalized subject, on the basis of considerable working experience, one respondent claimed that the education was not sufficient to achieve success internationally. And another says, the possibility of becoming a 'real fashion designer is rare'. Use of the word 'real' denotes he/she is comparing the work they have to do within Sri Lanka with the renowned fashion designer's practices of a fashion city in the Western world.

The next set of participants who said **SOMEWHAT SATISFIED** for the fashion education they had were a much smaller percentage of the total (refer to table 4.1). All the explanations given for saying 'somewhat satisfied' are negative comments. The common issue mentioned is that, it was only when they started working in the industry they have realised they do not have a good knowledge about some areas of FD. According to the research findings, this issue is justifiable. These FD courses are new to the education system in the country. Therefore teaching resources are limited; most of all, the teaching staff. If any study program does not find any subject experts locally or do not have foreign university collaborations, they are sure to have faced this situation. But in the present day, these types of replies should not be expected by any fashion education provider in the country as they are now more than a decade old in the system. Within the negative comments, one says "even though it was not the perfect syllabus, the design education that I had, shaped me to be what I am today".

Those participants, who answered **NEUTRAL**, hold the same explanation on lack of resources. One descriptive answer was, “I was in the first batch of the (design) course. There was no fashion tutors to guide us and I mostly learnt Fashion from books.” A similar answer was given by another who says that he/she is ‘somewhat satisfied’ with the education.

When we joined the fashion design – course – it was really new to the faculty..., with lack of resources (lecturers etc.) for us to learn. Mostly we were – guided through – experimental education – which – was so exciting for us (being all new to us). – But when we entered the industry, we realised that we have missed many things –

All the above differing clarifications came from the same set of participants who have selected to study FD mainly because they have had a vision to become ‘a Fashion Designer’. (Appendix I – Question #13). And those who have identified their personal talents, which can be fused in to a creative path, also have selected FD to build their future. It is as well interesting to see the wording that have been used to describe fashion particularly, “love for fashion”, “interest ...”, “like ...” and “passion for fashion”.

At the time of the final year major design project, 60% of the questionnaire respondents have considered an international target group in designing the collection. This is particularly what is needed by the local export oriented apparel industry. Graduates need to understand the international brand personalities, which is essential if they are to be recruited by such a company. The majority of the students coming from middle-income families do not have different lifestyle experiences. Seeing things from media is a total different factor from observing and experiencing first hand any object, occasion or context. Therefore these students find it very challenging to learn visual communication of an unseen, unfamiliar set up.

4.2.1.1 Analysis on the Subject/Skill Knowledge

Questionnaire participants were provided with a table of a list of subjects and skills (Question #11), for them to select to what extent they learnt them as students and to what extent they are using the knowledge of the specific area as fashion designers in the industry. Thirty-nine subjects were included as identified at the time of the data gathering. They were the subject areas that can be considered as common to fashion curricula in Sri Lanka at the time the questionnaire was administered. The thirty-nine subjects were recognized under seven main categories. They were; (1) Design, (2) Communication, (3) Materials and Production, (4) Society and Social Context, (5) Digital Technology, (6) Manual Techniques and (7) Professional Practices. (refer to Table 4.2)

The first section of the table was given as a five level Likert scale for them to select to what level they learnt the subject area given (refer to Appendix 1, pg.120). These levels were; (i) didn't learn, (ii) just an introduction to the subject, (iii) learnt the basics, (iv) learnt to a medium level and (v) learnt to an advanced level. Then the second section asked again to select to what extent they used the given subject matter when they are working in the industry. It is a four level Likert scale consisting of; (i) not important, (ii) moderately important, (iii) very important and (iv) do not know to comment. The answers

were considered for analysis only if more than 50% of the participants selected the same answer in the Likert scale.

	Category	Subject/Skill
1	Design	Design process
		Collection planning
2	Communication	Figure drawing
		Colour studies
		Fashion Illustration
		Fashion theory
		Mood-boarding
		Spec drawing
3	Materials and Production	Fibre types
		Fabric construction
		Fabric types
		Fashion Merchandising
		Garment construction
4	Society and Social Context	Sri Lankan Arts/Crafts
		20th century Design
		History of clothing (Sri Lanka)
		History of clothing (world)
5	Digital Technology	Machine Knitting
		Weaving – Machine-loom
		Machine Embroidery
		Photoshop
		Illustrator
		Lectra (CAD)
		Gerber (CAD)
6	Manual Techniques	Pattern Making
		Sewing techniques
		Tie-dye technique
		Batik technique
		Block Printing technique
		Screen Printing technique
		Hand Embroidery
		Patchwork / Appliqué
		Weaving – Hand-loom
		Hand knitting
7	Professional Practices	Marketing
		Business Management
		Professional Law
		Industry work placements
		Industry policies & procedures

Table 4.2: Questionnaire #11, Subject/skill categorisation

In any design education, the 'design process' can be considered as a prime area of teaching the design practice. Giving the highest mean value, the questionnaire participants claim they have learnt the design process to an advanced level and it is the only subject matter more than 75% claim to be

so. When it comes to industry practice more than 75% claimed that apart from the design process, it is very important to have the knowledge in collection planning, colour studies, mood-boarding, spec-drawing skill, fabric types, garment construction, Photoshop, Illustrator, pattern making, sewing techniques and marketing. Therefore, these areas can be considered as the firsthand important knowledge for a new entrant to the fashion industry with a designing qualification (refer to table 4.3). A lesser group of members but still more than 50%, identifies fashion illustration, fashion theory, fibre types, fabric construction, fashion merchandising, business management and industry work practices are very important knowledge necessary to work in the field of fashion. Each answer holder's industry working experience varies enormously. But, as a collective group of fashion educated people and those who have some experience in the industry, these can be considered as fair answers. However, none says collection planning, fabric types, Photoshop, Illustrator, pattern making, sewing technology, marketing and business management are not important or do not comment. Therefore, these can be considered as the prime areas of knowledge needed in the fashion industry.

Prime areas of knowledge needed in the fashion industry	Firsthand important knowledge needed to enter the fashion industry	Next important knowledge to be able to work in the field of fashion
Collection Planning Fabric Types Photoshop Illustrator Pattern Making Sewing Technology Marketing Business Management	Collection Planning Colour Studies Mood-Boarding Spec-Drawing Skill Fabric Types Garment Construction Photoshop Illustrator Pattern Making Sewing Techniques Marketing	Fashion Illustration Fashion Theory Fibre Types Fabric Construction Fashion Merchandising Business Management Industry Work Practices

Table 4.3: Subject/skill categorisation according to the importance identified by the questionnaire participants when entering and working in the fashion industry

The majority's selections as the moderately important areas in the fashion industry practice are the knowledge in 20th century design, history of Sri Lankan clothing and the skills in both machine and hand knitting and embroidery, batik/block printing/screen printing/patchwork/appliqué techniques and hand-loom weaving. There are several subjects (figure drawing, Sri Lankan arts/crafts, history of world clothing, machine-loom weaving, Lectra, Gerber, tie-dye technique, professional law and industry policies and procedures) that have not been commented on in this analysis as the selected answer is not the majority's choice. However, a majority does not say that any subject is not important or either they do not know to comment.

Altogether there are many subjects that the mass has learned above the medium level and it is a good sign of the education they received. However, fashion merchandising, machine knitting and embroidery, Lectra and Gerber of CAD, patchwork and appliqué, business management, professional law, industry work practice, policies and procedures have not been popular areas of teaching. Yet, out of these subjects fashion merchandising, business management, and industry work practice have been identified as very important areas of knowledge when they are working in the industry (refer to table 4.3). Therefore, in the future much consideration should be placed on teaching or giving exposure to these areas.

4.2.2 Work Experience

Work experiences differ immensely with the year of completion of the FD education. As was expected, the questionnaire respondents are from the years 2004 to 2011. Each respondent has worked for a different length of time since graduation up to the day of answering the questionnaire. Different categories of answers show how far they have come in a career which they must have thought about greatly as a FD student. All those who are employed at present are generally satisfied with their careers. In analysing the work experience the data is considered in three sub categories based on the year of their FD training completion. They are; (1) 2004 – 2005, (2) 2006 – 2008 and (3) 2009 – 2011 (refer to table 4.4).

Year of FD training completion	Number of respondents	%	Age group
2004 – 2005	11	20%	32 – 34 years
2006 – 2008	19	35%	27 – 31 years
2009 – 2011	24	45%	22 – 27 years

Table 4.4: The year of FD training completion and the age group, the Questionnaire participants' belong to

Those who finished FD studies in **2004 – 2005** have passed many milestones in their career life than the rest. Starting the careers from junior positions, some have even come to manager positions having five to seven years of working experience up the ladder. Though some have held fashion merchandiser and design developer positions as well, at present all the respondents are employed in either, designing or management duties or involved in FD education. These positions are either fashion related or connected with self-employment. Those who mentioned as 'self-employed' are calling themselves freelance designers or entrepreneurs. This identification of being entrepreneurs is a very positive aspect in the research.

One respondent from all the questionnaire respondents who was also from this '2004-2005' category has been involved in fashion journalism as well. It is a fascinating trend to realise that a person with much FD knowledge, can consider a practice in journalism. This is a neglected area in Sri Lanka.

Fashion was never brought to life in written format with a proper fashion vocabulary. Without having the adequate fashion knowledge some journalists have tried to talk about fashion in an amateurish way that has become very annoying even to the present day.

The respondents' justifications on the question of how satisfied they are with their present employment suggest that they have secured exciting creative careers. One directly says, "I am very happy with my job". Another says, he created the dream job, which did not exist, and now he sees himself as an entrepreneur. Others say, they enjoy for having a chance to practice design and development, being able to work for a reputable company and to work for an international brand is exciting. They do not particularly mention the income, which other two categories have done.

However, many of the 2004-2005 graduates are married and seem satisfied with the careers as it is because of personal life commitments. Marriage is a social norm in Sri Lanka where it is considered in the present day at least to get married before the age of thirty. Therefore changing careers or finding a different path even though it directs towards achieving their goals (refer to section 4.2.3) they have had as students, seems an idle mission in their lives.

The next group consists of participants who graduated between **2006 – 2008**. Those that fall in to this category have also worked in creative careers starting from junior designer positions to design manager positions at present. They have followed exactly the same FD related careers as the previous category did. However, being able to solve problems and showing leadership qualities, they have become design managers in the buyer accounts in the export oriented apparel companies within a much shorter period of time than the previous group. Apart from one who is unemployed, all the other respondents are involved in fashion related employment where two entrepreneurs stand in the crowd as well at present.

After studying a FD course everyone wishes to practice only design anywhere in the world. But people change careers according to the context all the time. A similar description is given by one participant to the question how satisfied are they with their present employment;

I always wanted to work as a fashion designer. But I still couldn't and am now working as a development merchandiser. However, as it is a fashion related job, I am somewhat satisfied about it.

But whenever they get the chance to practice what they have been learning for several years they talk about it with much satisfaction. Though they learnt many other fashion industry related subjects or practiced skills within their tertiary education, they all talk mainly about wanting to do only 'designing'. A different view is given by another who has changed her local context focus job to an export oriented job;

.... I first started (working) as a fashion designer in the local industry, but thinking of going forward with the export market ... to learn more on international designing, trade and trends, – I joined the export oriented apparel industry as a product developer

The FD graduates are proud when they know their design-involved products are bought by overseas customers. Therefore, the majority enjoy working in the export apparel industry. It is not only the

product developments which they have to do, but also some companies have moved forward with design departments where FD graduates are assigned to do designing using their knowledge and talents. Another mentioned, "They (the company) give good opportunities for hard work". These opportunities usually have relationships with promotions and salary increases. Having mentioned that, the graduates are satisfied with the salaries they were given as well. In contrast, an entrepreneur who is also very satisfied with what she does say, "I am engaged in what I truly enjoy (doing). I have the authority to decide on the entire designing and manufacturing of my garments". This explanation shows that there are some who want to do things on their own in spite of what they earn.

The third sub group of questionnaire participants of **2009 – 2011** graduates are the most recent to have entered the industry. Although they have only graduated recently few claim to have never worked in fashion related industry yet. Among them one has precisely stated that she changed the field of FD in search of self-satisfaction and has moved to become an 'Art Psychotherapist'. She claims,

On my personal reasons I found, being an artist or a fashion designer could not gain me the self-satisfaction I appreciated mostly. So I shifted my career to another art related field where I can serve mankind in a different level which I can feel more satisfied about.

Other respondents are involved in fashion related design, development and merchandising jobs where they are still young in the field to get managerial positions. No respondent mentioned fashion journalism or fashion photography. But in recent times, a huge trend is seen in the country for photography, which will be another potential creative path for the FD graduates to consider of practicing in future.

Having a considerable number of graduates employed in the industry, the 2009-2011 cohort may perhaps have been uncertain of securing a job in the field of FD. As such they would have been more than satisfied at the slightest chance of employment in the fashion field. Therefore most of the explanations for their employment satisfaction are about being able to get any job in relation to FD. A very simple explanation given by one respondent; "Now I am a fashion designer" shows how enthusiastic it is for him/her to be recognised as a 'fashion designer'. Apart from this type of comments, it is significant to see few commenting on having a satisfactory income, which other previous two categories have not paid much attention to.

4.2.3 Personal Goals and Achievements

Education always directs people towards achieving goals. As graduates of an emerging creative economy, the questionnaire participants too must have had many goals as students. The questionnaire asked respondents to select one of three answers or select 'other' to give their own explanation as to their goal as a FD student. The choices were; i) create my own fashion label in Sri Lanka, ii) work for a famous international fashion brand and iii) work for the export oriented garment industry in Sri Lanka.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Create my own label in Sri Lanka	25	46%
2	Work for a famous international fashion brand	11	20%
3	Work for the export oriented garment industry in Sri Lanka	6	11%
4	Other	12	22%
	Total	54	100%

Table 4.5: Responses on the question, "What was your goal as a fashion design student?"

Majority selected the first choice and those who have given a fourth choice have also mentioned **'creating their own label in Sri Lanka'** with an additional idea, such as wanting to create their own label and extend it to the international level, create their own label while working in the export industry and create their own label after getting some experience working in the industry. Those who have equalled or exceeded the expectations in achieving this goal have somehow managed to start a clothing-line under a self-owned label. But they are still at the very beginner level. Financial instability is a challenge they face. Those who have not met with the expectations do not talk about it as a failure yet. But they comment; "still planning to start my own business", "still gathering knowledge to achieve the goal", "still didn't get the required experience to achieve the goal" and "still work in process".

Another response embellishes these comments;

As a fashion design student I was dreaming to work with an internationally famous fashion brand to see and feel how a fashion designer really describes (him or herself). And (then) go for the goal of (creating) my own label. Learnt many things at implant training and when working in the industry. Working for the export industry provided me the technical and managerial skills that will be needed when creating my own label. Therefore now I have stepped a little forward with much knowledge and skill on my own brand creation.

All these explanations show that they are also still holding to their main goal, even though they know they have many challenges in the path. However, it is very interesting to find out that there is a good number of fashion graduates scattered all over with common expectations and beliefs, with a need to place their stamp in the local industry for fashion.

The next most selected personal goal they had, as a FD student is to **'work for a famous international fashion brand'**. More than half of those who selected this claim they equalled their expectations. Some of them are satisfied by being able to work in the export apparel industry where they get the chance to work in the buyer accounts of reputed international brands. A typical justification is; "I am working for the Victoria-Secret – USA brand as a regional design consultant".

Another who is 'short of expectations' holds an opposing comment;

though we get to work for international fashion brands (in the export apparel industry) it's not up to the same level (of satisfaction) as working directly to those brands.

Another respondent has pointed out a very common issue in the job market. It is, requiring of industry experience to get a job while you need somebody to offer a job at the first place to gain experience. The related response was about the difficulty of finding an employment with a famous fashion brand where they require at least three years of industry experience. And to gain experience the most

possible place is to work in the Sri Lankan apparel industry. However a recently graduated person finds it difficult to get a job even in the local industry.

‘Working for the export-oriented garment industry in Sri Lanka’ has not been a key goal of the majority. And even those few who selected it are satisfied at being able to get employment in such a company. This has been the choice of the minority as a goal, but when analysing the justifications it is clear that this is what the majority is involved in at present. And as analysed in the previous section of 4.2.2, they are basically satisfied with what they had to do by getting employed in the local export-oriented apparel industry.

4.2.4 Fashion Industry Identification

The primary focus of the research is based on the future fashion industry of Sri Lanka. In this setup when analysing the FD graduates’ transition to the industry, it is vital to understand their views about the current and future aspects of the fashion industry in the country. Fashion is not a ‘basic-need’ for any country. But it can be a ‘social-need’. On top of every aspect, at present the global fashion industry is a multi-billion dollar business. In the global context, Sri Lanka is only one jigsaw piece in this business as a quality apparel manufacturer.

Therefore, the question ‘how do you see the present fashion industry in Sri Lanka?’ was posed to the participants, who belong to the creative class in the country, specifically the group of ‘Fashion designers’. The answer options were, ‘as a business’, ‘as an art or craft’, ‘as a social need’ and another option was placed for open explanations. This was a question, which expected diverse explanations. However, only three of the total respondents have given a different explanation. One comments, “It’s a mess”. Another sees it as “an art and craft oriented business”, while the third sees, “fashion as a small business opportunity, but apparel as a social and economic need”. Other than these three answers 67% of the participants sees fashion industry in Sri Lanka as a business opportunity (refer to table 4.6). Some identified it as a social need while a very few selected it as an art or craft. The participants were not asked a follow-up question to justify the selected answer. Since this questionnaire was initial research conducted in the selected context, this question was included to understand the local fashion designers’ perspective about the current situation in the country. However, this question and answers could direct to further research studies.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	As a business	36	67%
2	As an art or craft	4	7%
3	As a social need	11	20%
4	Other	3	6%
	Total	54	100%

Table 4.6: Responses on the question, “According to your understanding how do you see the present fashion industry in Sri Lanka?”

The majority of the participants who view the fashion industry in Sri Lanka as a business also see that fashion has a better future than what the country is experiencing today. If the participants, the fashion designers, were given an opportunity to create their own clothing line the majority's selection was to do 'better fashion for a moderate price'. A slightly lesser number selected 'branded clothing for a higher price' while very few chose 'branded high fashion for a very high price' (refer to table 4.7). Because Sri Lanka is a developing country, 'price' is a major deciding factor for consumer buying patterns. Therefore the majority's selection is the most realistic within that context. Then again 'better fashion' means there has to be a design involvement. There is a niche market for branded clothing as well, if the brand personality carries a value for the marked price.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Basic and commodity apparel for low price	1	2%
2	Better fashion for moderate price	26	48%
3	Branded clothing for a higher price	17	31%
4	Branded high fashion for a very high price	6	11%
5	Other	4	7%
	Total	54	100%

Table 4.7: Responses on the question, "Considering the present local consumer demands and if you were given the opportunity to have your own clothing line, what would be your target group?"

More than 80% of the respondents see fashion as a promising field in the future Sri Lanka. This is a very positive answer and the justifications provide evidence for the development of a plausible fashion industry in the country. The questionnaire respondents have already experienced the changes and identified several norms of the current industry that they believe are providing the basis for building a better future for fashion within the country. They are:

- i) having a developing fashion industry in the country
- ii) lot of new young designers emerging with a knowledge in fashion
- iii) having many young designers now in the industry who are trying to provide better fashion but for a common target group therefore creating a competition among them
- iv) by stepping in to the field of fashion, there exist many career paths, such as creative, technical and business

In addition another claims, "there are potential designers who can understand the spirit of the country and can act accordingly. They will be able to do significant changes in the industry". These ideas all together are the existing strengths in the industry that can be advantageous for a better fashion industry for the country.

Apart from that, most of the respondents have identified the demand in the market for fashion goods and the changing trends of buying patterns. The main trends in the current local market identified by the respondents are:

- i) people becoming more fashion conscious every day and fashion becoming a very basic statement of individuals
- ii) growing demand for unique designer wear and branded clothing
- iii) people being more cautious of design and quality rather than just price
- iv) people wanting to follow latest international trends and want to see a diversity in the market
- v) developing of different lifestyles around the fashion industry in the country

Apart from these, another very descriptive comment provides a comprehensive explanation;

People in Sri Lanka are now much interested in fashion and branded clothing. People see fashion as an icon in their lives. That view is gradually developing. (Therefore) there would be a better future for (those who are involved) in the field (of Fashion). However, it is only happening in the major cities of the country, such as Colombo and Kandy. The reason behind this is only the people of upper middle and high (income) are interested in fashion, since they love it and can afford it.

These give a clear identification that there are opportunities for the development of the industry if appropriate strategies and policy settings are adopted.

However, one claims,

I do not think we have a fashion industry in Sri Lanka yet. It's still an apparel industry which has the monopoly among few manufacturers. People are not yet aware of fashion and only very few among them are following real fashion in each and every season. They will take few years to understand what fashion is and then they will start following it.

The first two sentences describe the reality as seen by another fashion designer. But then again having mentioned 'following real fashion in each and every season' leads to many more questions. Why is it that people need to "follow" what another does? And what is "real fashion"? In Sri Lanka what are the "seasons"? If a fashion designer is aware of the context more realistically he/she can answer these with a good design solution. This type of an answer again draws us back to the starting point of questioning his/her design training.

Few commented on the current strengths and some on the opportunities while few have brought explanations as suggestions. One who claimed that currently many new young designers are emerging with fashion knowledge suggests that "if the target markets are identified by them wisely", there would definitely be a good future for the fashion industry in the country. Similarly another mentioned:

With the war ending, Sri Lanka is now an emerging market just waiting to be developed. Do believe we need to develop it wisely so that it does not become the stereotypical commercial fashion arenas we see around the world. We have a chance to combine Sri Lankan culture into our perception of fashion and market it that way to the consumer. Give the consumer a new kind of edge to their fashion experience in Sri Lanka. Make our own stamp on fashion the same way that Japan is doing.

This explanation shows how aware some fashion designers in the current industry are about the future potential of the industry.

However, there is another set of respondents which is less than 20% of the total who do not see fashion as a promising field in future Sri Lanka. Their main concern is the economic condition of the

country. They consider that the image of 'fashion' as very luxurious and expensive products is not suitable to a developing economy like Sri Lanka. This group of respondents suggest that the people who can afford fashion goods are only a very small fraction of the total population. And due to a low consumer base, they suggest that there will not be a successful future for fashion in Sri Lanka. This is a very narrow minded view of a minority. If the FD graduates are not being trained to think out of the box without just following the existing trails, there has to be loop-holes in the education they received.

4.3 CONCLUSION

Creative education and creative industries do not have a long history in the Sri Lankan context. It is being introduced and people are getting used to it many years after they were introduced and practiced in many other western countries. However, the questionnaire participants who belong to this new creative class of the country having been educated in the field of fashion design are a pioneering qualified creative group in the Sri Lankan fashion industry. Data collection through this type of a questionnaire among this group has not been done previously in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this attempt can be considered as a good start for the industry creative practitioners and the education providers to think beyond their usual practices and link what they have been doing with the outer world.

However, a decade old FD education system has provided a good number of FD graduates to the industry. As it is a very new experience for the youth and the industry, a lot of graduates face many problems in breaking the existing industry systems. Almost all the FD graduates try to enter the prevailing export oriented apparel industry in search of a job as it is the very realistic job that has been projected in front of them. As students, FD graduates have had different goals other than working in the apparel manufacturing industry, such as, wanting to see their own fashion label in the market. However, satisfactory conditions of the current employment opportunities do not encourage them to search for different career paths.

Those who want to break away from the prevailing job system have many challenges to face in achieving their goals. Only very few have tried to step out of the usual system, in search of achieving their goals. However, in the present day, there are industry collaborations of fashion designers uplifting programs around the country. Therefore, there are some realistic opportunities in front of them which could act as stepping stones. Yet, most of the designers' goals are couched in terms of economic advantage. Yet, the reality is that those designers, who want to have a label, are also aware of not having a customer group to market their products to. In that case, their marketing knowledge seems very rudimentary. The lack of marketing knowledge has been identified as a gap in the curriculum. Within the emerging fashion industry of the country, 'marketing' seems a highly relevant teaching area for design students. However, the subject has to be well thought ahead and should be merged with current world trends along with local social, environmental and economic advancements.

As the questionnaire reached the participants through social networks and further via the snowball technique, the unpublished personal feedback were very positive. Some respondents have not even

realised that they do belong to a rising creative class in the country and that there is a whole group of people within that category who could do a change in the current practices. Now that a first group of fashion designers is in the industry, it is high time for the FD education providers to rethink the national development pattern and revise their curriculums appropriately. The national fashion industry bosses; the export oriented apparel manufacturing companies are well aware of the sustainable practices. Therefore, there is increasing awareness in the current Sri Lankan fashion industry for sustainable systems to be adopted and developed. Yet, it is not well incorporated in the education systems. This again brings back the same conclusion of the need for significant curriculum revision to take account of global fashion trends, the potential of a creative economy to drive Sri Lanka to achieve national development for the future.

5. CASE STUDIES

In this chapter, three case studies are presented. The first case study is of a major Sri Lankan fashion event. The other two case studies are of two locally qualified fashion designers. These case studies aim to discuss and analyse the impact of the cases towards the local fashion industry.

The first case study; Colombo Fashion Week (CFW) is the most prominent fashion event in Sri Lanka which creates a platform to the emerging fashion designers and Sri Lankan fashion labels to showcase their talents, while trying to create Colombo the Fashion Hub of South Asia. The next two case studies; 'Charini' and 'Prabath' are two local fashion labels that have reached the international fashion arena. The brand initiative designers' journeys so far and how they have succeeded in the industry having guidance and collaborations with other sectors is an inspiration to the future Sri Lankan fashion talents. Each case study highlights the potential towards developing a sustainable fashion industry for Sri Lanka.

Key words:

Colombo Fashion Week, Charini, Prabath

5.1 CASE STUDY ONE: THE COLOMBO FASHION WEEK (CFW)

In the current Sri Lankan context there are many fashion events hosted by various organizations, institutes as well as by individuals having different aims and objectives. Among the many events, the Colombo Fashion Week (CFW) can be considered as the country's premier fashion event which tries to create a sustainable fashion industry in Sri Lanka while creating a platform to the local fashion designers to interact, groom and create retailing opportunities. It was initiated in 2003, with the sole intention of "uplifting the local fashion industry through interaction, exposure and guidance" (CFW, 2013). From 2008, it became an annual event. Compared to the major four fashion weeks in New York, London, Milan and Paris, internationally CFW may appear as just another fashion week in a minor commercial city, but to Sri Lanka it is a very important fashion industry event.

Generally, a 'fashion week' is a major fashion industry event which "showcases the up-coming season's prêt-à-porter clothing" (Entwistle & Rocamora, 2006). It mainly targets the buyers to place orders and the media to get the publicity for the latest trends for the coming season. A 'fashion week' is usually organized to run throughout a week. Apart from the runway shows, there can be exhibitions of designers' work in the mode of a trade show. As Entwistle and Rocamora (2006) state, this is similar to the London Fashion Week (LFW) where they have exhibitions such as Estethica to go along with the runway shows. The collections of fashion designers, brands or fashion-houses showcased at the show conveys the message of what fashions are 'in' and what are 'out' for the season. However, Entwistle and Rocamora (2006) also claim that a fashion week is 'big business'.

Throughout the year there are countless fashion weeks around the world. Every day there can be a fashion week somewhere. But, their aims are definitely not the same. A true fashion week needs to build their own meanings and set of aims related to the context of its own country. While every city of the world cannot be a fashion capital, a specific city of a country can become its own country's fashion city.

A fashion week is often conducted closely to a particular season. Having two opposite climatic conditions of cold and hot during a year according to the geographical location of a country, has created the stage for two prominent fashion weeks per year; Autumn/Winter fashion week and Spring/Summer fashion week. Therefore, the season is a parameter of showcasing a particular collection.

Months of the year	North Temperate Zone locations	South Temperate Zone locations
March – May	Spring	Autumn
June – August	Summer	Winter
September – November	Autumn	Spring
December – February	Winter	Summer

Table 5.1: Seasons of a year according to the temperate zone location

In general a fashion week is conducted several months ahead of the season, where it permits the buyers to make decisions and the media to make prior announcements about upcoming trends. As an example the fashion weeks in Europe showcase Autumn/Winter collections from January to April, and Spring/Summer collections from August to November.

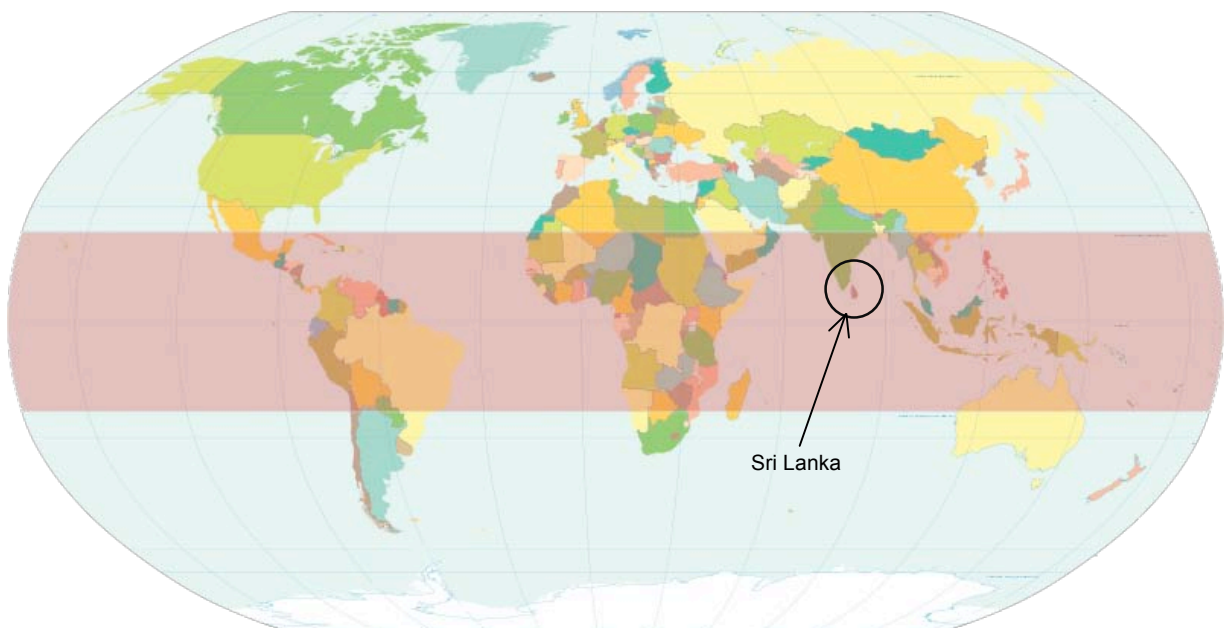


Figure 5.1: World map with the inter-tropical zone highlighted in red at the centre

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:World_map_torrid.svg

Sri Lanka is located in the tropical zone band (refer to figure 5.1). Therefore, the climatic condition is almost the same throughout the year. CFW is trying to follow the main features of the 'fashion week' concept. Just as any other 'fashion week', CFW also covers a series of catwalk shows of both local and international designers giving high prominence to Sri Lankan designers. The decision of the organizers to call the event 'Colombo' Fashion Week is very strategic. Colombo is not the capital but it is the major commercial city of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the most urbanized and famous city as well. Therefore, naming the event CFW creates the authority in the field of Sri Lankan fashion industry.

CFW founder and at present the President and also the Director of CFW is Ajai Virr Singh. He is a visionary character. He first came to Sri Lanka from India in mid-1990's, as an executive with global ad firm Grey Advertising. Ajai has mentioned, "Advertising was my day job, but I always had a passion for fashion" (Echelon, 2012). The vision and the accomplishment of the mission of an annual fashion week are primarily in the hands of Ajai Virr Singh. In the CFW web site, Ajai talks of the concept of the event as wanting to make Colombo the fashion hub of South Asia. This vision is a parallel concept to the present government's five-hub concept. The government initiating developments are focussed along a five-hub concept; 'Maritime hub', 'Aviation hub', 'Energy hub', 'Commercial hub' and a 'Knowledge hub'. As a key industry, the tourism industry has shown potential to get added to the list as a 'Tourism hub' in the recent times (CBSL, 2013). Therefore, the concept of fashion hub of Asia could become the sixth or the seventh in line of Sri Lanka's developing economic platform.

Ajai claims that the geographical location of Sri Lanka in the region makes the city a perfect destination for the Fashion-hub purpose. Having a tropical climate and towards the concept of South Asia fashion hub, CFW focus on spring/summer collections and in 2012 it launched a separate fashion week in September especially to showcase resort-wear collections, "to stretch Sri Lankan designers to think within the environment they live in..." (Echelon, 2012). The main CFW event took place in February each year. But since the introduction of a second event in September in 2012, the 2013 main CFW event shifted to the first week of April to maintain a half yearly gap between the two events.



Figure 5.2: CFW logo



Figure 5.3: Mr. Ajai Virr Singh

The participation of the young fashion designers at CFW starts when the CFW's Technical Studio identifies the promising designers and then by giving them the guidance to focus towards a better collection for the ramp as well as marketable collections to attract buyers. Ajay Singh, who can be introduced as a person with a good sense for fashion design and a well ahead person in marketing, maintains personal interactions with the designers' improvements. By doing this, CFW tries to sustain quality and it was visible from all the past shows what a difference it maintained from other events in the country. Then the designers who develop their collections under guidance "become part of the international showcase, gaining the opportunity to interact with and learn from established designers, as well as exposure to high potential markets" (CFW, 2013). When a designer is working in the apparel industry, the creations are limited to the company needs. According to Annette Ames (2008), designers "may explore more freely the possibilities of artistic expression through fashion design" if they get the chance "to express a particular theme on the haute couture or ready-to-wear" on a runway. To a great extent this is true when considering the collections being showcased at CFW especially since 2008. Several young locally qualified fashion designers have explored their career paths by being introduced to the society through CFW. Ajai has mentioned,

Colombo Fashion Week was run by people who understood how to unearth designers, how to implement the curriculum of fashion schools, how to pick young designers, put them under training with international designers and somehow give them confidence so that they could stand on their own as fashion designers – so they wouldn't have to go looking for jobs in the apparel industry (Echelon, 2012).

Ajai speaks of the relationship the T&A industry has with young designers:

Although Sri Lanka has a large garment and apparel industry, that doesn't mean it is a natural hotbed of fashion designer talent. In fact, he says, the fact that Sri Lanka has a large garment and apparel industry has hurt the cultivation of fashion designer talent (Echelon, 2012).

He says this for identifying the real picture of T&A industry's intention of having fashion designers and what is taught at the design institutions as an industry requirement. The T&A industry wants to move-up the value chain with design excellence and to fulfil this need they hire designers to work for their design briefs. Ajai has explained this via one of his experiences, "Any young kid coming out of school here with a fashion degree would go into the apparel industry. But that's not really fashion."

He elaborates:

Years ago, I was asked to give a lecture [to recent fashion graduates]. In their final term, these graduates were designing winter wear. I asked them, have you ever worn a sweater or a jumper before? They said no. I said, then how can you design it? Then I realized that this was a demand that came from the apparel industry... I realized that the natural tendency of people to design what their environment demanded was being killed.

Therefore, CFW mainly focuses to bring out the creativity embedded within the young local designers and for them to become a part of the emerging creative economy. The export-oriented T&A industry can be an employer for many young fashion graduates. But according to Ajai, to see a development in the fashion industry of the country it should not be the only employer. And this is where CFW aims to set up a different path for designers who have a creative vision and don't want to work for the T&A manufacturers. By doing so CFW also works with the fashion education providers in the country and tries to build a collaborative holistic system.

One of the most important but one of the most lacking segment in the Sri Lankan fashion industry is the brand presence. By introducing new designers' collections, CFW brought new labels to the market. Though there are ample brands by the designer's name in the international arena, young Sri Lankan designers hesitated to start their labels under their own name. They hesitated not knowing how the local consumer would accept a label of a local name. But the platform created by the CFW gave birth to several brands by the designer's name. Some namesake collections showcased in the recent couple of years are 'Asanga', 'Charini' (refer to section 5.2), 'Deneth', 'Dimuthu', 'Prabath' (refer to section 5.3) and 'Ramona Oshini'. Being identified through CFW was a significant advantage for each designer to be able to reach the consumer.

As an example, Asanga has taken part in CFW for four consecutive years since 2008. In 2008, since he was an employee at a leading Sri Lankan shirts manufacturing company; Emerald (pvt) Ltd, his debut collection was of men's wear. Asanga, getting his breakthrough to the real fashion industry platform via CFW has resigned from Emerald to find his own path. Ajai identified his expertise along the area of gents clothing. It has given him the opportunity to design for Ajai's own fashion line of shirts; 'Stringhopper'. Then at CFW 2009, Ajai launched 'Stringhopper' label and Asanga received the recognition for being the designer behind the collection. Though Asanga wanted to start his own fashion line in gents wear, production has been a challenge. The local manufacturers are not yet ready to do small quantity production volumes of emerging fashion designers, and the retailing for new labels like Asanga can be challenging.



Figure 5.4: Asanga with models wearing his hand-woven saris of Mondrian Collection at CFW 2011



Figure 5.5: Asanga's saris sold at Aashkii (2009/2010)

Source: www.facebook.com/SeventyNinebyAsanga/photos_albums

Asanga always wanted to use distinctive fabrics. Again, there's no-one other than the local hand-loom weavers to do small production quantities. This led him to turn his head around to rely on the local hand-loom weavers to get his small quantity fabrics done. Sri Lankan women's famous attire; the sari is just an open cloth of six yards. Then, as a temporary solution for all the challenges, and as an initiative towards his goal, he started designing and producing hand-loom saris for the Sri Lankan up

market. He received full support from a well-recognised sari store in Colombo; 'Aashkii' as the selling point for his collections. Asanga got this opportunity as he was able to project himself as a CFW participant. Since then, in 2010 and 2011, Asanga came to CFW with his own label and a collection mainly focussed on saris. 'Dineth', 'Dimuthu' and few others who stayed with CFW for a while have similar stories like Asanga's.

The most important aspect of CFW is that its mission is always focussed to bring out new young talents to the public awareness. As Ajai Singh revealed, 'Gen-Next Award' was an award introduced in 2011 "to fill the necessity of a formal system to unearth potential designers from various fashion schools in Sri Lanka" (Fibre2fashion, 2012a). The award is to be presented to an upcoming talented designer to showcase his or her collection in an international fashion show. 'Dimuthu' received the 2011 award and has obtained the chance of showcasing his collection in three cities in India; Mumbai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Placing another step ahead, in 2012 it launched the 'Bright Spark Fashion Shows'; a separate segment of CFW as a new designer development programme. Having a high demand to enter the main CFW runway, the 'Bright Spark' shows provide the platform for the very new promising young talents from the local fashion schools to showcase their collections, from where they can advance to the main CFW in coming years. Therefore, fourteen selected newly graduated students from University of Moratuwa, Academy of Design and Lanka Institute of Fashion Technology have gained the first opportunity in 2012 'Bright Spark' show.

CFW is not only a platform for young fashion designers, but it also lends a hand even to well established local retailers and business entrepreneurs to introduce their retail changes or brand developments. As for example, ODEL one of the very successful retail chains in the country takes part in the event annually and at CFW 2012, the founder and CEO of ODEL, Otara Gunewardene launched her namesake jeans collection of a bold colour palette; 'O tara'. Apart from opening opportunities for the retailers, CFW organisers also identify the total retailing system as an area that needs guidance on fashion retailing. As Ajai's expertise is in the area of advertising and marketing he has initiated a CFW team member to conduct "training workshops for some of the better-known stores in Colombo, to teach them the dynamics of fashion retail, because they have not done fashion retailing" (Echelon, 2012).

To bring out a fashion brand presence in Sri Lanka, CFW is trying to build business collaborations among the designers and retailers. This concept, in which designers collaborate with retailers is fairly new to Sri Lanka, as it was explained in chapter two that the existing retail is not design focussed except for a very few retailers based in Colombo. With regards to this local business partnership program, five local retailers have joined hands with CFW to bear the collections of local designers showcased at CFW. The five retailers are Trunk, Cantaloupe Boutique, Aashkii, Melaché and Cotton Collection. Aashkii is the up market branded Indian sari store which now gives support to sell Sri Lankan handloom designer-saris of Asanga. Melaché is the first fashion boutique in Sri Lanka which was launched in March 2010. Melaché is a store which provides the local fashion designers to market all types of designer garments. These retail stores built collaborations with CFW realising the benefit they also can achieve in the future. This would mean that after the show, the collections are available

with one of these retailers to be purchased by the fashion fans of the collections. This action established a long term association between the designers and the retailers. The Island newspaper (12 January 2012) writes, that by “identifying and linking local retailers and designers, the local retail infrastructure and Sri Lankan fashion platform is positioned to grow via increased commercial activity”.

It was stated in ‘The Island’ newspaper (12, January, 2012) that the CFW is becoming a true fashion week by establishing links with local retailers, international buyers and by building collaborations with other fashion weeks. In 2010, CFW signed an MOU (memorandum of understanding) with the Miami International Fashion week to benefit a designer exchange programme. CFW has also built partnerships with Malaysia Fashion Week and Russia Fashion Week. Building relationships with other fashion weeks provided exceptional exposure to the local designers. They were selected to showcase in the international event regarding their talents and the brand. “In the past – the brands – ‘KT-Brown’ and ‘Buddhi Batik’ have had the opportunity to be selected for Russia Fashion Week and Miami Fashion Week” (The Island, 12, January, 2012). Apart from going to other international fashion weeks, having a line-up of international designers in CFW creates an exclusive atmosphere for the young local designers. For several years CFW has received the support of famous designers like Agatha Ruiz de la Prada (Spain), Rohit Bal (India), Bibi Russell (Bangladesh), Rizwan Beyg (Pakistan), and Manoviraj Khosla (India).

CFW encourages local designers to use Sri Lankan crafts in their designs. Some designers solely promote their brands by using a local craft in their collections. Young designer Kasuni Ratnasuriya uses ‘Beeralu’ lace in her women’s wear clothing line, Asanga Godamuna uses hand-weaving for his sari collections, while Darshi Keerthisena of ‘Buddhi Batik’ is famous for using batik in her collections. While creating a prestigious stand to the designer and brand for using a local craft in their collections, this as well helps to uplift the local craft industry inadvertently. Having the interest to build a sustainable fashion industry, CFW reserved a whole day of the total event to showcase brands of ethical practice. Therefore since 2011 the day two was officially dedicated for ‘Ethical Fashion’. Ajai Singh claims “Sri Lanka has already taken a lead by positing itself as ‘Garments Without Guilt’ ethical manufacturing sourcing hub and I think – Colombo – can easily become a hub for – ethical fashion – in South Asia” (Daily FT, 17 February 2012). Having a whole day reserved for ethically manufactured fashions has made CFW unique in the region.

CFW aims to attract an audience of around one-thousand people. Though in the initial years the audience was just a crowd of fashion appreciators, today it is trying to absorb buyers and international media houses. In December 2010, the Sunday Times of Sri Lanka reported that the CFW 2011 was going to host twenty local designers and ten prominent international designers along with the representation of around eight buyers and ten international media houses. This has become news worthy as a major achievement for the organisers especially for having international buyers and media in the audience. “Sri Lanka did not have huge credibility as a fashion destination, so to get the buyers in, it took us a lot of convincing,” (Echelon, 2012) Ajai has recalled in an interview. However, while

many other fashion events in Sri Lanka have their own agendas, the core agenda of CFW is to absorb international buyers.

Representation of international media houses at the Colombo fashion event is the next needed factor of the organisers to gain further publicity and establish reputation. At the 2012 fashion week, the Fashion TV, Elle and other international fashion magazines covered the event providing excellent exposure to the designers as well as the entire fashion industry of Sri Lanka. The local newspaper, Daily FT (17 February 2012) wrote, "the key indirect role Fashion Week plays is that it influences how people dress and how fashion goes into society". This is a true comment where CFW has created a vast change on the consciousness of the Sri Lankan clothing. Throughout the years CFW has been able to generate a certain clientele to admire Sri Lanka made labels. By uplifting the local talents a trend is being created to consider wearing an outfit of a local label which is designed and produced in Sri Lanka.

CFW, has created a fashion platform for young fashion designers to showcase their talents, exposed to international fashion events and come up with good presentable collections worthy of doing more productions. CFW also has provided the retailers to know better marketing, academics to think beyond what they teach, and media to create fashion debates on designers, collections, ethical practices, and sustainable development of the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. CFW has been involved in all these areas since its launch as a not-for-profit organisation. Recently, it has been "converted into a bottom-line oriented corporation" (Echelon, 2012). CFW has a strong set of sponsors, whom Ajai wants to treat as partners. As Ajai says, they spend but in return they get marketing solutions, where both the parties enjoy benefits (Echelon, 2012). Since 2008 to date, the title sponsor is the HSBC.

Other than the brand 'Stringhopper', Ajai has launched two more fashion lines as 'Arugam Bay' and 'Conscience'. 'Arugam Bay' is a beachwear line; and 'Conscience' is an ethical men's label that uses only organically grown cotton. "In addition to generating cash flow, Ajai hopes to lead Sri Lanka's fashion industry by example with his own products" (Echelon, 2012).

I have created brands that in brand equity terms are quite rich, and in business terms they are consistently growing," he says. "But if I was in the west somewhere I probably would have been bought out by private equity or venture capital and made millions overnight," he says with a laugh. "Here it is all organic growth (Echelon, 2012).

The total venture of CFW focuses in developing a sustainable practice within the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. And it is a development hope to achieve via local fashion design excellence of young fashion designers.

5.2 CASE STUDY TWO: 'CHARINI'

'Charini' is a pure Sri Lanka-made fashion label which currently focusses on eco-luxury lingerie. The brand carries the design signatures of "luxury, hand-crafted, timeless, vintage design with a contemporary twist". The designer behind the brand is Ms Charini Suriyage. She is a locally qualified young Sri Lankan fashion designer, who entered the fashion industry from the manufacturing end in 2005 and thrived to have her own namesake fashion label in the international market by 2011. In a short period of time she has succeeded in achieving her vision of taking her own fashion label to the global fashion arena. The mission started from the developing economy of Sri Lanka; a nation that is only famous for apparel manufacturing within the world fashion system. Therefore, 'Charini' fashion label can be considered an ambassador from Sri Lanka to the world fashion platform in building an image of the nation's design expertise and sustainable (especially ethical and eco-friendly) industry practices. From the consumers' perspective, 'Charini' products are filling a gap in the ethical, eco-friendly luxury lingerie market and from the industry perspective she is contributing for a social, economic and environmental development for Sri Lanka. Charini Suriyage is a great example among many other locally qualified young fashion designers of how a fashion designer can contribute to developing sustainable fashion industry of Sri Lanka.



Figure 5.6: Charini Suriyage



Figure 5.7: 'Charini' logo

5.2.1 Education and Work Background

Charini graduated in 2005 with the completion of the Bachelor of Design honours degree taught under the Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. Doing the three-month industrial training module between third and fourth years of her degree at the MAS Holdings (pvt) Ltd, directed her to build many more future bonds with the company. MAS Holdings is one of the leading apparel manufacturers in the country mainly specialising in underwear and sportswear through its MAS Intimates and MAS Active divisions. Charini's successful career started with her being employed as a designer at MAS Intimates after her graduation. MAS Intimates mainly manufactures for Victoria Secret (VS) and Marks & Spencer (M&S). Starting as a designer of product development and quickly being promoted to become an account manager in later years, made Charini an expert in lingerie

design, production and marketing. Having achieved an undergraduate qualification in design and industry experience since 2005, she then in 2012 completed a Masters in Design Management at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, UK to gain more knowledge about management and entrepreneurship. The training and experience gained from the industry, the philosophical design foundation received from the education and industry collaborations led her to develop her own lingerie label. Currently she is still an employee at MAS, but her own lingerie line is being developed with the company's consent and is now available in the London market since its launch in 2011. The high-end product line price range from £90 to £300. A brief price would start from around £90 and a bra would start from £120.



Figure 5.8:
LFW Spring/summer 2011
From 'Charini' first collection for LFW

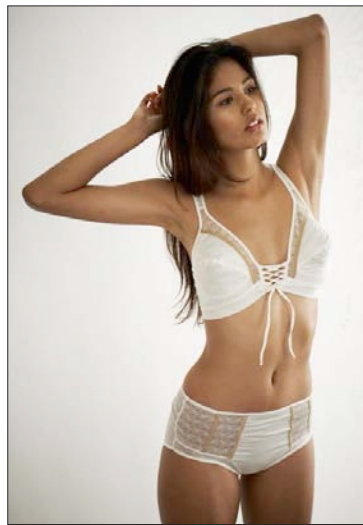


Figure 5.9:
LFW Spring/summer 2012
From 'Charini' 'pure' collection



Figure 5.10:
LFW Spring/summer 2012
From 'Charini' 'gui-pure' collection



Figure 5.11:
LFW Spring/summer 2012
From 'Charini' 'gui-pure' collection

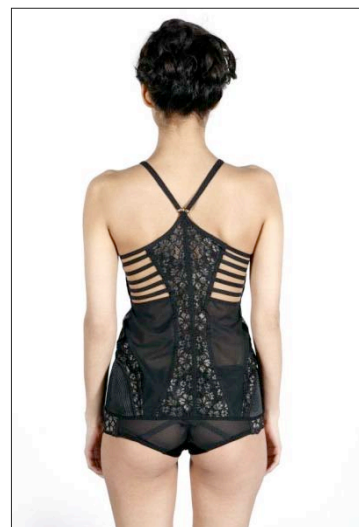


Figure 5.12:
LFW Autumn/winter 2012
From 'Charini' 'Range X' collection

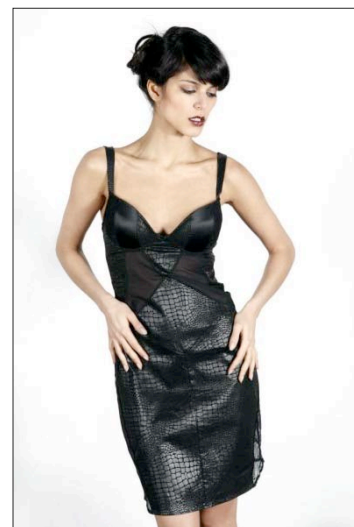


Figure 5.13:
LFW Autumn/winter 2012
From 'Charini' 'Range X' collection

Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Charini/194125720648989?sk=photos_albums

5.2.2 Practices and Modes of Production

'Charini', is the first fashion label from Sri Lanka to reach the Europe market, carrying motivating themes in the brand venture. The main factor behind her successful venture so far is that she has taken advantage of the opportunities presented and has got the maximum use of the collaborations, fashion events with clear aims and exclusive fashion competitions which she can be a part of with prestige. Though there are many fashion events in Sri Lanka, Charini chose to take part in the two main fashion events in the country up to date: the Colombo Fashion Week (CFW) and the Sri Lanka Design Festival (SLDF). In 2009 and 2010, Charini introduced herself to the local fashion appreciators by showcasing outerwear collections at the CFW. But she received the breakthrough she was looking for by winning the first ever Ethical Fashion Award for Lingerie in Sri Lanka at the 'ethical fashion' competition 2010 organized by the SLDF. The competition involved collaboration between SLDF and the British Council, Marks & Spencer and the Carbon Consulting Company (SLDF, 2013). Having many years of experience in lingerie design, she has taken the strategic decision at this point by selecting the lingerie section of the competition to take part in other than the ready-to-wear category.

Having received the Ethical Fashion award from Sri Lanka, Charini was given the chance to launch her collection at the 'Esthetica' exhibition, which is a part of prestigious London Fashion Week in autumn 2011. The selection criterion for inclusion was the applicant's design excellence and commitment to working in a sustainable way. At the February 2012 press release of Esthetica, it was mentioned that,

all (selected) designers adhere to at least one of the key Esthetica principles of fair trade and ethical practice in the production process; the inclusion of organic fibres and the use of up-cycled and recycled fabrics and materials.

After the ethical award, before taking part at Esthetica, she had to go through an intensive three-month mentoring programme on ethical fashion designing under international designers: Orsola de Castro, Filippo Ricci, Elizabeth Laskar and Claire Hamer and M&S. With all the prior experience and knowledge, this training has helped her in developing the brand personality of the eco-luxury lingerie collection as suitable to the Europe market. And the training as well had helped her to refine her debut collection for a foreign platform.

To reach an international market, international exposure is essential. Working at MAS Intimates has provided Charini with considerable knowledge about the international lingerie clientele, as MAS Intimates have handled design development and production accounts of VS and M&S for many years. Charini once stated "... lingerie is a product which is celebrated more in the western world so it is important to understand and observe consumer trends and lifestyles" (Foroutan, 2012). Apart from working in the intimate manufacturing end she has also received training from much-admired designer Carol Maloney in the United States and afterward with Limited Inc New York via MAS Holdings training programs. However, in a very short period of time this young fashion designer, who is coming from a developing country, has gained much experience and exposure via favourable industry collaborations.

Eco-luxury lingerie is a niche market and Europe is the ideal market for a new brand like 'Charini'. The brand personality is purely based on ethical and eco-friendly practices. Up-cycling of fabric waste of cancelled bulk orders from Sri Lankan manufacturing plants, using of recycled plastics, restraining from using metal and harmful dyeing, and getting the involvement of local artisan community in valuing their traditional crafts are the main features of the production process. Apart from these,

questioning the contemporary methods of lingerie manufacturing, Charini aspires to revive traditional lingerie manufacturing processes, using a unique manufacturing process that results in a minimum number of components, reducing the Carbon footprint left by the product (Dole, 2012).

For staying true to the eco-sustainable practice, the 'Charini' brand has received a carbon label from the Carbon Consulting Company (CCC) of Sri Lanka. However, rather than focussing on seasonal trends, this fashion label speaks of 'timeless' designs, where it is an encouragement to the slow-fashion movement with lasting styles. For having all these characteristics, 'Charini' label titles under 'sustainable fashion' and it is a far cry to the emerging sustainable fashion industry of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's mass apparel manufacturing industry has meant there is much fabric waste taking place every day from every company through having order cancellations and/or over ordering of fabrics for production. Some fabric surpluses are burnt for not having the authority to release to the markets of factory excess. Charini has experienced the massive waste that takes place in the fashion industry for her being at the manufacturing end of it for several years. But with the recycle and up-cycle trends and eco-sustainable movements many such fabrics are now no longer wasted in landfills. They are being allowed to recycle for other purposes. Taking advantage of this circumstance, and identifying the essence of a sustainable fashion label, Charini has decided to use up-cycled fabric into her designs. This is a timely decision as a realistic sustainable practice for Sri Lanka and a good strategic venture in brand marketing.

The other materials used are handloom silk and lace of local artisans. Sri Lankan handloom industry is famous for cottons. Without an external interference, the local handloom-weavers otherwise do not do silk weaving as they are not aware of how to market silk if they do the productions. For 'Charini' lingerie collections, use of silks and lace is being identified as a design necessity according to the consumer demand. Therefore, the designer has encouraged the local handloom weavers for silk production where she can be the direct buyer. Instead of machine produced silks and lace, selecting manual labour-intensive materials are a pure advantage for the local artisans, and indeed a value in building the brand personality. In addition this approach promotes Sri Lankan craft communities in the 'fashion world'. Charini believes incorporating traditional crafts into her designs. It is a way to contribute to the craft industry to sustain its practices. In her words she claims,

I think what we have to do is to provide these communities with a more stable and constant way of sustaining their businesses rather than wanting mass orders in one go and not giving them any orders for the next six months ... (DailyFT, 09 September 2011).

This ethical and ecological decision ensures ongoing work for artisans who otherwise would lose their usual marketing tracks for their productions and end up even losing their long-term income-generating paths.

Charini believes customer wellbeing is a prime factor for lingerie lines and can as well become a statement to the wearer. Today, lingerie is not only an underwear, but as well could be an outer wear at certain instances where there is a new meaning given to the wearing. At many occasions lingerie merge the boundaries of underwear and outerwear. Gaining this vividness, Charini has designed and produced two well contrasting collections for the LFW 2012; a bridal range as 'Marry Me' and a power-wear range as 'Range X'. Maintaining the built brand personality, she added a 'no-waste' concept bringing up-cycled elastics as the main feature for her 2012 collection. Staying true to the brand philosophy, all other materials were hand-woven pure silks and lace from local artisan communities and luxurious satin sourced via factory waste. Generally, lingerie is considered to have in the market to be able to find the perfect fit to the body and check the comfort by the consumer. But, having followed the quality manufacturing standards, since August 2012 her collections are being added to the ASOS online store on sale price.

ASOS is one of the UK's largest online-only fashion stores, which sells over 50,000 branded fashion goods globally. Charini's decision to add her collections to ASOS shows her need to expand her brand awareness. By this action she could create a global customer network for her brand.



Figure 5.14:
'Charini' High-waist brief
 (£90)
 At ASOS sale £22.50
 In March 2013



Figure 5.15:
"Charini Longline bra with
criss-cross front (£185)
 At ASOS sale £46.00
 in March 2013



Figure 5.16:
'Charini' Lace body with
buttoned front (£330)
 At ASOS sale £82.50
 in March 2013

5.2.3 Aesthetic

For Charini, central to the designing process at all times is the inspiration through Architecture. She always tries to see parallels between fashion and architecture through space, lines, shapes and forms that the fashion design creates on the body. This is an influence she received by having her first fashion design education, the Bachelor of Design (BDes) degree under Faculty of Architecture in Sri Lanka. She was from the second batch of local design graduates to specialise in fashion design. Within the country, Architecture is an esteemed profession and the works and teachings are highly

philosophical. As an early graduate from the BDes degree, she has developed her design philosophy based on architectural perspectives.

For the purpose of this research, a direct question was forwarded to Ms. Charini Suriyage in June 2012 to highlight how the learning process in her bachelor's degree built a fashion design process based on 'problem solving methodology'. Her answer was;

Because of my academic background I tend to always follow a design process. This has helped me to have (1) more coherence in the steps that I follow, (2) treat the design process as an evolving approach to best suit my objective and (3) not to deviate from the starting point and the final objective. I have looked at this process holistically as a problem solving method. From the market analysis, selecting materials, choice of technical methods, and the design sketch is treated as providing solutions to a problem. The positive side was that I could isolate each step of the process and solve the problems related to each step.

Therefore, all the work behind the 'Charini' brand can be seen as solutions to all the issues she had in achieving her goal of developing her own fashion label. To date Charini is a highly motivated character aiming to project a Sri Lankan sustainable fashion label to the international market while maintaining sustainable fashion industry practices.

As for any successful designer, Charini too has several key figures as inspirational sources for all her works. Since she was a child, it has always been her mother who "had the biggest impact in evoking her passion for design and community work". Sri Lankan families have a strong bond within a family unit. Children live with their parents until they get married. Therefore, children eventually get to follow the good deeds of their parents whom they admire. Charini says,

She (mother) took pleasure in designing and stitching outfits for me and it gave me an early opportunity of experimenting and using my imagination - creating a new design each time. Also my mother was always involved with community and welfare projects in Sri Lanka, which focused on assisting and uplifting women in rural communities.

Her mother belongs to the last generation in which all women in the Sri Lankan common society had to learn stitching to be able to stitch their own and other younger family members' dresses. But, Charini belongs to a generation of which clothing is entirely dependent on a retail system. Learning to design and stitch was not a compulsory act for Charini. Once it is not an obligation, the passion to learn is different. Charini followed her instincts and became a fashion designer identifying her mother as the key inspirational source. Apart from her, Charini admires the works of Issey Miyake for changing the world of fashion by giving new dimensions and Orsola De Castro for showing how ethical fashion can be luxurious and fashionable.

Being raised in a country which has endless inspiring materials; nature, heritage, traditions, art and crafts, and many more, is a great advantage for Charini as she explains;

I'm fascinated by everything Sri Lankan, from its ancient heritage and beautiful natural environment to its people and their way of life. Being an outdoors person I am always enchanted by this small tropical island in the Indian Ocean which gives anyone the ability to move from the coast to the hill country, experiencing its vast bio diversity within a matter of hours. Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage traces back thousands of years and the amazing wildlife has given me an abundance of inspiration that has enriched me throughout the years. (Suriyage, 2011)

5.2.4 The Designer's Place in the Local and Global Fashion Arena

Designing lingerie is the line of her expertise. Maintaining an ethical frame in the production process along with adding Sri Lankan essence to the designs helped establish her label in the international fashion arena in a short period of time. The collection at the Estethica was described as “luxury, hand-crafted, timeless, vintage design with a contemporary twist’ - a far cry from any sweatshop image many might have of Sri Lankan apparel” (Pathirana, 2011) given that Sri Lanka is a developing country in Asia. Having said that, in August 2012, the UK based online magazine; ‘Urban Times’ has assembled the top five sustainable lingerie brands with a careful consideration and has named ‘Charini’ branded lingerie as the third of the list. The online portal has appraised the brand by mentioning of how the products are ethically made, for sourcing locally manufactured fabrics in supporting the local small artisan communities and for having an environmentally friendly production process within the country itself (Stewart, 2012) in projecting a sustainable brand to the international market. While Charini is not able to uplift the whole local craft industry on her own, her works can inspire other emerging young local designers to start valuing the national artisan works and find a suitable market for their designer collections while helping the wellbeing of local communities. She says,

I want to promote Sri Lankan craft in the international market and also to help these communities sustain what they are doing so that we can sustain our traditional crafts as well (Pathirana, 2011).

She also believes that,

small industries that rely mainly upon other major industries must take risks and try to become less dependent if they are to progress and face challenges in the globalised economy (Pathirana, 2011).

After her breakthrough in the fashion world via a lingerie line, she has launched her outer-wear collection in December 2012 to the Sri Lankan market under the label ‘Concept Studio by Chari’ at Melaché in Colombo. Targeting to sell a collection in the international market brings economic advantage to the country. At this stage, designing for the local market is another different vision where the designer can fulfil a national demand and bring brand presence in the Sri Lankan market.

However, ‘Charini’ luxury lingerie is highly priced in the UK market. The reasons behind this as she claims are, (1) for the moment having only a niche market for ethical fashion and under that another niche for eco-luxury lingerie, (2) manufacturing of a limited quantity, (3) using of hand-woven silk and hand-made embellishments which are sourced at fair prices from local communities, (4) doing the production at local small-scale factories, (5) having a comparatively higher cost for the complete product and (6) selling the brand through other retailers (Foroutan, 2012). The given reasons are interlinked with each other.

She mentioned at the same interview with the UrbanTimes that a future fashion entrepreneur should believe in what they do and have to do it with passion to be successful. Charini is a good example and an inspiration for the future young Sri Lankan designers for the motivation and determination she has in achieving her goal of reaching the international market via a personal fashion label. At every act there will be ups and downs. But the success of Charini as a fashion designer mainly relied on the

strengths she had and the opportunities of which she took advantage; the industry setups she identified as appropriate to achieve her strong goal.

Charini's successful story started as she studied fashion design at a local university. At the time Charini started fashion design education in 2001 Sri Lanka only talked about a manufacturing T&A industry. Yet, BDes degree curriculum (refer to section 3.1) did not focus on training fashion designers to enter the T&A industry just for product development careers. Charini faced the common challenge of starting a career as a fashion designer by entering the T&A manufacturing industry. Though she was not trained to follow the exact industry design and development procedures, the design foundation and background knowledge she gained through her education made her able to adjust to any industry practice. The fashion design education, the current T&A industry system and local fashion industry collaborations have all helped Charini, and have enabled her to identify herself as a part of the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

5.3 CASE STUDY THREE: PRABATH

'Prabath' is the namesake brand of the young fashion designer, Prabath Samarasooriya. Prabath mainly focuses on saris and ready-to-wear collections suitable to the spring-summer style, using fabrics made by Sri Lankan artisans. For the moment his main clientele is the Sri Lankan market but he has taken the Sri Lankan fashion designing reputation to the south Asian fashion arena via participating at several Indian international fashion weeks. Currently, he is an academic, but his passion for designing, love for the local crafts, and the enthusiasm to see the beauty of the crafts in contemporary fashion market, has driven him to become a known Sri Lankan young fashion designer. His brand is still to some extent new to the consumer market, but he has gained much fame in the Sri Lankan fashion platform by participating at many local fashion runway shows as well. He does not have his own retail outlet, but has one buyer to place the productions of one-off and very small quantities to meet the local consumer. The main reason for the selection of Prabath as a case study for the research is, the way he works with local craft communities and the brand personality he is trying to create in the contemporary fashion practices with a hold and bond to the local cultural essence.



Figure 5.17: Prabath Samarasooriya



Figure 5.18: 'Prabath' name tag

5.3.1 Education and Work Background

When Prabath completed his secondary level education in 1997, there was no tertiary level fashion design education in Sri Lanka. Coming from a town far from the main commercial city of Colombo, *Matale*, he was not aware of how to nurture the born talent he had in the field of art. However, Prabath was lucky enough to meet the Swiss artist Radalph Zysset who was in Sri Lanka at the time and learned the subject of art free of charge. With the knowledge and practice in art, he then moved to the city having identified "out in the rural, there is no chance of an artist or designer to be recognized" (Markar, 2004). He has said, "coming to Colombo has given me the chance to do something better and to become a good artist and a professional designer" (Markar, 2004). After coming to Colombo in search of any design education, he then completed a Diploma in Jewellery Design in 2002 and searched for any opportunities after that. His breakthrough in the field of fashion started when he

became aware of the fashion design diploma provided by the New York School of Visual Arts (NYSVA) in Colombo. NYSVA was the then name given for the current Academy of Design (AOD) which now provides an affiliated design degree from the School of Design, University of Northumbria, in the UK. Prabath completed the higher national diploma (HND) in fashion design in 2004. Having knowledge and qualifications in both jewellery and fashion design, his career paths changed from being a jewellery designer, to a knitwear designer and finally to an academic at AOD, before being identified as a true fashion designer. The young international level design education provider of AOD recruited Prabath to their academic staff for showing talent in many areas as well as for bringing a strong sense of localism within him. While teaching he also completed his degree level qualification in fashion design from the University of Northumbria, UK via AOD in 2011.

With an enthusiasm to learn design, Prabath dedicated several years to complete his formal fashion design education via AOD. He now believes this private institution provides a timely relevant design education to those who have a passion for design. In an article published in the local Sunday Times newspaper in September 2012, Prabath states,

AOD is the only place where I learnt fashion from level zero and it's definitely the best place that shows the 'right way' to achieve your dreams in fashion. In Sri Lanka I believe that AOD is the only place where fashion is captured from the basic fundamentals in art and design, ethical responsibilities to developing a creative personality (Education Times, 2012).

He believes in a sustainable fashion industry for future Sri Lanka. All his current acts are focussed towards achieving a sustainable process on top of the social and economic challenges he has to come across. Today, he is not only trying to be successful in this developing fashion industry as a inputting fashion designer, but as well put his efforts to educate another set of fashion designers by lecturing at AOD; the place he has much faith in. And he helps AOD much in developing the best fashion design curriculum to suit the Sri Lankan context while following the UK standards.

5.3.2 Practices and Modes of Production

Prabath carries a motto in his life, which is; "to always try something new, a strong will and determination that makes him to believe much in working hard for oneself" (Markar, 2004). In 2004, at the interview with Farah Macan Markar for Sunday Observer, Prabath has mentioned,

I have worked on the base for my future, in which I hope to be a professional designer and an artist. My work is changing. I haven't settled into any one thing as yet. I hope in time to discover my own style. Slow and steady, I will make it up there.

Since then, Prabath has become an entrepreneur in the local fashion context and has a vision to make the Asian, indigenous and image of the Sri Lankan woman to a contemporary look in the modern world of fashion and lifestyle (Samarasooriya, 2012). Following his talents and instincts, Prabath has achieved several milestones within creative practices in Sri Lanka. Today, he is a known fashion designer with a local touch in the collections he creates primarily for the Sri Lankan market and showcases internationally with a local essence.

In trying to create a 'new look' for Sri Lankan women's fashion, Prabath has used textiles developed through local craft based production methods. Having excellent skills in fashion illustration, draping, print development, textiles, and three dimensional pattern constructions, his uniqueness lies in how he combines these elements to local craft-based textile productions when creating his collections. The basic material he uses is cotton. The main crafts he uses in his collections are the 'beeralu' lace making, handloom weaving, and the manual fabric dyeing techniques of tie-dye and batik.

'Beeralu' is the name given locally in Sri Lanka to the technique of manual lace making and it was an introduction from the Portuguese during their colonization in the 16th – 17th centuries. The technique was handed down from mother to daughter through many generations. Though it was a foreign skill, the technique had become more local with the excellence of the craftswomen, who have incorporated new designs to amalgamate the technique with Sri Lankan traditions throughout its evolution. Yet, today it is identified as a dying traditional craft. Today, the marketing of 'beeralu' lace products are generally associated with the local tourism industry. Other than tourism, the craft communities do not have reliable channels to sell their time consuming products for a reasonable price. Crafts were always handed down knowledge and skill practices from generation to generation. (refer to section 3.3). However, all these 'beeralu' lace, handloom weaving, tie-dye and batik being traditional crafts, have had a low status in the local consumer market as a cultural industry. Therefore, Prabath can be considered as one of the few people who changed this perspective by adding design value to the cultural industries and trying to bring them to the creative industry platform.

His initial design process for a particular collection starts with the searching for textile development that is suitable for the self-finalised sketches. He spends much time at this stage to get the textiles developed from the skilled artisans of the selected craft methods. Though he is now stationed in Colombo, he gets his textiles from the craft communities of several rural villages far from Colombo. Prabath visits them regularly to check the progress. Because the designer pays several visits to the craft centres, the artisans are more efficient at their work and from Prabath's point of view he gains the opportunity to check the quality of the production as well. Yet, he believes the artisans he is working with are extremely passionate people and knowledgeable about the practices that have been passed down through generations. Indeed, Prabath's works are reviving the rural village industries of especially handloom, tie-dyeing and batik, because to get the required textiles produced he has selected the distant communities where others may not go. Generally, rural village artisans are used to doing the same type of productions all the time just to keep the flow of production and sales. In order to prevent their professions and crafts from disappearing they need someone with a business plan and fresh ideas to introduce them to the new markets. Otherwise, they do not put much effort to developing their ventures of craft practices socially or economically.

Designers have to have a strong bond with craft communities in order to get the products done in right quality and within right time. They have to understand the craft language of the particular community. Prabath being a very down-to-earth person maintains a good relationship with the artisan communities and he has been working with them over the past ten years of his practice. Therefore, he finds it is easy to work with the artisans even doing experiments and to come up with new textile developments

that he wants. He tries to merge his creative ideas with the crafters' strong manual skills and bring out the fabric he wants to use in the collections as a unique piece of art. Finally, with much dedication and commitment he could achieve his own style of woven and dyed textiles. The main features of Prabath's textiles are the rich and deep use of colours, fine elegant mix of textures, combinations of creative stripes and sections of shaded colours. And with a careful inspection he gets the high quality finishes from the local artisans.



Figure 5.19: Prabath collection at Hyderabad Fashion Week 2011 (use of hand-loom fabrics, batik and tie-dye)

Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Prabath-Samarasooriya/photos_albums



Figure 5.20: Prabath collection at Chennai International Fashion Week 2012 (use of hand-loom fabrics, batik and tie-dye)

Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Prabath-Samarasooriya/photos_albums

His design process for the ready-to-wear collections starts with initial sketches similar to many other fashion designers. Then he illustrates them to highlight the textile to identify the fabric he needs to get produced at the craft centres. He does the pattern construction by himself and holds total production control. All his creations follow the minimum waste concept. Considering the final look and the pattern

of the designing garment, he instructs the weavers in placing the warp and weft colours accordingly. He believes if he wastes the fabric it is not only the textile that he discards, but as well he is throwing away the artisans' time and effort that was placed in creating the fabric. Therefore, his patterns always follow minimum cut and minimum waste concepts. Doing all the textile development to pattern construction he perfects his environmentally friendly practices. Valuing every inch of the artisans' produced textiles makes him a very unique designer in the contemporary fashion system of Sri Lanka.

At the final stage, Prabath hires a seamstress to stitch and complete his one-off or small quantity collections once again with his guidance as to the finishing techniques.

Small-scale business in this (fashion) arena is producing fashion clothing design which is artisanal and underpinned with craft skills, where the handmade and its 'one-off' idiosyncrasies are celebrated. These garments are becoming 'sustainable fashion badges' worn by an educated consumer who wears the small-run commercial or hand-made garment as a political flag in order to rail against the unsustainable industrial fashion clothing system in the developing world. (Gwilt & Rissanen, 2011, p.31)

This statement specifically highlights a current unsustainable system that the developing countries have fallen into for they are only known in the fashion world for low cost mass textile and apparel manufacturing. But, being from a developing economy the action, which Prabath has taken, is a different concept to the statement because his collections carry the 'sustainable fashion badge' and holds the 'political flag' of an ethical, environmental friendly sustainable fashion system of Sri Lanka. And his fashions can make an impact on the educated local consumer, and later it has the possibility to create trends in the local context. At the moment, it is not the demand of the majority. But his venture is to create that demand, through inspiration and comparison via customer reach from the top-down.

5.3.3 Aesthetic

After moving from art to the field of design, Prabath clearly identified the differences in the two fields of art and design, apart from the known factor of design can be applied in art and vice-versa. Most importantly he sees the need of a designer product to have a good presentation and fine finish as well as being a final piece of art. At an interview for the local newspaper, the Sunday Observer Prabath has claimed,

A designer must be in touch with the environment and its background, down to even objects. These are what inspire him, through which he later develops his designs. An artist, on the other hand, is inspired by his own mind, thoughts and feelings. Or he draws things as he sees them (Markar, 2004).

In contrast to art being a traditional subject, design can be considered as a practical subject. Prabath who follows a career towards design after an art practice says, "There are so many aspects to consider when designing something. It has to be practical, flexible and trendy. Art on the other hand can be dreamy, imaginative and unlimited" (Markar, 2004). Yet, being raised in a village environment with mountains, forestry, river and haze, has developed within him affection for nature, the people, beauty and harmony of life. These are the main factors about the local context which inspires him the most in his fashion collections even today.

Though Sri Lanka is a small island in the global perspective it has much variety within it, of nature, culture, traditions and habitations. Whenever Prabath travels around the country, he gets inspired of everything about Sri Lanka and grabs the essence of the vividness of this small nation and tries to merge them in to his collections. He speaks of such localness through his 'Jaffna Collection' he showcased at the PReT 2011 fashion show (refer to figure 5.22). The collection has named after 'Jaffna' as a celebration of Jaffna Tamil community. Jaffna being the most war conflicted area during the country's civil war, he wanted to present the reawakening in the region as he came to witness how the Tamil community has started to celebrate their culture. He brought out this collection of strong local identity at a platform where many Indian fashion designers were showcasing their collections with strong Indian culture.



Figure 5.21: From 'Prabath' Jaffna collection for PReT 2011 in Sri Lanka
Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Prabath-Samarasooriya/photos_albums

5.3.4 The Designer's Place in the Local and Global Fashion Arena

Though he worked with the craft communities for many years in developing textiles, he couldn't find the breakthrough in fashion designing he expected, for fashion was not much of a design-oriented field in Sri Lanka when he started. However, having all those background creative assets within him, he finally got his breakthrough in the field of fashion after taking part at the Colombo Fashion Week (CFW) 2008. From then on, he primarily dedicated his life to fashion. He was identified by his name in the local clothing industry and several started speaking about his interesting creations. Thereafter, he became a regular participant at several true fashion shows organised in Sri Lanka and India. He showcased many unique handloom, batik and 'beeralu' fabricated collections at the 2008 and 2009 CFW, from 2009 onwards at Sri Lanka Design Festival (SLDF) fashion show, in 2011 the Fashion-circle show, PReT and the British High Commissioner show, and in 2012 the Expo Sri Lanka show and the Galle fashion show.

Maintaining a regular appearance in the two main local fashion events of CFW and the SLDF made him receive invitations to the other fashion events as a high performing designer. All the showcased

collections had the same unique style of using vibrantly designed handloom textiles. In 2011 he received the invitation to take part at the Hyderabad Fashion Week and in 2012 at Kochi and Chennai Fashion Weeks. Going a step further, he added much value to his creations by redecorating the hand-woven textiles with the application of batik and tie-dye techniques, when he was taking his collections to Indian fashion weeks.



Figure 5.22: Prabath collection at SLDF 2012 (use of hand-loom fabrics and batik)

Source: www.facebook.com/pages/Prabath-Samarasooriya/photos_albums

Prabath's fashion collections speak about the cultural identity of the country. He tries to maintain a sustainable design practice. He is a strong believer in promoting the skills of Sri Lankan craft communities through the fashions he creates. In fact, his fashion collections can be considered as an ambassador for Sri Lanka. However, he creates timeless designs that are also trendy for the modern day woman. Prabath follows his instincts and tries to do what is best for the local consumer, for the craft community who involves in his productions, for the environment, and for the image of Sri Lanka on the world platform. His work in this creative field is inspiring, especially as a lecturer at AOD, where he inspires future fashion design students immensely. He also inspires the whole fashion industry to consider the up grading of the nation's culture industries to a creative industry practice where much economic, social and environmental benefit can be achieved.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified and examined the ventures of two young fashion designers who have qualified in fashion design under Sri Lankan fashion education providing institutes and a mission of a local fashion industry upgrading event. All three cases contribute to develop a creative economy through their unique sustainable practices.

The two fashion designers; Charini and Prabath carry their missions in two very different paths. Yet, there are similarities along their visions, work ethics and sustainable production processes. Charini's main focus; the vision was to take a namesake brand from Sri Lanka to the international fashion platform. To highlight Sri Lanka not only as an apparel manufacturing destination, but as well an emerging sustainable fashion industry destination with design excellence. Identifying her own expertise, her country expertise, current global fashion movements, and the niche market segment where she can combine each of the other and implement her vision is the key to her successful story as a beginner in this vast global fashion arena. Therefore, it is very relevant to say her focus on the eco-luxury lingerie which has a niche consumer demand in the Europe market is a timely decision of a clothing line where she is capable of maintaining the high value of the sustainable production process carried out in Sri Lanka.

Alternatively, Prabath's venture is an effort to make a change in the Sri Lankan fashion consumer market via creating a unique look in the Sri Lankan women's attire. The underlying concept is to revive the local craft communities. By doing so, 'Prabath' collections would carry the Sri Lankan cultural flag in the international fashion arena. His mission is to dress the local women with clothing which will create an identity to the wearer, to create an impression on the mind that they are helping their own less fortunate communities by wearing them while being proud in wearing a quality garment made within their own nation, Sri Lanka.

Charini and Prabath are both proud to say their products are made completely in Sri Lanka. Both brands try to maintain the personality as a 'sustainable fashion badge' and want to change any unpleasant international image about Sri Lankan manufactured apparels. Both their collections can be a subject matter for Sri Lankan design capabilities. 'Charini' and 'Prabath' fashion products mainly target the upper categories of the 'fashion pyramid' what has been introduced in many instances in the fashion system. Their collections within their own contexts can be categorised in 'branded bridge lines' which includes much fashion content, a comparative high price and vibrant design change with limited quantities. They are several segments above the bottom layer of basic and commodity category of the lowest price, slowest design change and mass quantity of production. According to Raustiala and Sprigman (2006) identified fashion pyramid, their targets fall in to the business line of designer ready-to-wear clothing segment which is below the top level of designer haute couture at very high price. Both their works are an awakening for the brand presence from Sri Lankan fashion industry.

Charini and Prabath as young fashion designers have had many industry collaborations along the successful path they have come so far. Their brands came to the consumer awareness and in the

future as well will hold to its excellence via keeping continuous connections with true fashion shows, events, movements, industry associations, and collaborations.

The British Council and British Fashion Council collaborate in organising an International Fashion Showcase during London Fashion Week. In February 2013, British Council of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka High Commission of UK together with the AOD initiated Sri Lanka participation at the event. Charini and Prabath have got the opportunity along with eight other emerging designers to take part in the showcase as representatives from 'the future of fashion in the region' of Sri Lanka.

The Colombo Fashion Week is one of the true fashion events in Sri Lanka, which has a clear set of aims to achieve its excellence. CFW is not just a glittering fashion show. It does not carry the same aims of another fashion week of a major fashion city. But its aims are well context related and speak on behalf of Sri Lanka. It is a fashion platform to the emerging Sri Lankan fashion designers to polish their ideas, showcase their talents, and get exposed to international fashion events and designers. CFW also a guide for the new designers to learn how to build a good presentable collection to attract buyers, for the retailers to know better marketing, for the academics to think beyond what they teach, and for the media to create fashion debates on designers, collections, ethical practices, and sustainable development of the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

The selected three case studies depict responsible acts each has taken towards a sustainable style within their own contexts that might be suitable to an emerging design oriented fashion industry of Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSION

This section summarises the research project in relation to whether it has answered the key research questions, namely:

- i. What is the role of the fashion designer in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka?
- ii. How can Sri Lanka achieve a sustainable economic development via fashion design?
- iii. Is Sri Lanka's fashion design education meeting the needs of graduates as they transition into the T&A industry?

Evidence centred on the aim of the Sri Lankan fashion design education, the readiness of the fashion designer who qualifies from the particular local education system and external collaborations and support the fashion designer gets to become a strong partner in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. The conclusion aims to show that the context of the developing Sri Lankan fashion industry – as outlined in Part One – has been demonstrated by the data analysis of fashion design education and designer case studies in Part Two. The implications of the research will then be considered.

The research was mainly carried out because no research has been conducted into the emerging design oriented fashion industry in Sri Lanka. Much research has been undertaken on Sri Lanka's export-oriented apparel manufacturing industry and its contribution to the national economy. Since, fashion design was a newly added value in the local clothing industry practices, no research had focused on the local fashion design education, the emerging fashion designer and the potential contribution via fashion design excellence towards sustainable economic development.

In the thesis, the 'Part One' involved in identifying the background concepts, definitions, current practices and trends that belong to the notion of the emerging creative economy based on fashion industry practices of Sri Lanka. In doing so, Chapter 1 discussed the economic benefits, concepts and literature central to the association of creativity around a global fashion industry system. The main aim of Chapter 1 was to understand the relationship between creative practice and economic value attached to the global fashion industry system.

Since the fashion designer is a key person in the fashion industry system, the research needed a special focus and a clear understanding about the social, economic and environmental aspects of the venture of a 'fashion designer' in any context. Therefore, Chapter 2 highlighted the role of the fashion designer in becoming a successful professional character in the job market and in bringing a sustainable development approach to the fashion industry via fashion design practice. The chapter mainly aimed at identifying the setup the fashion designer has to become a part of in building a creative economy for a country like Sri Lanka and the global sustainable concepts the fashion designer has to deal with in building a sustainable fashion system for Sri Lanka.

The first two chapters of Part One provided the big picture of fashion design oriented global system, and thereby created the background understanding for the discussion in Chapter 3 about Sri Lanka's current position in the field of fashion practices. This chapter focused on the structure of Sri Lanka's

economy, its clothing industry and practices and the fashion design education the country provides to educate fashion designers suited to Sri Lanka's emerging creative economy.

The discussions in Part One provided background knowledge to the analysis of data presented in Part Two. A qualitative data analysis was carried out on the two types of data collection methods: a questionnaire and case studies. The research primarily aimed at collecting data from emerging fashion designers to understand their current position in the local fashion industry system. The sample respondents of the questionnaire were locally qualified fashion designers. The questionnaire analysis presented in Chapter 4 was designed to evaluate the relevance of Sri Lankan fashion design education and the qualified fashion designers' readiness for transition to the fashion industry after a formal local fashion education.

Conducting a questionnaire was not sufficient to understand the true strength the local fashion designer might have as a contributor to the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka. Therefore, three case studies were conducted particularly to bring examples of the potential practices a fashion designer might carry out in building a sustainable fashion industry for the country. Therefore, Chapter 5 presented strong cases of two locally qualified fashion designers to illustrate the route to their role as a fashion designer in the developing economy of Sri Lanka. The other case study explored a major fashion event in Sri Lanka, the Colombo Fashion Week (CFW) that has been established with a prime focus on upgrading the local fashion talents.

Sri Lanka has identified the emergence of a design oriented fashion industry system on top of the long established export-oriented textiles and apparel (T&A) manufacturing industry as an essential part of the aim to build a creative economy. This concept does not have a long history. It started when the local T&A manufacturing industry wanted to incorporate fashion design and development practices in order to move the industry up the global apparel value-chain to gain more economic advantage. With this expectation, fashion design education was introduced in both government and private sector providers in Sri Lanka to train fashion designers to meet the industry's need. Since 2004, locally qualified fashion designers with appropriate knowledge, improved skill and nurtured creativity in fashion design, started to enter the local job market. A new creative profession began to attract attention within the country. The emergence of the fashion designer profession added value and created design consciousness and awareness in many who were involved in the country's clothing industries.

A decade on since the introduction of fashion design education in the country, the T&A industry has met their goal of incorporating design and developments into their established practices of manufacturing for export orders. Design and development departments have been formed and creative job opportunities have been introduced. Since the first batch of fashion designers qualified in 2004, the T&A manufacturing industry has recruited fashion designers to their companies. Qualified fashion designers have started their careers as 'junior designer' positions and gradually worked their way up the ranks till today there are a number of graduates who have senior 'design manager' positions in the industry (refer to section 4.2.2).

To a great extent, fashion designers have fulfilled their role as a company employee and have supported the companies' goal to move-up the apparel value chain. Thereby, most of the companies have reached the ODM level while the lead firms have even reached the OBM level of the apparel value-chain (refer to section 1.4.1). These levels were achieved due to the value-added productions via fashion design excellence. Therefore, today, the T&A manufacturing industry, the strongest national economy supporter as an industry and the biggest employer, is building a reputation for achieving sustainable economic development through fashion design.

Although educational providers began fashion design education as a T&A manufacturing industry requirement, each institute has built curricula based on different aims and objectives. Yet, to date, there has not been much evidence of attempts to introduce curriculum innovations that would train fashion designers to take up future challenges of a sustainable fashion industry system for Sri Lanka. Therefore, the research aimed at collecting data from those who qualified via three established fashion design education providing institutes to evaluate the effectiveness of their training to meet the local needs. They were: (i) Department of Integrated Design, University of Moratuwa (UoM) – [government], (ii) Department of Textiles and Clothing Technology, UoM – [government] and (iii) Academy of Design – [private].

However, most of the questionnaire participants are at present working for T&A manufacturing companies where all of them are satisfied with their current employment based on getting a good pay and/or getting a chance to apply what they learnt as students (refer to section 4.2.2). Yet, some are not very satisfied about their job brief, though they were given the 'fashion designer' job title. The image of a 'fashion designer' in a fashion design student or a newly qualified designer is not the same as what they have to do in a mass-manufacturing firm. Yet, when they are working for a manufacturing based company they have to bear the consequences of working for the company need. Sri Lanka as a developing economy strongly needs the export T&A manufacturing industry system within the country, mainly as a socio-economic supporter. However, its practices depends on external buyer decisions and thereby the decisions of the company management. But, fashion designers upgrading to design-manager positions seems a positive change in the current industry practices where the management tries to absorb the creative class into the decision making platform.

Identifying the global trends and change in the local fashion system, the other major fashion employment ally, the clothing retailers, also try to absorb fashion design excellence in to their practices. Retailers those who have their own manufacturing systems have given a value to the fashion designer position and thereby have started to recruit qualified fashion designers to their firms. Therefore, fashion designer positions were not only created by the export-oriented T&A manufacturing firms, but also retailers have become employers for them.

The fashion designer career differs from other fashion industry career positions due to the significance of its creative practice (refer to section 2.1.2). From the company's perspective, fashion designers are bringing economic advantage by meeting the buyer options and/or fulfilling the changing consumer demands. Designers are generally major decision makers, trend creators and inventors of new

experiences. But in Sri Lanka's current situation, designers who have not reached manager level have not got the chance of making decisions that could introduce major changes to manufacturing and production. They still have to follow the existing practices where they have to work within the employment hierarchy and follow higher management decisions. But in the future, one can expect a change in the local clothing industry when the creative class reach the decision making level in the companies.

When the fashion designer has the motivation to reach personal goals of creating their own label, it seems that employers are not restricting them from doing so. Both the case studies of fashion designers; Charini (refer to section 5.2) and Prabath (refer to section 5.3), have been and still work for an employer. Yet, they both have reached their targets in developing their own clothing line. Sri Lanka's current trend is to build a sustainable fashion industry system. The government, current industry and many private event organisers (ex: CFW – refer to section 5.1) are at present supporting the fashion designer in this venture. Today, the country needs trend creators, new fashion experiences and extraordinary decision makers to take up the challenges and create the pressure for change.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A major revisioning of the fashion industry based on incorporation of practices of sustainability especially through fashion design practice is needed in the local clothing industry of Sri Lanka in order:

- to upgrade the export oriented apparel industry – (refer to section 3.2)
- to supply the local consumer with much quality, suitable fashion products as import substitute – (refer to section 3.2.1)
- to develop the local fashion related cultural industry practices in order to revive the traditional craft practices, help social development and poverty eradication of the communities involved – (refer to section 3.3)
- to minimize and utilize factory waste of textiles effectively – (refer to section 2.2)
- to become a force to other creative industries and fashion associates of Sri Lanka (ex: industries of film, tourism, craft, etc.) – (refer to section 2.4)
- to compete with global economy development patterns via entering to creative economy – (refer to section 1.1)

In doing so, Sri Lanka can expect to achieve sustainable economic development via clothing industry practices. The most capable group of people to make the above changes are the 'fashion designers' who can apply creative practice to bring creative solutions to reach a sustainable fashion industry system. Therefore, the role of the Sri Lankan fashion designer needs to be defined as one that can participate in the fashion system in creating above changes to meet a sustainable economic development. Thereby, the locally qualified fashion designer will be a direct participant in the emerging creative economy of Sri Lanka.

Since Sri Lanka already has the garment manufacturing labour force within the country system, the designer can be the intermediate force in the fashion business between the top layer of up market consumer and the bottom layer of the labour. This was highlighted in the research via the two case studies of two designers, Charini and Prabath.

However, Sri Lanka can expect much social, economic and environmental advantage via fashion design practice and the fashion designer is the identified key figure in this venture. Anyone with an inborn talent to create aesthetically pleasing fashions can consider himself as a fashion designer. But the research concluded that a fashion designer has to have a greater responsibility in projecting social, economic and environmental sustainability than just creating aesthetically pleasing clothing, in order to suit Sri Lanka's developing economy system. At this point, the fashion design education curricula have a deep responsibility to adequately prepare a young generation of individuals to face the challenges and support the country's economy by building a sustainable fashion industry system.

The above mentioned multiple sustainable fashion industry changes may not be achieved by a single fashion designer. But the education can target those areas by nurturing fashion talents to adequately adjust to the local system. Section 3.4 particularly brought one fashion design curriculum approach in the country where major consideration is placed on teaching fashion designers to bring solutions to current fashion industry issues and make sustainable changes for the country.

Sri Lanka's fashion education so far has succeeded in meeting the prime need of the country, namely, filling the creative class gap. The first generation of fashion graduates has taken the initial creative job vacancies in the context. They have succeeded within the system and the industry too welcomes the benefits. Yet, the analysis of the questionnaire revealed that students were not given much business knowledge required to adequately apply to establishing a fashion design practice. As fashion industry is a business, and at a time when the country is seeing the emergence of a creative economy, emerging fashion designers need to have fashion business knowledge, entrepreneurial skills and know global perceptions of fashion design practice to succeed in the future. Then the fashion designer can create new business opportunities.

A decade on since the initiation of fashion education in the country, the country's fashion industry set up is not the same. Curricula have to be reviewed and revised to meet the new challenges in the system to adequately prepare future fashion designers. The current challenges for the fashion designers would be:

- lack of fashion business knowledge and entrepreneurial skills to forefront their creative ideas and create the sustainable industry changes,
- lack of guidance to many other fashion career paths in the emerging creative economy,
- lack of exposure to new technological advancements,
- lack of research and education developments in the creative field in relation to the world development patterns,

At this stage, the Sri Lankan government, while encouraging private investments in higher education, should equally improve the quality of the public higher education system especially boosting the quality of design education. Both public and private design education providers thereby should have the same goal to meet the country's needs by nurturing a young generation to suit the emerging creative economy.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The research totally focussed on the current fashion designers who were trained under the existing local fashion education and had the transition to the current T&A industry system of the country. In the venture of Sri Lanka going towards a sustainable economic development via fashion design, the needs will evolve and many changes will occur accordingly in the future. As a result, the future fashion design requirement for the industry will be changed immensely. At this point there will be many areas as potential future research. Some of such research areas would be:

- The true value of a fashion designer who works for mass manufacturing industry of a developing economy
- The interference of the cultural, educational, economic and political systems for fashion as a creative industry of a developing economy
- The global trends vs. sustainable design practices for the emerging creative industries of developing economies
- The new fashion design education reforms and affiliated policies on future benefits

This could be extended to different type of economies in the global context.

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APPENDIX 1 - THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Default Question Block

Name of the Institution of your initial Fashion/Textile Design training/education:

- Fashion & Textile Design – Faculty of Architecture, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
- Fashion Design & Product Development – Department of Textile and Clothing Technology, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
- Fashion Design – Academy of Design, Sri Lanka
- Other

Year of completion?

Qualification gained?

- HND BA B.A (Hons) B.Des. B.Des. (Hons) Other

Age?

Gender?

- Male Female

Marital status?

- Single Married

Current country/city of residence?

- Sri Lanka (please specify the city)

- Other country (please specify the country)

School attended?

School level highest examination?

- GCE O/L GCE A/L

- Other

If A/L is completed, what was your subject stream?

- Mathematics Bio-Science Arts

- Other

Please select the most relevant

	Subject/skill knowledge gained at the institution as a student:					As a designer in the industry/freelance, having the subject/skill knowledge is:			
	Didn't learn	Just an introduction to the subject	Learnt the basics	Learnt to a medium level	Learnt to an advanced level	Not important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Design process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collection planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Figure drawing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Colour studies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fashion Illustration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fashion theory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mood-boarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spec drawing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fibre types	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Didn't learn	Just an introduction to the subject	Learnt the basics	Learnt to a medium level	Learnt to an advanced level	Not important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Fabric construction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fabric types	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fashion Merchandising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Garment construction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sri Lankan Arts/Crafts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20th century Design	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History of clothing (Sri Lanka)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
History of clothing (world)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Machine Knitting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Didn't learn	Just an introduction to the subject	Learnt the basics	Learnt to a medium level	Learnt to an advanced level	Not important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Weaving – Machine-loom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Machine Embroidery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Photoshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Illustrator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lectra (CAD)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gerber (CAD)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pattern Making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sewing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tie-dye technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Didn't learn	Just an introduction to the subject	Learnt the basics	Learnt to a medium level	Learnt to an advanced level	Not important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Batik technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Block Printing technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Screen Printing technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hand Embroidery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patch-work / Appliqué	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weaving – Handloom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hand knitting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Didn't learn	Just an introduction to the subject	Learnt the basics	Learnt to a medium level	Learnt to an advanced level	Not important	Moderately important	Very important	Don't know
Professional Law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industry work placements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Industry policies & procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text"/>									
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What was your target group of your final graduation design project?

- Local – Lower income Local – middle income Local – high income International – middle income
 Other

Why did you select Fashion Design for your higher education training?

- It is my vision to become a Fashion Designer since I was small
 A member of the family is working in a fashion related field
 I did not have any other choice
 Other

How satisfied are you with your fashion design education?

- Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Somewhat Dissatisfied Neutral Somewhat Satisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied

Please explain the reason for your answer for the above question.

What positions have you held in a fashion related industry?

- Never have worked in a fashion related industry
 Junior fashion Designer
 Fashion Designer
 Textile Designer
 Design Manager
 Fashion Merchandizer
 Design developer
 Fashion journalist
 Fashion photographer
 Stylist
 Other

In what category are you employed at present?

- Fashion related occupation Non-fashion related occupation Self-employed Unemployed

Which of the following best describe what you do now?

- Designing Management Merchandising Journalism Photography Fashion design education
 Other

Which of the following best describe your self-employment?

- Entrepreneur Freelance fashion designing Visual merchandising
 Other

Specify your occupation (optional)

How satisfied are you with your present employment?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Somewhat Dissatisfied Neutral Somewhat Satisfied Satisfied Very Satisfied

Please justify your answer for the above question briefly

What was your goal as a fashion design student?

- Create my own label in Sri Lanka
 Work for a famous international fashion brand
 Work for the export oriented garment industry in Sri Lanka
 Other

So far, to what extent have you achieved your goals?

Far short of expectations Short of expectations Equals expectations Exceeds expectations Far exceeds expectations

Please justify your answer for the above question briefly

Do you have any experience in working in government initiated Fashion/Textile related projects?

- Yes No

Please comment on your experience in working in government initiated Fashion/Textile related projects briefly:

According to your understanding how do you see the present fashion industry in Sri Lanka?

- As a business As an art or craft As a social need Other

Considering the present local consumer demands and if you were given the opportunity to have your own clothing line, what would be your target group?

- Basic and commodity apparel for low price
 Better fashion for moderate price
 Branded clothing for a higher price
 Branded high fashion for a very high price
 Other

Do you see fashion as a promising field in future Sri Lanka?

Yes No

Please explain your above answer briefly:

Briefly, how do you see yourself in another five years?

Comments:

RS/JC/JU 2012