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Local Wisdom-Based Fashion Shows as a Strategy for Sustainable Cultural Tourism Development: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Fashion shows inspired by local textiles and dress traditions are increasingly used to attract cultural tourists. Their contribution to sustainability, however, depends on whether they preserve cultural meaning and benefit the communities whose knowledge they present. This article aims to examine how locally grounded fashion performances may support sustainable cultural tourism. A systematic literature review was designed using the PRISMA 2020 framework, with searches planned across Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and SINTA/GARUDA. This draft synthesises 10 mapped journal articles published within the last decade. Because the search log and eligibility decisions have not yet been documented, the corpus and PRISMA flow remain preliminary. The synthesis identifies four connected themes: cultural interpretation, visitor experience and destination image, community participation, and sustainability assessment. Empirical studies indicate that traditional costume experiences can strengthen visitors' engagement with heritage, while research on fashion and intangible cultural heritage links contemporary presentation with destination perception. One destination-image study analysed 522 tourist questionnaires. The evidence also shows that garment design, staging, and heritage settings influence how cultural meanings are communicated. Nevertheless, the mapped studies provide limited comparable evidence on artisan income, the transmission of craft skills, benefit sharing, and environmental impacts. Locally grounded fashion shows therefore offer a promising cultural tourism strategy when artisans and cultural custodians help shape the event and its benefits. Future event-level research should measure cultural, social, economic, tourism, and environmental outcomes before claims of sustainable impact are made.

Keywords : Local Wisdom; Fashion Shows; Cultural Tourism; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Sustainable Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism destinations increasingly use fashion performances to make local textiles, dress traditions, and craftsmanship visible to visitors. A runway can bring together clothing, music, storytelling, and historic settings in a memorable event. Yet visibility alone does not establish sustainability. When a tradition is adapted for an audience, organisers must decide whose account of that tradition is presented, who has authority over its symbols, and whether artisans and communities benefit from the attention it receives. Research on heritage tourism in Toraja, Indonesia, illustrates the importance of conserving local values while improving cultural interpretation for visitors (Kausar & Gunawan, 2018). Local wisdom offers a useful starting point for addressing these decisions. In this review, it refers to knowledge, meanings, practices, and skills that communities develop and transmit in relation to their cultural setting. In a fashion performance, these may

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appear through textile techniques, motifs, forms of dress, or the stories attached to them. The challenge is to translate such knowledge into an engaging visitor experience without reducing it to decoration. Brown and Vacca (2022) argue that cultural sustainability in fashion requires attention to craft knowledge and to the risks of cultural appropriation. Their argument suggests that the provenance of a garment and the participation of its knowledge holders matter as much as its visual appeal. The tourism value of traditional dress is nevertheless substantial. Lee and Lee (2019) show that wearing traditional costume at a heritage festival can create an experiential connection with place. Calinao's (2020) semiotic analysis further demonstrates that the meaning of a fashion show emerges from the interaction of garments, staging, and heritage settings. These findings make a locally grounded runway a plausible cultural tourism strategy, but they also expose a central research problem: an event can communicate heritage effectively while leaving its cultural, social, and environmental consequences unexamined.

Recent scholarship explains the relationship between fashion and tourism through several complementary perspectives. Experiential tourism considers how visitors encounter culture through participation and sensory engagement (Lee & Lee, 2019). Fashion communication examines how heritage practices acquire new visibility when they are presented through contemporary forms. Xie, Lai, Zhang, and Huang (2025) use this perspective to analyse the transformation of intangible cultural heritage in destinations, while Xie, Zhu, Zhang, and Huang (2025) examine its fashioning within tourism. Together, these studies indicate that contemporary presentation can extend the audience for living heritage, although the conditions under which that change benefits its bearers require close attention. A second body of work addresses destination outcomes. Cho and Ko (2025) investigate how fashion-week experiences relate to city brand equity, electronic word of mouth, and revisit intention. Yu, Xie, Zhang, and Huang (2025) examine how fashioning intangible cultural heritage influences destination image. Yamagishi and Doering (2024) likewise show how fashion and lifestyle practices contribute to the production of a rural tourism destination. These studies establish that fashion can shape how a place is perceived and promoted. Their emphasis on image and visitor response, however, provides only part of the evidence needed to judge whether a fashion event supports sustainable cultural tourism. Research on cultural production provides a closer view of the heritage involved. Djuniwarti, Kurniawan, and Rachmaningsih (2026) explore the transformation of traditional attire associated with the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace into ready-to-wear fashion linked to cultural preservation and tourism. Brown and Vacca (2022) position craft as a resource for culturally sustainable design. Read alongside Calinao (2020), these works suggest that a fashion show can function as a form of interpretation: garments carry meanings, while design and staging influence which meanings audiences encounter. This interpretation is strongest when artisans' skills and the historical context of dress remain legible within the event. A third perspective concerns the sustainability of the destination and the event. Zou, Meng, Bi, and Zhang (2021) develop an ecological-niche approach to evaluating cultural festival tourism, drawing attention to environmental conditions, resources, demand, and support for events. Zubiaga, Sopelana, Gandini, Aliaga, and Kalvet (2024) propose indicators for assessing cultural tourism's effects across destinations. Research on the sustainable tourism development of traditional Chinese drama also evaluates heritage through humanistic value, project quality, tourism development, and sustainability. Collectively, these studies offer criteria that extend beyond attendance or publicity. They encourage assessment of cultural continuity, community outcomes, and resource use alongside visitor appeal.

Although these fields increasingly intersect, the evidence remains dispersed across different objects of study. Research on fashion events often centres on branding and visitor intentions (Cho & Ko, 2025); studies of heritage fashion examine communication and destination image (Xie et al., 2025; Yu et al., 2025); and sustainability frameworks commonly assess festivals or cultural destinations more broadly (Zou et al., 2021; Zubiaga et al., 2024). Each explains an important part of the phenomenon, but their findings have yet to be brought together around fashion performances explicitly based on local wisdom. This separation leaves several questions unresolved. How does a fashion performance convey the meanings of local dress to visitors? What roles do artisans, cultural custodians, designers, organisers, and tourism institutions play in deciding how heritage is represented? Which reported benefits reach local communities, and which outcomes are merely assumed from visitor interest or destination exposure? Finally, how are event materials, production practices, and longer-term cultural effects evaluated? The Indonesian example of Cirebon demonstrates the potential to connect traditional attire with contemporary fashion and tourism, while the Toraja study underscores the need for local values and interpretation in heritage management (Djuniwarti et al., 2026; Kausar & Gunawan, 2018). A synthesis across these concerns is needed before locally rooted runway events can be advanced as a sustainable strategy.

This systematic literature review aims to synthesise recent peer-reviewed evidence on locally grounded fashion performances as a strategy for sustainable cultural tourism. It asks how local knowledge is represented in fashion events, how those events shape visitor experiences and destination value, and what evidence exists concerning cultural preservation, community participation, economic benefits, and environmental responsibility. The review will also examine the methods and indicators used in existing studies so that claims about sustainability can be distinguished from claims about promotion or popularity. The proposed contribution is an integrated framework connecting cultural representation, community agency, visitor experience, and sustainability outcomes. Its novelty lies in treating the fashion performance as both a designed tourism experience and a setting in which decisions about living heritage are made. This approach brings the insights of fashion communication and experiential tourism into dialogue with cultural sustainability and destination assessment (Lee & Lee, 2019; Brown & Vacca, 2022; Xie et al., 2025; Zubiaga et al., 2024). In sum, locally grounded fashion shows have credible potential to communicate heritage and enrich cultural tourism. Whether they contribute to sustainable tourism depends on evidence about cultural meaning, community authority, shared benefits, and event practices. A systematic synthesis can clarify what is currently known, where evidence is thin, and how future fashion events and research can be evaluated against those wider goals.

METHODS

This study is designed as a systematic literature review of locally grounded fashion performances as a strategy for sustainable cultural tourism. Its proposed corpus comprises 10 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2017 and September 2026. The review follows the PRISMA 2020 reporting framework, which requires transparent documentation of search, screening, eligibility, and inclusion decisions (Page et al., 2021). Because the database search log and screening decisions have not yet been supplied, the 10 articles are treated as the target corpus, not as a verified final selection.

Searches will be conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and SINTA/GARUDA. Search strings will combine terms for the event (“fashion show,” “fashion event,” “traditional costume”), its cultural basis (“local wisdom,” “indigenous textile,” “intangible cultural heritage”), and its intended outcome (“cultural tourism,” “destination image,” “sustainable tourism”). English and Indonesian equivalents will be used where appropriate. The search date, database-specific strings, retrieved records, and duplicate-removal decisions will be retained in a screening log so that the selection process can be reproduced.

Eligible studies must be journal articles within the stated publication period and examine at least two of the following: locally rooted fashion or dress, cultural events or visitor experiences, heritage interpretation, community participation, and tourism sustainability. Studies focused solely on garment construction or fashion marketing without a meaningful cultural tourism connection will be excluded. Title and abstract screening will precede full-text assessment; each full-text exclusion will receive a recorded reason. This distinction matters because traditional costume experiences (Lee & Lee, 2019), fashion shows in heritage settings (Calinao, 2020), and heritage-inspired fashion products (Djuniwarti et al., 2026) address related but different aspects of the review question.

A structured extraction form will record authorship, year, country, research design, cultural context, type of fashion activity, stakeholders, reported tourism outcomes, and evidence concerning cultural, social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Methodological limitations will be noted for each article. The analysis will use thematic synthesis rather than a pooled effect estimate because the anticipated studies include qualitative interpretation, destination studies, and event assessments with different outcome measures. Brown and Vacca’s (2022) account of craft and cultural sustainability will inform the cultural dimension; Kausar and Gunawan’s (2018) work on local values in Toraja will inform community and heritage interpretation. Visitor and destination outcomes will be considered in light of Cho and Ko (2025), Yu et al. (2025), and Xie et al. (2025), while the wider sustainability assessment will draw on Zou et al. (2021) and Zubiaga et al. (2024). These works provide analytical concepts; their findings will be coded as review data only if they pass the documented eligibility assessment. researchinnovation.

The synthesis will compare how studies link fashion performances to cultural meaning, visitor experience, community benefit, and sustainable destination management. Divergent findings and missing evidence will be reported explicitly. Once screening is completed, the PRISMA diagram must be updated with the audited number of records at every stage; a final count of 10 alone cannot establish how the articles were selected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Profile of the Evidence

The ten articles mapped below address the review topic from four related perspectives: heritage-based dress and fashion presentation, visitor experience and destination image, community and craft knowledge, and sustainable tourism assessment. This is a preliminary evidence synthesis, not a completed PRISMA selection result: the search log and full-text eligibility decisions have not yet been documented. Accordingly, "10 articles" describes the studies analysed in this draft; it must not be reported as the verified number included through systematic screening.

Table 1. Conceptual and Empirical Findings From the Ten Mapped Articles

Study and focus	Evidence or approach	Finding relevant to this review
Kausar and Gunawan (2018), heritage tourism in Toraja	Destination case study	Conserving local values and improving interpretation are central to managing the relationship between heritage and tourist experience. A fashion event should therefore explain the cultural meanings of dress, not simply display it.
Lee and Lee (2019), traditional costume at a heritage festival	Study of visitors' costume experiences	Wearing traditional costume offers a participatory encounter with heritage and place. This supports interactive components alongside runway presentations.
Calinao (2020), fashion shows in built heritage	Semiotic analysis	Garments, setting, and staging work together to produce meaning. Venue choice and presentation can strengthen cultural interpretation, but can also alter how heritage is understood.
Zou et al. (2021), cultural festival sustainability	Indicator-based assessment of festivals	Festival sustainability depends on a combination of environmental conditions, resources, demand, and institutional support. Event popularity alone is an insufficient measure.
Brown and Vacca (2022), craft and cultural sustainability in fashion	Conceptual analysis of craft-based strategies	Sustaining craft knowledge and addressing cultural appropriation are necessary considerations when traditional forms enter contemporary fashion.
Zubiaga et al. (2024), sustainable cultural tourism indicators	Comparative indicator framework	Tourism impacts require assessment across cultural heritage and destination outcomes. Their framework provides a basis for evaluating fashion events beyond promotional reach.
Cho and Ko (2025), fashion week and city branding	Empirical study of fashion destination experience	Fashion-week experiences are examined in relation to city brand equity, electronic word of mouth, and revisit intention. These are relevant tourism outcomes, although they do not by themselves establish cultural sustainability.
Xie, Lai, Zhang, and Huang (2025), fashion communication of intangible heritage	Destination-focused study	Contemporary fashion communication can give intangible heritage new visibility in tourism. The finding highlights the need to examine how traditions are transformed and represented.
Yu, Xie, Zhang, and Huang (2025), heritage fashion and destination image	Tourist survey; 522 questionnaires reported	Fashioning intangible heritage was associated with a stronger fashionable image of heritage destinations; memorable experiences and place identity acted as mediators. This is evidence for destination-image mechanisms, not proof of long-term sustainability.
Djuniwarti, Kurniawan, and Rachmaningsih (2026), Cirebon palace attire	Design study of traditional attire adapted into ready-to-wear fashion	Heritage-inspired garments may connect cultural preservation with tourism products. The study offers an Indonesian example of adaptation, while leaving the longer-term effects of a fashion *event* open for examination.

Thematic Synthesis

Fashion performance can make heritage legible through experience. Traditional clothing communicates more than visual style: its materials, techniques, and use carry cultural meanings. Lee and Lee (2019) indicate the value of direct costume experience, while Calinao (2020) shows that the relationship between clothing and venue shapes an audience's interpretation. Applied to locally grounded fashion shows, these findings support performances that incorporate accounts of textile origins, making processes, and the significance of motifs. This is a conceptual implication of the two studies; neither establishes that every runway event will produce cultural learning.

Contemporary presentation may strengthen tourism appeal. Evidence is strongest for visitor perception and destination image. Cho and Ko (2025) investigate fashion-week experience in relation to branding and future visitor behaviour. Yu et al. (2025) provide more direct evidence that fashioning intangible heritage can influence how visitors perceive a heritage destination, with memorable experience and place identity helping explain that relationship. Xie et al. (2025) add a communication perspective: heritage gains visibility as it enters contemporary fashion forms. Together, these articles support a plausible route from heritage presentation → meaningful experience → destination perception. They do not establish a common effect size or demonstrate that increased attention benefits local producers.

Cultural sustainability depends on who shapes and benefits from the event. Brown and Vacca (2022) foreground the continuity of craft and the ethical implications of using cultural forms in fashion. Kausar and Gunawan (2018) show the importance of local values in heritage tourism management. The Cirebon study demonstrates how traditional attire can inspire a contemporary product (Djuniwarti et al., 2026). Synthesised, these findings suggest that the involvement of artisans and cultural knowledge holders should be assessed throughout design, interpretation, and benefit sharing. The mapped studies do not provide comparable measures of artisan income, decision-making authority, or intergenerational transmission; these remain evidence gaps.

Tourism success and sustainability require different indicators. Visitor interest, image, and revisit intention describe valuable outcomes, but sustainability also concerns heritage continuity, community effects, and the resources used to stage an event. Zou et al. (2021) and Zubiaga et al. (2024) offer wider assessment approaches that can be adapted to fashion performances. On the present evidence, the clearest supported conclusion is that locally grounded fashion shows have potential as cultural tourism experiences. Evidence that they deliver sustained cultural, economic, and environmental benefits is less direct and requires event-level evaluation.

Table 2. Proposed Indicators Derived From the Synthesis

Dimension	Indicators for future fashion-event studies
Cultural	Accuracy of interpretation; involvement of cultural knowledge holders; continuity of textile and dress-making skills
Social	Artisan and community participation in decisions; visitor learning; perceived cultural respect
Economic	Payments to makers; local procurement; sales and benefits retained locally
Tourism	Visitor experience; destination image; intention to revisit; connections with other cultural attractions
Environmental	Material sourcing; garment reuse; event waste; transport and venue-related resource use

Discussion

The findings suggest that locally grounded fashion shows can contribute to sustainable cultural tourism when they operate as interpreted cultural experiences rather than isolated spectacles. Across the ten mapped articles, the strongest direct evidence concerns visitor experience and destination image. Evidence for sustained benefits to artisans, cultural continuity, and environmental performance is more limited. This distinction is important for interpreting the review: a successful runway presentation may attract attention, but attention is only one step toward sustainable destination development. The discussion below interprets the ten mapped studies alongside five related studies; the latter provide context and do not expand the preliminary review corpus.

Fashion Shows as Cultural Interpretation

A garment presented on a runway can make local wisdom visible through its textile, form, making process, and associated story. Yet those meanings are not automatically apparent to an audience. Calinao (2020) demonstrates that garments and heritage settings jointly shape the meanings communicated by fashion shows. Lee and Lee (2019) show that engaging with traditional costume can give visitors a more participatory heritage experience. Read together, these studies suggest that locally grounded performances should connect what visitors see with what they can learn: who made the garment, why a motif is used, and how dress relates to community life.

The importance of interpretation is particularly clear in an Indonesian context. Kausar and Gunawan (2018) identify the conservation of local values and better explanation of heritage as concerns in Toraja tourism. Djuniwarti, Kurniawan, and Rachmaningsih (2026) show how traditional Cirebon palace attire can be adapted into contemporary fashion products associated with preservation and tourism. These studies support

creative adaptation, provided that an audience can still recognise the garment's cultural origins. They do not, however, demonstrate that adapting a design or staging a show necessarily safeguards the skills and knowledge through which the garment was produced.

Contemporary Design and Destination Appeal

The reviewed evidence indicates a plausible connection between heritage-based fashion and tourism appeal. Cho and Ko (2025) examine fashion-week experiences in relation to city brand equity, electronic word of mouth, and revisit intention. In a study reporting 522 tourist questionnaires, Yu, Xie, Zhang, and Huang (2025) find that fashioning intangible heritage influences the fashionable image of a heritage destination, with memorable tourism experiences and place identity serving as mediators. Xie, Lai, Zhang, and Huang (2025) likewise position fashion communication as a means of giving intangible heritage new visibility. These findings explain how cultural presentation may affect destination perceptions, although they should not be read as measurements of community welfare or long-term conservation.

Five related studies help interpret this mechanism without being counted among the ten mapped articles. Li, Zhang, and Wood (2024) examine the interplay of familiarity and novelty in appreciation of intangible heritage. Li and colleagues (2025) investigate whether modernised elements can attract young festivalgoers to Chinese opera. Their insights suggest a design challenge for fashion events: contemporary staging may help visitors approach unfamiliar traditions, but the event still needs to communicate the tradition it draws upon. This is an inference across different cultural forms, not a direct experimental finding about local-wisdom-based runway shows.

Community Agency and Cultural Sustainability

The central sustainability question is who controls the representation of local culture and who gains from it. Brown and Vacca (2022) argue for the importance of craft knowledge and caution against appropriation in fashion. Kausar and Gunawan's (2018) findings on local values reinforce the need to involve people connected to the heritage being presented. For a fashion show, meaningful involvement could include artisans and cultural custodians in motif selection, garment production, accompanying explanations, and decisions about compensation. These are practical implications of the literature; the ten mapped studies do not provide a common measure of such participation.

Related tourism research warns against equating a fashionable destination with an inclusive one. Yamagishi and Doering (2024) show how the creation of a fashionable rural destination can involve unequal influence over the representation of place and its economic opportunities. Xie, Zhu, Zhang, and Huang (2025) examine the fashioning of intangible cultural heritage within tourism. Together, these studies strengthen the case for asking whether local makers retain authority as their work reaches new audiences. The review cannot yet conclude that fashion events routinely deliver equitable benefits; rather, it identifies community agency and benefit sharing as outcomes that future event studies must document.

Measuring Sustainable Tourism Outcomes

The final finding concerns evaluation. Zou, Meng, Bi, and Zhang (2021) assess cultural festival sustainability through a framework covering the event's environment, resources, and demand. Zubiaga, Sopelana, Gandini, Aliaga, and Kalvet (2024) propose indicators for comparing cultural tourism impacts. In related heritage research, Zhao and colleagues (2024) use assessments from 52 experts to evaluate dimensions including humanistic value, tourism development, and sustainability. These approaches show why visitor numbers or favourable publicity alone cannot substantiate a sustainability claim.

For locally grounded fashion shows, a stronger evaluation would combine visitor learning and destination perception with evidence of artisan payment, local purchasing, continuity of craft skills, and event resource use. On the evidence presently mapped, the most defensible conclusion is conditional: fashion performances can make local heritage engaging and may improve destination appeal, while their contribution to sustainable cultural tourism depends on cultural interpretation, community authority, shared benefits, and measurable event practices. Documenting these outcomes in future studies would turn a promising strategy into a testable one.

CONCLUSION

This review indicates that fashion shows grounded in local wisdom can support sustainable cultural tourism when they present dress as living heritage and involve the people who sustain it. Across the ten articles mapped in this draft, studies of traditional costume and heritage settings show how participation, garments,

and staging can communicate cultural meaning. Empirical tourism studies further associate fashion experiences with destination image, memorable experiences, and intentions to revisit. One study of heritage fashion and destination image reported 522 tourist questionnaires, providing evidence of a visitor-perception mechanism. These findings support the potential of fashion performances to enrich cultural tourism, but they do not establish that every event produces lasting local benefits.

Conceptually, the synthesis connects four conditions: accurate cultural interpretation, community authority, meaningful visitor experience, and measurable sustainability outcomes. The evidence is less developed for artisan income, the transmission of craft skills, benefit sharing, and environmental impacts. Organisers should therefore evaluate who designs and explains the garments, who receives payment, what visitors learn, and what resources the event consumes.

The ten studies constitute a preliminary mapped corpus. Because the search and screening record has not yet been completed, the conclusions should not be presented as the final findings of a PRISMA-verified systematic review. Future research should assess local fashion events over time using cultural, social, economic, tourism, and environmental indicators.

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