



Parivartan: Crafting Tassels to Re-invent Garment Making

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Abstract: Constructing a garment involves laying fabric in layers and cutting pattern pieces during marker making, a process that leaves 15–20% of the fabric unused and classified as waste. Larger enterprises are often able to recycle this waste, but for small-scale industries and independent designers, using this resource productively remains a challenge. This practice-based research upcycles such pre-consumer textile waste while creating self-employment opportunities for semi-skilled artisans. Tassels have long featured in Indian decorative practice, appearing on garments, home décor, and animal accessories, yet have rarely been reimaged beyond their conventional role as a trim or minor component. This project explored tasselling as a garment-making technique in its own right, focusing on minimal resource use: the final construction involves no sewing and can be transformed into another product. Because of the nature of material procurement, each piece is individual in colour, texture, and feel, embodying the principle of ethical fashion. Using the simple techniques of sorting, cutting, knotting, and twisting cords from textile waste, cords were interlaced and interwoven directly on the body form to build the shell of a garment, subsequently fleshed out with inserted fabric cut-outs; bespoke garment forms were developed for varied anatomical regions through draping, minimising waste throughout. Beyond their creative contribution, these garment forms open a dialogue on the impulsive consumption driving fast fashion, serving as a trigger to reuse, curate, revive, reimagine, and reinvent material.

Keywords: Pre-consumer waste, upcycling, circular economy, handmade textiles, bespoke garments, local economies.

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