

Unraveling the Political Complexities of the Textile and Clothing Waste Ecosystem; A Case Study on Melbourne Metropolitan Civic Waste Management Practices

Authors : Yasaman Samie

Abstract : The ever-increasing rate of textile and clothing (T&C) waste generation and the common ineffective waste management practices have been for long a challenge for civic waste management. This challenge stems from not only the complexity in the T&C material components but also the heterogeneous nature of the T&C waste management sector and the disconnection between the stakeholders. To date, there is little research that investigates the importance of a governmental structure and its role in T&C waste managerial practices and decision makings. This paper reflects on the impacts and involvement of governments, the Acts, and legislation on the effectiveness of T&C waste management practices, which are carried out by multiple players in a city context. In doing so, this study first develops a methodical framework for holistically analyzing a city's T&C waste ecosystem. Central to this framework are six dimensions: social, environmental, economic, political, cultural, and educational, as well as the connection between these dimensions such as Socio-Political and Cultural-Political. Second, it delves into the political dimension and its interconnections with varying aspects of T&C waste. In this manner, this case-study takes metropolitan Melbourne as a case and draws on social theories of Actor-Network Theory and the principals of supply chain design and planning. Data collection was through two rounds of semi-structured interviews with 18 key players of T&C waste ecosystem (including charities, city councils, private sector providers and producers) mainly within metropolitan Melbourne and also other Australian and European cities. Research findings expand on the role of the politics of waste in facilitating a proactive approach to T&C waste management in the cities. That is achieved through a revised definition for T&C waste and its characteristics, discussing the varying perceptions of value in waste, prioritizing waste types in civic waste management practices and how all these aspects shall be reflected in the in-placed acts and legislations.

Keywords : civic waste management, multi-stakeholder ecosystem, textile and clothing waste, waste and governments

Conference Title : ICTES 2020 : International Conference on Textile Exchange Sustainability

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : December 10-11, 2020