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**WEAVING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR FASHION: THE ROLE OF  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN EAST LONDON**

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**ABSTRACT**

Social enterprises, embracing the triple bottom line also known as the 3Ps: people, planet, and profit (Elkington, 1998) have challenged traditional fashion systems by prioritising purpose over profit. These enterprises serve as change-makers in the industry, advocating for ethical working conditions, sustainable livelihoods, and responsible production. Among these social enterprises, there is one type that provides skills training in textile design and production to people from varying backgrounds and socio-economic classes, particularly those from disadvantaged communities and marginalised groups. Additionally, they collaborate with local sustainable fashion brands and retailers to product their collections. The present research focuses on the role of these social enterprises in East London fashion cluster, aiming to explore their contribution to sustainable and ethical practices in the fashion industry. According to the Fashion District Report (2019), 23% of London's social enterprises and employment in the fashion industry are situated in East London, driving growth in design, retail, and manufacturing. This research aims to investigate the role of East London social enterprises in promoting sustainability and ethical practices. The study employs a qualitative case study approach, conducting interviews with social enterprise representatives and focus groups with trainees. The objective is to understand how the training provided by these enterprises impacts the lives of individual trainees and how these enterprises contribute to the East London fashion cluster.

**Keywords:** Fashion, Sustainability, Ethical practices, Social enterprises, East London

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