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Flagship Store with Onyx Stone and Mother of Pearl Maximalist

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Abstract: *This study explores how traditional Indian textile motifs – specifically Banarasi brocade can be digitally and materially translated into the interior design of a flagship fashion store. It investigates appropriate use of luxury materials like onyx stone and Mother of Pearl, aesthetic and functional integration, and how this approach can reinforce brand identity, customer experience and cultural heritage.*

Drawing inspiration from Banarasi brocade's intricate patterns and cultural richness, the project incorporates materials like onyx stone and mother of pearl, celebrated for their aesthetic elegance and structural versatility. Literature reveals that onyx, with its translucency and natural veining, adds dramatic sophistication to interiors, while mother of pearl offers timeless beauty and mechanical resilience, as evidenced by studies on nacre's biomimetic properties and its innovative use in modern lacquerware.

Further, research into stone craft in contemporary interiors emphasizes how material tradition can be revitalized through experimental design techniques. By referencing sustainable approaches such as onyx waste reuse in concrete, the project also touches upon environmentally conscious practices.

The synthesis of these materials and traditions reimagines Indian craftsmanship in a modern context, creating a flagship store that is both luxurious and culturally rooted.

Keywords: *Flagship store, Onyx stone, Mother of Pearl, Maximalist interior, Banarasi brocade*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Interior Design

Interior design is a discipline that extends far beyond the arrangement of furniture or the selection of decorative elements. It is a field rooted in the understanding of how people experience space and how design decisions influence comfort, behaviour, and emotional response.

As society and technology continue to evolve, the role of interior design has expanded to address new challenges—ranging from sustainability and material innovation to cultural expression and the enhancement of human well-being.

B. Flagship Store

Flagship stores have become one of the most significant expressions of interior design within the retail industry. Unlike typical retail branches that prioritize product display and transactional efficiency, a flagship store acts as the physical embodiment of a brand's identity, values, and narrative.

It is not merely a place where goods are sold; it functions as an immersive environment where customers can engage with the brand on a sensory, emotional, and experiential level. As such, the design of a flagship store requires a higher degree of conceptual clarity, material innovation, and spatial storytelling.

In contemporary retail culture, flagship stores serve multiple roles. They operate as marketing tools, cultural landmarks, social spaces, and experiential hubs. Interior designers must therefore approach these spaces with an understanding of how spatial design influences consumer behaviour, brand perception, and emotional engagement.

The store must communicate a cohesive identity through its layout, materials, lighting, colour palette, and architectural elements. Instead of relying solely on signage or merchandise, a well-designed flagship store immerses visitors in a world curated by the brand.



C. Onyx Stone

Onyx is one of the most visually striking and luxurious natural stones used in contemporary interior design. Known for its translucent quality, vibrant veining, and rich colour variations, onyx has become a preferred material for designers aiming to create dramatic focal points and high-impact visual statements. Unlike more common stones such as marble or granite, onyx possesses a gemstone-like appearance that adds depth, elegance, and a sense of exclusivity to interior spaces.



D. Mother of Pearl

Mother of pearl, also known as nacre, is a natural material renowned for its iridescent sheen, delicate beauty, and timeless elegance. Formed inside the shells of oysters and molluscs, it has been used for centuries in decorative arts, jewellery, and craftsmanship. In contemporary interior design, mother of pearl has gained renewed attention for its ability to introduce refinement, luminosity, and cultural richness into interior spaces. Its unique surface quality—shimmering with subtle hues of pink, gold, blue, and white—makes it an expressive material capable of elevating both traditional and modern design concepts.

Within interior environments, mother of pearl is cherished for its ability to catch and reflect light, producing a soft, glowing effect that enhances the ambience of a room. This natural iridescence makes it particularly effective in feature walls, inlays, furniture detailing, lighting fixtures, and decorative panels. Designers often leverage its reflective quality to create visual depth and sophistication, especially in luxury settings such as boutique hotels, flagship stores, and couture showrooms, and high-end residences.



E. Banarasi brocade

Banarasi brocade is a timeless textile art form that epitomizes the opulence and heritage of Indian weaving traditions. Originating from the ancient city of Varanasi (formerly Banaras), this luxurious fabric is renowned for its intricate patterns woven with gold and silver threads, often inspired by Mughal motifs such as floral vines, paisleys, and architectural elements. Crafted primarily from silk, Banarasi brocade has long been associated with ceremonial attire, especially bridal wear, due to its rich texture and regal appearance. Each piece is a testament to the meticulous craftsmanship and cultural legacy that has been preserved through generations of skilled artisans.

Banarasi brocade designs are deeply inspired by Mughal art and architecture, featuring motifs like floral vines, paisleys, and intricate jaali patterns. These luxurious weaves also draw from nature, incorporating elements such as lotus flowers, peacocks, and mangoes. Persian influences and traditional Indian symbolism—like kalash and conch shells—add to their richness, making each piece a reflection of cultural heritage and artistic finesse.



II. REVIEW LITERATURE

- 1) Nikiema, Daouda, Balland, Pascale, Sergent, Alain (2023) investigated the mechanical behaviour of 3D printed onyx parts like how wall layers, infill, etc affect strength. This paper helps us understand exotic applications of onyx and combining onyx with newer fabrication techniques.
- 2) Nugroho, Hadi, Danang (2022) he has stated to focus on using onyx stone waste in concrete mixtures; especially mechanical properties like compressive strength.
- 3) Luz, M, Gisela, Mano, F, Joao (2009) their research paper explores how nacre's "brick-and-mortar" layout gives rise to mechanical toughness; also describes strategies to replicate such features in synthetic materials.
- 4) Choi, Ho, Seung, Kim, L, Kim (2014) as affirmed by them nacre has interesting photonic / light resonance properties. They look at how localized modes of light in nacre layers can hybridize, which could lead to light amplification.
- 5) Oaki, Yuya, Imai, Hiroaki (2005) in their research paper discusses nacre's multilevel hierarchical structure (nanoscopic to microscopic). Highlights how nacre achieves toughness, strength and also how its architecture allows for organic/inorganic composite mimics.
- 6) Kamal, Arif, Mohammad 2024 they surveyed how stone craft is applied in interiors: techniques, finishes, decorative applications, trends. Discusses durability, visual effects and how stone finishes, textures are used in contemporary interior design
- 7) Cuchor, David, Kopas, Peter, Broncek, Jozef, Brumercik, Frantisek (2023) wrote a conference paper about Onyx material used in 3D printing. That is the context is all about composite / printed onyx material, effect of layer orientation / thickness on mechanical properties, tensile testing etc.
- 8) A nacre inspired structural material with thermochromic properties and mechanical robustness by atomic-level design 2025 It tells that there develops a composite mimicking nacre (brick and mortar microstructure) With added properties: thermochromic (changes colour with temperature) and flame retardant.
- 9) Gilbert, Pupa, Metzler, A, Rebecca, Olabisi, M, Ronke, Coopersmith, N, Susan (2007) research focuses on the microstructure of nacre in abalone shells; shows that mother of pearl is 3000 times more fracture resistant than its mineral component (aragonite) due to its hierarchical layered structure.
- 10) Zhao, JunGuo (2022) examines traditional lacquerware with Mother of Pearl inlay and modern product design using those techniques; includes accessories, packaging, utensils, public art.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Current research shows several gaps in luxury retail interior design: Indian textile heritage like Banarasi brocade is rarely integrated into store spaces; little work explores how textile motifs can be translated into durable materials such as onyx or mother-of-pearl; and studies on the use of these materials in Indian retail are minimal. There is no clear design framework for blending traditional crafts with modern maximalist principles, nor much research on customer experience in richly ornamental interiors. Sustainability and maintenance issues are underrepresented, and there are no case studies combining onyx, mother-of-pearl, and Banarasi motifs together, leaving a major gap in understanding how to create culturally authentic yet contemporary flagship stores.

IV. PURPOSE

This research explores a culturally enriched interior design proposal for a flagship store of an Indian fashion designer, reinterpreting traditional Banarasi brocade motifs through the innovative use of onyx stone and mother of pearl. The study aims to bridge heritage textile design with contemporary luxury retail interiors by using material-driven storytelling to strengthen brand identity and user engagement. Onyx, with its translucency and veined elegance, is identified as ideal for feature walls and spatial zoning, while mother of pearl, with its iridescent durability, is suited for intricate ornamentation. Current scholarship lacks examples of these materials being combined with Indian motifs in retail contexts, making this project both relevant and original. By translating the visual language of Banarasi brocade into spatial and material form, the thesis proposes a design framework that balances cultural narrative, luxury appeal, and material functionality, offering a precedent for contextually rooted, material-conscious interiors in India's fashion retail industry.

V. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To reinterpret traditional Banarasi brocade motifs and patterns into interior elements
- 2) To explore the potential of onyx stone and Mother of Pearl as expressive design materials
- 3) To celebrate Indian craftsmanship and cultural heritage through interior storytelling
- 4) To create a material and motif language that can become a signature style for the brand.

VI. AIM

The aim of this thesis is to design a flagship store for an Indian fashion designer that translates the visual and cultural of Banarasi brocade into a luxurious, immersive interior environment, through the thoughtful integration of onyx stone and Mother of Pearl as primary materials.

VII. HYPOTHESIS

The intricate patterns, motifs and cultural symbolism of Banarasi brocade are thoughtfully translated into spatial elements using materials like onyx stone and mother of pearl.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

- 1) Lack of real client: The project is hypothetical, there is no direct collaboration with an actual fashion designer.
- 2) Geographical & Site specific factors: The location is limited to Bhopal only

IX. METHODOLOGY

This research paper adopts a qualitative methodology that integrates case study analysis, material investigation, and public perception surveys to examine the design of maximalist flagship stores featuring onyx stone and mother of pearl. The study begins with a review of existing literature on luxury retail environments and maximalist design principles, followed by comparative case studies of flagship stores that employ similar opulent materials to establish contextual benchmarks. Material analysis is conducted to evaluate the aesthetic, cultural, and sensory impact of onyx and mother of pearl within interior spaces, considering their historical symbolism and contemporary applications. To capture user perspectives, structured surveys were administered to potential consumers, focusing on how these materials influence perceptions of luxury, cultural storytelling, and brand identity. Data from these sources are triangulated to generate insights into how maximalist materiality can enhance experiential retail design, ensuring that the findings are both academically rigorous and practically relevant to the evolving discourse on flagship store interiors.

X. CONCEPT AND DESIGN

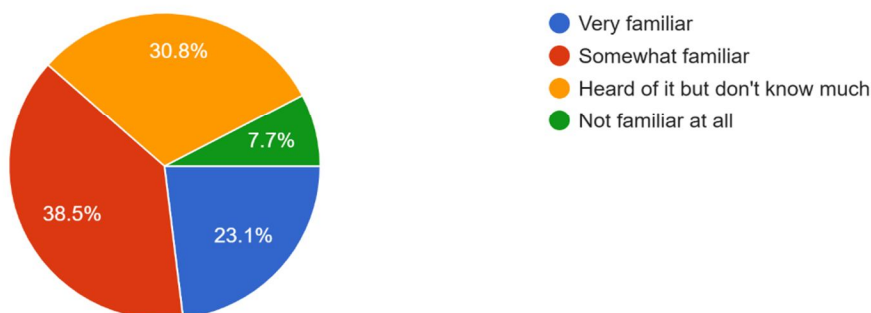
The flagship store embraces a maximalist interior style that celebrates opulence and cultural depth, weaving together traditional Indian artistry with contemporary luxury. Banarasi brocade motifs are translated into bold spatial elements, etched and inlaid into luminous onyx stone and shimmering mother-of-pearl surfaces. Walls, columns, and display counters become canvases where intricate textile patterns are reimagined in hard, ornamental materials, creating a layered environment rich in texture, colour, and reflection. The interplay of polished stone and iridescent shell evokes grandeur while honouring heritage, immersing visitors in a sensory-rich space that embodies both the designer's Indian identity and the drama of maximalist design. This fusion of craft and materiality transforms the store into more than a retail space—it becomes a cultural statement of luxury and tradition.

XI. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Google form for reviewing the public interest

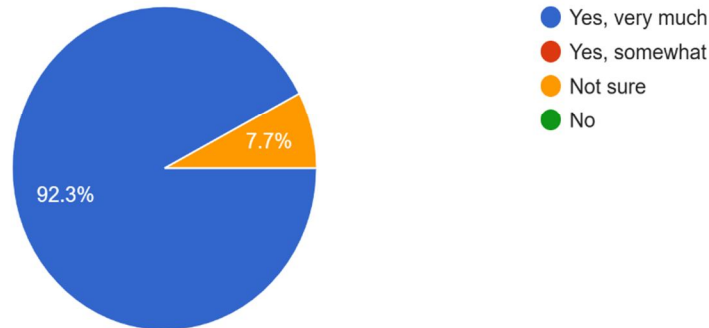
1. How familiar are you with traditional Indian textiles like Banarasi brocade ?

13 responses



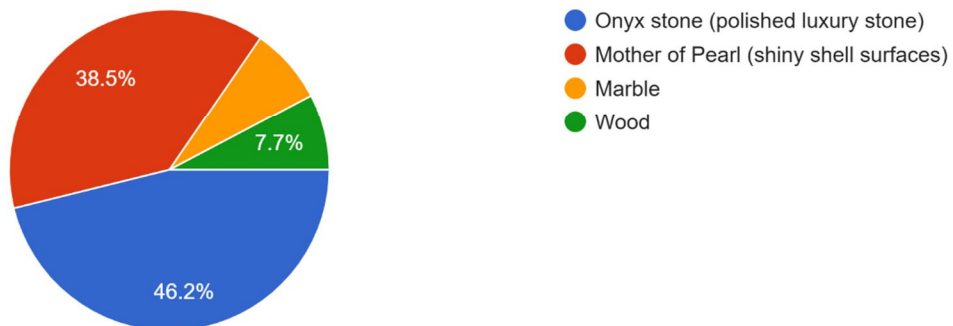
2. Would you enjoy seeing traditional Indian patterns used in modern luxury store interiors ?

13 responses



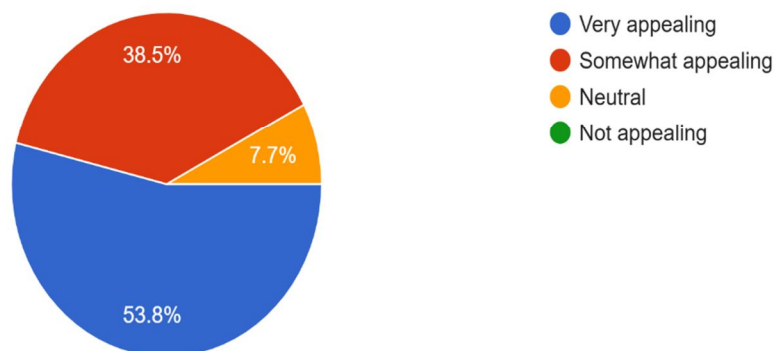
3. Which material feels most "luxurious" to you in a store interior ?

13 responses



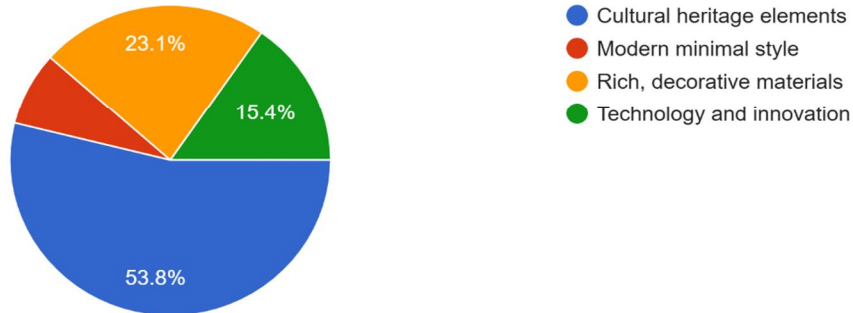
4. How appealing is the idea of turning textile patterns into designs on stoner shell surfaces ?

13 responses



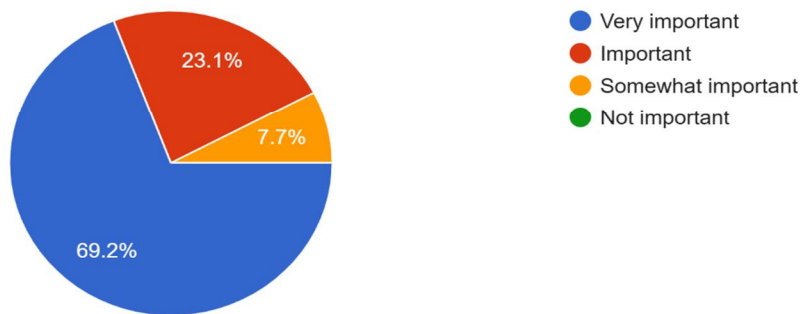
5. What attracts you most when you enter a flagship fashion store ?

13 responses



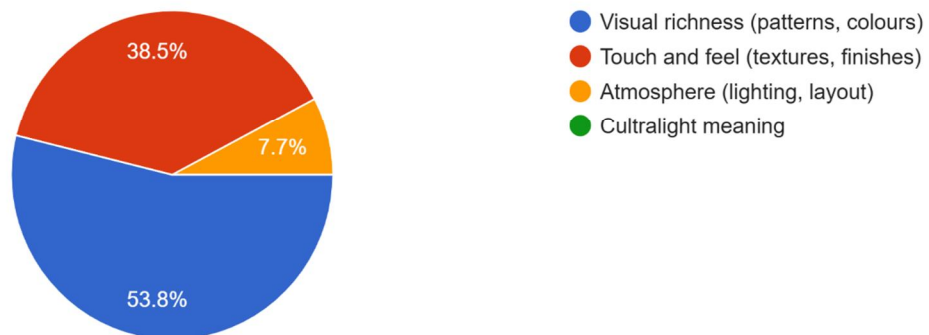
6. How important is eco-friendly and sustainable design in luxury interiors ?

13 responses



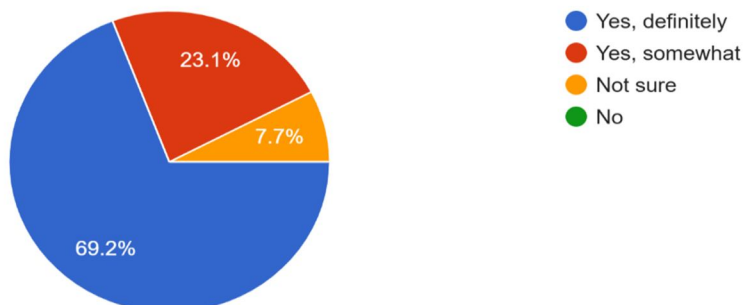
7. Which aspect matters most to you in a luxury shopping space ?

13 responses



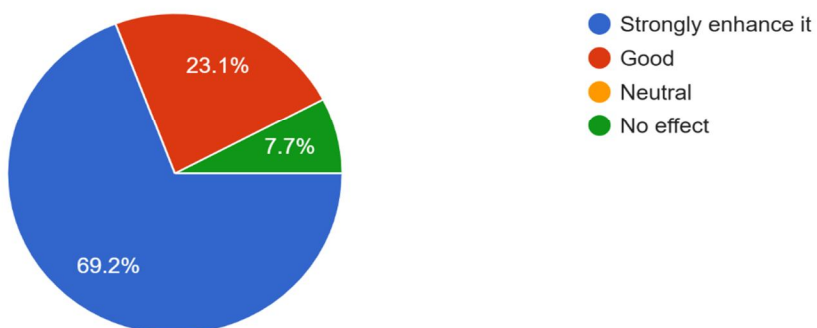
8. Would you prefer interiors that mix traditional Indian motifs with bold, decorative designs ?

13 responses



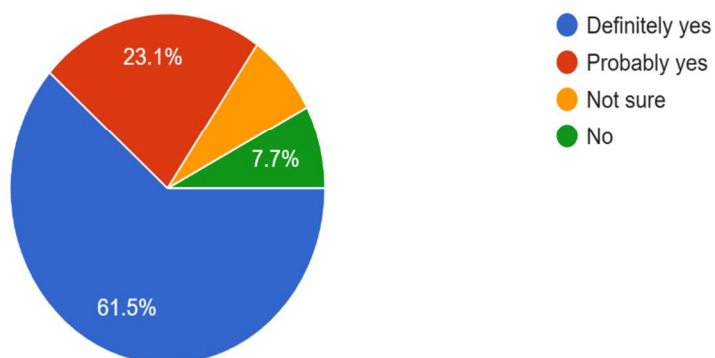
9. How do Mother of Pearl and onyx stone affect your sense of luxury ?

13 responses



10. If a flagship store used Banarasi patterns on shiny shell and stone surfaces would you visit ?

13 responses



XII. CONCLUSION

The public interest survey further validates these findings. Respondents expressed strong appreciation for the use of luxurious materials such as onyx, marble, and mother-of-pearl. They also valued furniture layouts that encourage exploration and comfort, false ceilings and lighting that dramatize the retail experience, and front facades that act as cultural statements and visual anchors. This convergence of design practice and consumer expectation underscores the importance of holistic flagship store design, where architecture, interiors, and brand ethos align seamlessly.

In conclusion, flagship store interiors are not just commercial environments but cultural and experiential spaces. They embody heritage, sustainability, and innovation, while simultaneously responding to public interest in immersive, luxurious, and meaningful design. For future designers and brands, the challenge lies in balancing authentic cultural storytelling with contemporary retail functionality, ensuring that flagship stores remain both aspirational and accessible.

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