



STUDY OF RECONSTRUCTION OF SUSTAINABLE GARMENTS FROM USED CLOTHING

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ABSTRACT:

Reconstruction of garments refers to the creative transformation of used clothing into fashionable, contemporary designs. This sustainable approach to fashion has gained prominence in recent years due to rising concerns about textile waste and the environmental impacts of fast fashion. By repurposing old garments—often those carrying sentimental value—into new, trend-appropriate clothing, the process extends the life cycle of textiles while significantly reducing waste. This study explores the reconstruction of sustainable garments using discarded or out-of-fashion clothing, including traditional Indian sarees. The objective is to design and develop fashionable attire that promotes eco-conscious practices while fostering emotional sustainability. The research examines the textures, fabric grains, durability, and overall characteristics of reused textiles to evaluate their suitability for modern garment creation.

Objectives:

- Designing stylish outfits from one or multiple used garments.
- Preserving the sentimental value associated with old clothing.
- Encouraging emotional attachment, financial savings and resource conservation through sustainable fashion choices.

The scope of the study is limited to women's garments designed for individuals aged 25–35. All creations are developed from old or previously used clothing, thereby demonstrating that sustainable fashion can be both affordable and emotionally meaningful. Ultimately, this research positions garment reconstruction not only as an eco-friendly initiative but also as a creative design challenge that merges tradition with innovation.

Keywords: *Reconstruction, Transformation, Sustainable fashion, Emotional attachment, Financial savings.*

INTRODUCTION :

Reconstruction of Garments

Reconstructing garments means giving new life to old clothes by changing them into stylish and modern outfits. Instead of throwing away garments that are out of fashion, we can creatively redesign them to suit the latest trends. This process not only reduces waste but also keeps the emotional value of clothes alive, especially when they are gifted by someone special like a father, husband, or friend.

Tips for Reconstructing Garments

- A dress form is very useful because it helps in draping while redesigning.
- Patterns or parts of patterns can be used if the fabric is large enough.

- More than one garment can be combined to make a new design.

- Extra fabrics can be added, for example, using a leather skirt with a fabric lining.

- Choose garments with good quality fabric and large fabric panels like sarees, skirts, or shirts.

Tips for Designing a Reconstructed Garment

- Study the garment's original fabric and design to find features worth keeping.

- The purpose of the original garment can guide the new one (like casual T-shirts or dressy evening wear).

- Adjust size and fit if needed by adding or reducing fabric.

- Hide stains or worn-out areas with design details like ruffles, pockets, or collars.

- Small changes like new buttons, added pockets, or shortening the length can completely refresh the look.

How to Reconstruct a Garment

- Clean old garments before starting.
- Either take apart the whole garment or just remove unwanted parts.
- Start building the new design, testing ideas on a dress form or with pins before stitching.
- Use normal garment construction techniques—add interfacing, facings, or bindings if required.
- Quilting or patching can strengthen weak areas.
- Small details like ruffles can hide stains and make the outfit unique.

This study uses unused sarees and old garments with emotional value, showing how they can be turned into fashionable and meaningful clothing instead of being discarded.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study adopts a practice-based and experimental methodology, focusing on the reconstruction of discarded garments into innovative fashion pieces. The approach emphasizes sustainability and creative reuse while retaining aesthetic and functional qualities.

Sample Selection. The selection of fabrics and garments was undertaken based on their texture, drape, fall, colour, weight, and durability. These parameters were considered essential, as they directly influence the adaptability of fabric for reconstruction. To ensure variety, fabrics such as cotton, silk, satin, net, and denim were included, thereby enabling experimentation across different textures and finishes.

Locale of Study. The practical work was conducted at Sakhi Designer Boutique, Nagpur, which provided both professional infrastructure and a creative environment for the experimentation process.

Research Tools and Materials. Since the research is practice-based, the primary materials comprised old or previously used garments and fabric remnants. Tools included sewing machines, hand-sewing equipment, tailoring instruments, and embellishment supplies. Design techniques such as draping, pleating, layering, and surface manipulation were employed to transform the discarded fabrics into new garments. This approach not only tested the durability and flexibility of the fabrics but also highlighted the potential of reuse in contemporary fashion.

Hypothesis:

The study is guided by the hypothesis that old garments, when handled carefully and creatively, can be reconstructed into beautiful, attractive, and emotionally resonant pieces of clothing. By integrating innovative design practices, these garments acquire new aesthetic appeal while preserving elements of their original form. This process strengthens the emotional connection between wearer and garment, as it carries both personal history and renewed style. Furthermore, the hypothesis supports the belief that sustainable fashion practices can merge creativity with environmental responsibility, proving that up cycled garments are not only viable alternatives to fast fashion but also meaningful contributions to sustainable living.

DESIGN 1

The recycling of Draped Tunic dress to Tiered Party Frock

Garment Description

Original Garment (The "Before"): Draped Tunic Top

Style: Modern Indian/Fusion wear. The garment is heavily draped, sleeveless tunic or kurta-style top, worn over white leggings.

Fabric: Light-to-medium weight, potentially cotton, silk-blend, or a similar textured fabric with a subtle sheen, in a neutral/beige colour palette.

Intricate Draping: The most defining feature is the complex, asymmetrical, and voluminous draping across the bodice and waist, creating a sculptural effect. This suggests a significant amount of fabric was utilized.

Color/Pattern: Solid, neutral beige/cream.

Construction: Likely involves minimal seaming for the main body, with the shape being achieved primarily through folding and manipulation (draping).

Reconstructed Garment (The "After"): Tiered Party Frock

Design Concept: A playful and voluminous party frock suitable for a 6-year-old. The goal was clearly to maximize the aesthetic appeal and create a high-fashion/designer look from the existing material.

Fabric Utilization & Textures:

Primary Fabric (Beige): The original tunic fabric was used for the bodice and the outermost/top tiers of the skirt. The original fabric's subtle sheen lends a dressy quality.

Secondary Fabric (Silver/White/Contrast): A new, contrasting fabric was introduced for the middle tiers of the skirt. This fabric appears to be metallic white netting, organza, or a stiff silk with a distinct, shimmering finish. This is a crucial design choice for creating contrast, structure, and a "party dress" aesthetic.

Netting (Volume): The overall volume suggests that a lightweight fabric like organza (likely beige to match or white to provide lift) was added underneath the main tiered structure to serve as a petticoat or crinoline for fullness, a common technique in children's party wear.

Bodice: The excess fabric from the original garment's drape has been cleverly repurposed to form a simple, structured bodice with a wide, decorative bow or knot detail at the center front neckline. The shoulder straps are simple.

Skirt Silhouette: The silhouette is a full, bell-shaped skirt achieved through a multi-layered, tiered construction.

DESIGN 2

The recycling of Saree to Anarkali- Palazzo Set

Traditional saree featuring a striking contrast. The upper part (likely the pallu or blouse fabric) is a vibrant rani pink shade, while the Palazzo section is a sheer beige net fabric heavily embellished with pink-toned floral embroidery. This combination is classic occasion wear.

The "After" costume presents a completely reconstructed Anarkali- Palazzo Set, which modernizes the look while retaining the original textiles' richness and colour palette:

1. **Fabric Repurposing:** The rani pink fabric from the original saree (likely from the main pallu and body) has been used to create the Anarkali-style Kurta. This preserves the bold colour as the dominant feature of the upper body.

Design Details: The Kurta features a relatively straight cut with a subtle flare, suggesting it's more of a long, flowing a moderate Anarkali silhouette. The sleeves are a modern three-quarter length.

2. **The Palazzo Bottoms**

The heavily embroidered beige net fabric, which was the skirt portion of the saree, has been transformed into the Palazzo-style bottoms. The intricate showcased in a fresh, contemporary context. The volume and flow of the wide-legged bottoms complement the length of the kurta.

DESIGN 3

The recycling of Denim Pencil skirt to short pant

The original garment's tight, knee-length fit has been converted into a much shorter, more relaxed-fit short. The skirt's original waistband and pockets are retained, which ensures a polished, professional look. By cutting the skirt and forming the new inseam/crotch, a completely new, casual silhouette was achieved. Paired with a contrasting light blue knit tank top, the entire outfit is instantly modernized.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

When we reuse and recreate old clothing in new ways, we are using our imagination—it becomes a way of expressing ourselves. However, turning old clothes into something attractive can be a challenge. Many garments are often thrown away when they no longer fit, go out of style, or are replaced by newer versions.

The process involves repurposing, reconstructing, re-cutting, and enhancing them with decorative elements such as embroidery, stitching, threads, crochet techniques, patch work and discharge printing. These changes transform the original look of the garments into fresh designs that match new fashion trend

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Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.



Figure 5.



Figure 6.