



INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN FABRIC DOMINANCE ON THE CULTURAL DESIGN OF MALAYSIAN ARTIFACTS

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Abstract

To develop into a modern, diversified, and free market, Malaysia has kept rapid and inclusive economic development, along with real GDP, at a substantial 6.4% annually since 1970. Malaysia as a country has always put efforts to build its image by establishing economic partnerships with many countries across the globe. Trading between Malaysia and other foreign countries has not only affected the cultural art design of artifacts but also has changed the tourism industry. A literature review guided this study and the results indicated that foreign fabrics have both positive and negative aspects when it comes to Malaysian cultural artifacts. Foreign fabrics have increased the creativity and improvement of local textile industries in designing various materials for Malaysians to meet customer needs in the current competitive business economy. However, the long-term result is that the cultural designs of Malaysia are likely to get extinct. As a result, the article recommends that the local textile industries should design textile materials that accommodate both foreign (modern) and indigenous fabrics to avoid losing Malaysian identity.

Keywords: embroidery, foreign fabric, culture, artifacts, Malaysia

Introduction

To develop into a modern, diversified, and free market, Malaysia has kept rapid and inclusive economic development, along with real GDP, at a substantial 6.4% annually since 1970 (Haseeb et al., 2021). In terms of global economic competitiveness, Malaysia placed 24th in 2013. Because of this calling, Malaysia's economy has become one of the world's most dynamic. The textile and garment business as well as the manufacturing and service sectors both contributed significantly to Malaysia's rapid economic development (Said et al., 2019). Aside from this, the overall expansion rate of the apparel industry over the last 5 years has been quite impressive, making the



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apparel market's growth rate quite remarkable. Fabric can be woven or non-woven, knitted, tufted, knotted, or bound together. The fashion business makes use of a wide range of textiles for a wide range of purposes and designs (Claxton & Kent, 2020). Products are constructed using various textiles and materials depending on their intended function. Fabrics come in a wide variety of styles and textures to better accomplish a variety of tasks. Textiles can be made from a wide variety of sources, including vegetation, animals, and synthetic materials created by humans. Fabrics that combine these methods have unique looks and textures, giving buyers more variety. Take decorative rugs as an example; depending on the cloth type and weave, the resulting pattern can be either simple or intricate, and the resulting sensation underfoot can vary greatly. Malaysia as a country has always put efforts to build its image by establishing economic partnerships with many countries across the globe (Sharma, 2019). Malaysia has established economic relations with China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, the United States of America, and India which are the world's largest exporters of textiles and clothing (Kim, 2019a). Before Malaysia and China strengthened their trading systems, China had close ties with Singapore. However, for more than a decade now, China has confirmed Malaysia as the greatest trading partner even Singapore. Trading between Malaysia and other foreign countries has not only affected the cultural art design of artifacts but also has changed the tourism industry. Foreign fabrics have both positive and negative aspects when it comes to Malaysian cultural artifacts. Foreign fabrics have increased the creativity and improvement of local textile industries in designing various materials for Malaysians to meet customer needs in the current competitive business economy. However, at the same time, foreign fabrics have caused a change in how the cultural designs of textiles have been structured. This document thus explores the influence of foreign fabric dominance in the cultural design of Malaysian artifacts. Trends in the textile industry across the world, the leading countries in the textile industry, the foreign fabric dominance in the Malaysian fabric industry, and the Malaysian cultural artifacts make the thematic subheadings.

Trends in the Textile industry across the world

The global textile industry is extremely important to economies all over the globe. The textile industry, which includes fiber production and garment manufacturing, provides necessary goods to people all over the world. The market is expected to increase in size to \$266.38 billion by 2025. With the start of a new decade and the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the textile industry has adapted to the changing times (Khurana, 2022). The textile business, like the rest of the world, is adjusting to the modern era by adopting cutting-edge production and marketing strategies. These tendencies shed light on the way the textile industry will grow and influence global economic conditions in the years to come;

Demand shift to natural fibers- The increased desire for natural fabrics like Cotton, milkweed, flax, and hemp constitutes one of the most noticeable new textile trends. Some common examples of natural sources for these strands are animal fur, plant matter, and minerals. Due to their durability and wide availability, natural fabrics have gained in popularity (Karimah et al., 2021).

One of the most significant developments in the textile business in 2022 is the rising popularity of natural materials. China, India, and the United States are just a few of the many countries in which a fiber crop like cotton thrives. This rapid expansion of natural fibers is a significant factor in the expansion of the textile business. As demand rises, so has the pace at which natural fibers are produced, and this pattern is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

Moving to non-Woven Fabrics- The shift toward non-woven fabrics is another major development for the textile business in 2022. Thermal or chemical methods create non-woven fabrics, which are like sheets and materials. Non-woven fabrics are linked together chemically, as opposed to woven textiles, which are created by transforming fibers into yarn (Patnaik & Patnaik, 2020). In the Asia-Pacific and Europe, non-woven fabrics are extremely prevalent. Non-woven textiles have become increasingly popular in recent years. Non-woven fabrics are commonly used in a wide variety of hygiene products. Soft and absorbent non-woven cloth is perfect for most sanitary applications. Fast liquid absorption is especially useful for products like diapers and sanitary napkins. Furthermore, constant birth rates around the world have led to an increase in demand for baby diapers and other baby supplies (Ahmed et al., 2020). Aging populations have a greater need for personal care items, which increases the demand for non-woven fabrics. The demand for non-woven fabric is expected to rise as the number of people in the 65 and over age category continues to swell.

Use of Digital Textile Printing- Recent years have seen an uptick in the use of digital cloth printing. This method is unlike conventional textile methods because it prints a digital file's image onto the fabric (Tunakova et al., 2020). In comparison, conventional textile printing uses rotary screens to transfer dyes onto the fabric. The proliferation of digital printing is large because it is user-friendly and has a minimal ecological effect.

Leading Countries globally in the textile industry

China- China has surpassed the United States as the world's largest cloth exporter as a result of technological advances and enhanced production methods. It is responsible for 52.2% of the world's yearly cloth output (Anner, 2020). China has earned a worldwide reputation as a leading manufacturer of high-quality silk. A gorgeous, long-lasting, and reasonably priced cloth is also strong and lightweight. Furthermore, many businesses import cotton from China.

Italy- Yearly 6.7% of the world's textile production comes from Italy. Beyond this, Italian woolen and silk textiles are in high demand all over the world. In addition to producing high-quality fabrics, Italy's textile industry is also renowned for its cutting-edge finishing and coloring techniques (Sedita & Ozeki, 2022). High-quality goods with a wide range of textures and colors are the result of labor-intensive finishing processes. Each cloth is expertly crafted using decades of experience.

United States of America - United States is a great option for companies looking to source non-woven, industrial, and specialty textiles (Shuvo et al., 2020). More than 5.3% of all textiles produced worldwide come from the United States. In the textile industry, it is among the most competitive exporters and manufacturers in the world. In addition, it ranks eighth in the globe in terms of textile exports. About \$27.14 billion is the approximate worth of America's export market. There has been a dramatic influx of the industry's top decorative fabric manufacturers to the country because of its technologically advanced textile production processes (Kim, 2019b).

Turkey- Turkey's textile sector provides more than 10% of the country's GDP and is worth approximately USD 12 billion. Its exports of home accent textiles are rapidly expanding, making it the seventh-largest market in the globe (Normuminovich et al., 2021). Cotton cultivation in Turkey dates back to the time of the Ottoman Empire. Due to this, the country continues to take pride in its role as a worldwide textile powerhouse. Turkey has one of the most diversified marketplaces, it exports a lot of knitted fabric and cotton materials, making it a popular source for imported décor textiles. In addition to this, silk and Angora goat hair (Mohair) are also staples in Turkish textile production (Ünal & Üçgül, 2021). Turkey is a major supplier of brocade textiles (Kehma and Catma) to the global textile industry.

Foreign Fabric dominance's effects on Cultural design In the Malaysian textile industry, the case of Pelangi Cloth

The Malaysian Investment Development Authority reports that the textile and apparel industry in Malaysia has seen a rise in the amount of inspiring investment over the past four years (Crisis, 2019). Not only does foreign investment play a significant role but also foreign fabric accounts for 75% of the Malaysian textile industry. In addition, Malaysian local textile investment has been relatively slow for the last six years, except in 2014 (Zhang, 2021). Foreign and local investment in manufacturing and the textile and clothing industries was particularly noteworthy in 2014, accounting for roughly half of all investment. In 2015, the indicator for manufacturing in Malaysia was at 4.8, while the index for textiles, clothing and footwear was at 7.5 (Farhana et al., 2022). Malaysia's government has taken several significant steps over the course of many years to build up the country's textile industry and increase the country's ability to import and export textiles (Nayak et al., 2019). The textile-manufacturing sector in Malaysia has been expanding steadily except for the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

In 2014, China was the source of 43% of Malaysia's yarn imports and 33% of its textiles imports, with the remainder coming from a variety of other nations (Xiao et al., 2017). The total import worth of fabrics was RM4.9 billion. The first quarter of 2015 saw a slight increase in significance manufacturing of 5.6% (initially it had been 5.4%), helped by an operate smoothly of open and market manufacturing industries which increased by around 6.3% (previously it had been 5.4%), urged by electrical and electronics products, chemicals and their products, petroleum, wood, and wooden products (Farhana et al., 2022). In addition, it was 9.7 percent in the textile, clothing, leather, and footwear industries. Real benefit per employee, a measure of output, rose by 3.3% in

2015 in Malaysia, reaching RM 75,538 From RM 73,091 in 2014. The increase in GDP this year of 5.0% can be attributed in part to the nation's increased productivity. In 2015, the manufacturing industry saw the greatest productivity increase, at 7.0%. Compared to the prior year, manufacturing output rose from RM 98,307 to RM 105,226. More importantly for the Malaysian context, the import of textile materials from many countries into Malaysia has stayed stable over the past few years.

Malaysia is one of the many nations with a rich textile heritage that has developed over centuries and reflects the country's distinctive culture (Lierse, 2018). To meet the requirements of the Malay people, particularly those living on the Malay Peninsula, textile production has been a highly developed art and craft for centuries. Individually or as a group, they honed their skills in the production of textiles for everyday use using time-tested techniques. People in the original Malay settlement on the Malay Peninsula had already demonstrated their ingenuity in the textile industry by repurposing patterns, designs, and materials from other countries (Yusof, 2021). Pelangi fabric has a significant cultural and historical significance in Malay culture. However, its status and uniqueness are no longer valued by modern society, unlike that of other Malay legacy textiles whose production and use have begun to dwindle. Previous studies depict that the traditional Pelangi cloth has a very fascinating and distinctive pattern. However, due to the high globalization in the textile industry, foreign fabric has made the local manufacturers shift their designs to meet the "current tactile trends" as a way of meeting consumer satisfaction. Foreign fabrics' outlook has influenced even the paintings of Malaysia's cultural heritage. Several aspects of traditional Malaysian art, including batik and tribal motifs, have been incorporated into the contemporary painting to better represent Malaysia. Typical subjects for paintings include kampung and indigenous life, as well as the colonial scenery of the nation's many heritage locations.

CONCLUSION

Foreign fabrics have gained more popularity among Malaysian residents thus making a drift in the designing and painting of Malaysian textiles. Foreign fabric makes at least 75% dominance in Malaysia's textile industry. This may be seen as a great improvement as it boosts economic growth. However, the long-term result is that the cultural designs of Malaysia are likely to get extinct. As a result, the article recommends that the local textile industries should design textile materials that accommodate both foreign (modern) and indigenous fabrics to avoid losing Malaysian identity.

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