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Innovative Approaches to Developing Home Textiles from Unwanted Materials

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Structured Abstract

Background: Home textiles refer to a range of decorative and functional textile products used in residential spaces, including carpets, curtains, bedding, towels, cushion covers, and upholstery. While these items enhance comfort and aesthetics, the disposal of used home textiles has become an increasing environmental concern. In Malaysia, home textiles that are no longer in use are often treated as *unwanted materials* and discarded through conventional waste disposal systems, resulting in a growing volume of textile waste in landfills. Although small-scale initiatives have begun promoting textile recycling, public awareness and participation remain limited. Therefore, this study focuses on understanding home textile disposal practices among Malaysian consumers and explores the potential of transforming unwanted textile materials into sustainable home furnishing products through a design-based approach.

Methods: This study adopted a quantitative approach using a structured questionnaire to examine home textile disposal practices among Malaysian consumers. Data were collected manually through the physical distribution of printed questionnaires to households from diverse backgrounds. A pilot test was conducted to ensure clarity of the instrument, and ethical considerations were addressed through voluntary participation and respondent anonymity. The data were analysed using descriptive statistical methods, including frequency and percentage analysis, with the support of Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets.

Results: The findings indicate that used home textiles in Malaysia are largely regarded as unwanted materials and are commonly disposed of through conventional waste streams, reflecting limited awareness of more sustainable disposal alternatives. Disposal decisions are mainly driven by factors such as wear and tear and changing household needs. In addition to these findings, the study resulted in the development of home textile products using various types of unwanted materials and discarded fabrics sourced from household environments. The product outcomes demonstrate that the combination of different unwanted materials and fabrics can be effectively transformed into functional, aesthetic, and sustainable home textile products through a design-based approach.

Conclusion: This study highlights the issue of home textile waste in Malaysia and demonstrates the potential of unwanted materials to be transformed into sustainable home textile products through a design-based approach. The findings also indicate the need to increase public awareness and promote alternative disposal practices to support more sustainable textile waste management.

Keywords: Home textiles; Unwanted materials; Textile waste; Sustainable design; Recycling

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