

Urban Ethical Fashion Networks of Design, Production and Retail in Taiwan

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Abstract : The circular economy has become one of the seven fundamental pillars of Taiwan's economic development, as this is promulgated by the government. The model of the circular economy, with its fundamental premise of waste elimination, can transform the textile and clothing sectors from major pollutant industries to a much cleaner alternative for a better quality of all citizens' lives. In a related vein, the notion of the creative economy and more specifically the fashion industry can prompt similar results in terms of jobs and wealth creation. The combining forces of the circular and creative economies and their beneficial output have resulted in the configuration of ethical urban networks which potentially may lead to sources of competitive advantage. All actors involved in the configuration of this urban ethical fashion network from public authorities to private enterprise can bring about positive changes in the urban setting. Preliminary results through action research show that this configuration is an attainable task in terms of circularity by reducing fabric waste produced from local textile mills and through innovative methods of design, production and retail around urban spaces where the network has managed to generate a stream of jobs and financial revenues for all participants. The municipal authorities as the facilitating platform have been of paramount importance in this public-private partnership. In the explorative pilot study conducted about a network of production, consumption in terms of circularity of fashion products, we have experienced a positive disposition. As the network will be fully functional by attracting more participant firms from the textile and clothing sectors, it can be beneficial to Taiwan's soft power in the region and simultaneously elevate citizens' awareness on circular methods of fashion production, consumption and disposal which can also lead to the betterment of urban lifestyle and may open export horizons for the firms.

Keywords : the circular economy, the creative economy, ethical urban networks, action research

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