

## Preserving Heritage through Interior Space Identity: A contemporary vision for Egyptian Furniture Design

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### Abstract:

Interior design as a cultural lens, articulates the identity of a society, retelling stories of their history, brings out historical richness, and initiates a powerful sense of dialogue between the past traditions and the modern spatial language. Furniture in interior design is central in the context of forming a spatial identity and cultural narrative. The study fills the gap between Heritage and innovation with a new structure of Egyptian furniture design, one that combines the contemporary styling and aesthetic with its ancient Theme. The goal is to create interior environments that reflect the concept of luxury yet preserving the original cultural identity of Egypt and specifically using the visual aspect of the Pharaonic culture that is perpetual, and something that defines an Egyptian. Contemporary market-generated design styles usually fail to consider the power of indigenous cultural discourse in the pursuit of globalized design. This gap creates a chance to restore and introduce heritage into the contemporary Egyptian interior environment .

The current research will focus on understanding how the symbols of Pharaonic culture might be applied to inspire original and identity based furniture design that will define the narration of the space and create an effect of culture continuity. The aim of the research is to come up with design processes that incorporate symbolism of heritage amidst contemporary design practices to produce objects such as furniture that is functional and symbolic of Egyptian identity. The study uses qualitative, design based research methodology, which is complemented with methods of user based evaluation, to fill the gap between the rich history of design in Egypt and it's not so significant representation in current practices of furniture. The method will be sequenced and interconnected into three phases, each having a unique role of meeting the research purpose .

The paper will contribute to the debate on culturally integrated design by offering guidelines on how to accommodate heritage and innovations together to reinforce Egyptian identity in the contemporary interiors and offer a feasible and exportable design direction, which follows the global market trends.

**Keywords:** *Egyptian identity; Preserving Heritage; Spatial Identity; Symbolism; Comparative Analysis*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Egypt is the cradle of some of the most highly esteemed artistic and cultural heritage of the world since the dawn of civilization. The early principles in architecture and interior space planning were set by the pharaohs of ancient Egypt and are the foundations upon which the art of furniture designing was to emerge. The high degree of symbolism and craftsmanship that characterizes Pharaonic furniture has influenced generations of interior architects and designers interested in the aesthetic volume of such furniture, as well as its cultural affinity (Smardzewski et al., 2005).

In this paper, I will argue that heritage needs to be renovated by maintaining its identity and aesthetical integrity, so that the legacy of Egypt is not merely preserved, but revisited to fit new generations. It coincides with the current technological changes in improving preservation strategies by use of innovative designs. The rebirth of the Pharaonic aesthetics of design in modern furniture has been proposed as an effective and practical way of keeping the past of Egypt in the limits of the present (Killen et al., 2017) .

The main research issue remains in that this heritage is not reflected in modern practices of furniture design to an extent, creating a wide gap in the modern design that fails to consider a potent and permanent source of inspiration, although having a wide range of meanings and aesthetic longevity potential. As the Ancient Egyptian civilization was of the largest extent, rich in many aspects of culture and historically dominant, and as one of the first and the most developed in furniture making, the scope of the limited scholarly investigation and design exploration is astounding. Moreover, the research gap is addressed in the absence of empirical studies that evaluate user perceptions, satisfaction, and cultural resonance of such designs. Very few frameworks exist to assess how users engage with identity-based furniture in terms of functionality, aesthetic appeal, and emotional connection, despite the increasing interest in heritage-inspired furniture design. Besides, there is currently no focused academic attention to the heritage of Egyptian designs in contemporary practices; the lack of empirical user assessments and application of the legacy of a civilization that has been so rich in history in the existing production lines.

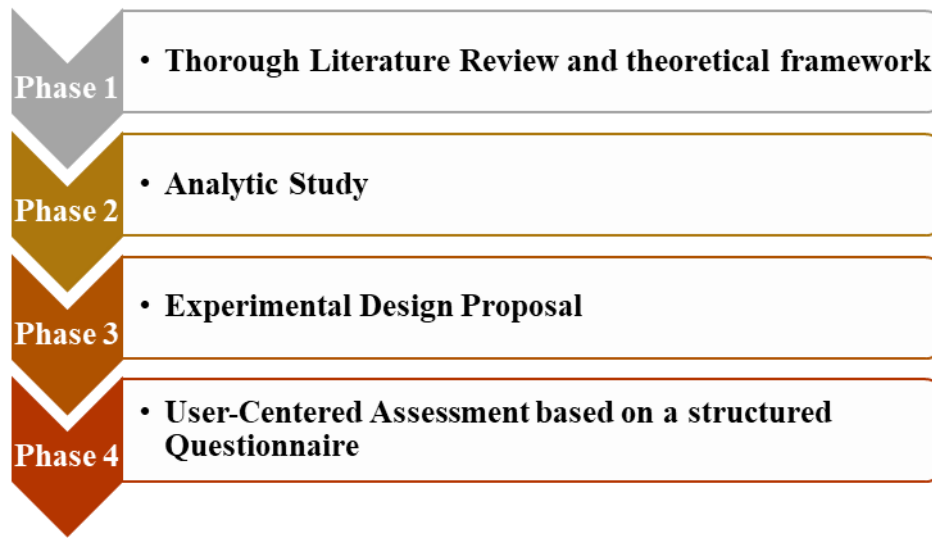
This research addresses that gap by introducing a structured evaluation rubric, via a Google Form survey, focusing on three key dimensions: aesthetic identity, ergonomic functionality, and

cultural/emotional impact. The Current Study tries to eliminate the gap between a rich history of furniture design in Egypt and a shallow inclusion in current design by revitalizing the Pharaonic symbols and aesthetics to be implemented in exterior design in the present-day environment. The research aims to create highly culturally enquired furniture items through conceptual design, experimental prototyping, and user-centered evaluation to honor the depth of cultural history and visual communication of Ancient Egypt and still agree with the needs of modern users when it comes to functionality and stylistic requirements. In this respect, it allows the public to appreciate Ancient Egyptian heritage not as a stagnant source, but rather an adaptable and long-lasting reservoir of novelty and sense of identity in the contemporary design.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study has a multilayered qualitative approach, design based research methodology, which is complemented with methods of user based evaluation. The method will be sequenced and interconnected into three phases, each having a unique role of meeting the research purpose. Such a methodological approach facilitates the formulation of a new design paradigm in the Egyptian furniture that is both rooted in the past based in the history, technically progressive, and expressive in its spatial limit. The paper ties together a strong theoretical background, international comparisons, and practical experiments, which makes the research applicable to other projects and enters an academic debate about the identity-based innovation of interior architecture (El-Zeiny et al., 2019).

The approach is structured in four sequentially related stages within the framework. See Figure 1. This framework where which one gets a full-fledged picture both when developing the concept and when acting it out: Phase 1: thorough Literature Review and theoretical framework, Phase 2: Analytic Study, characterized by a comparative analysis, Phase 3: Experimental design proposal that Develop design practices facilitating identity and contemporary relevance, ending with Phase 4: User-Centered Assessment based on a structured survey with a Google Form was used to validate the functional, aesthetic and cultural effects of the proposed designs. This user knowledge plays a significant role in evaluating the relevance of heritage inspired furniture in modern milieu and makes sure that the designs applied are not only responsive (functional) but also culturally sensitive. This step will also support the authenticity of the proposed Egyptian design practice and guarantee compliance with the local identity as well as the global design discourse.



**Figure 1.** Illustrates the three phases of the research methodology.

Source: Researcher, 2021

### ٢,١. Phase 1: thorough Literature Review and theoretical framework

At the center of this study is to recover and re-design the neglected heritage of design of Ancient Egyptian civilization through the designing of modern furniture that would incorporate the identity of Pharaonic symbolism. The research aims at resolving the rift between heritage and contemporary interior architecture by means of experiment design, providing culturally enriched, utilitarian and aesthetically engaging furniture that would reify Ancient Egypt as a vibrant source of cultural inspiration in the field of design today.

Through this initial stage, the intellectual and cultural background of the analysis is set. It entails an extensive analysis of: The history of Egyptian designing of furniture with emphasis on Pharaonic designs, symbolic language and artisanship of materials (Killen et al., 2017). The theoretical views concerning the spatial identity, cultural heritage conservation, and the way furniture shapes the former two criteria experience (Cook et al., 2013). Moreover, the literature review also looks into how globalization and technology affect the identities of indigenous designs and how they are difficult to have authenticity in such fast-moving modernization settings (Vannini et al., 2017). The review guides a conceptual framework according to which the furniture design can be seen as a transmitter of cultural continuity and space meaning.



**Figure 2.** Illustrates the thorough Literature Review and theoretical framework.  
Source: Researcher, 2021

### ٢, ١, ١. *Historical Foundations of Egyptian Furniture Design*

It is important to find the historical background in order to realize the appearance of principles of Egyptian furniture design as the unique reflection of culture, social position and spirituality. In this section of the literature, the attention is paid to:

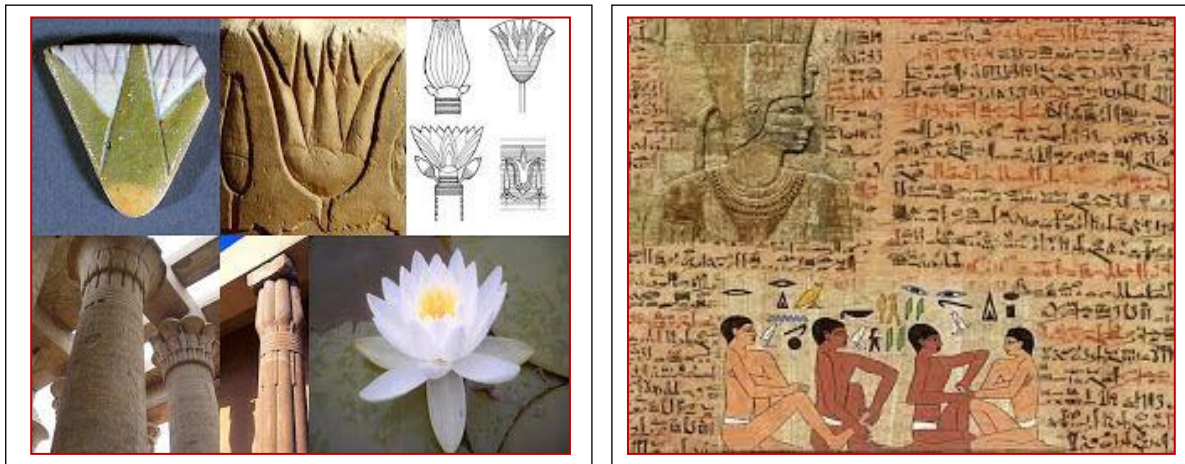
- Materiality and Function in Ancient Egypt

Furniture: Wood, ivory, stone (and, on occasion, gilded pieces) are the most common materials used in the construction of furniture in the pharaonic period. Artifacts like stool, beds, headrests, chests were founded not just to be used on a daily basis but also to be present as sacred and funerary artifacts accompanying the deceased into another life (Riggs et al., 2014).

- Ancient Egypt Design Elements

The Ancient Egyptian pieces of furniture were densely endowed with symbolism. See picture 1& 2. Popular patterns such as lotus (rebirth), papyrus (life, growth), scarab beetle (transformation), and ankh (immortality) were inculcated into forms and surfaces of furniture (Peck et al., 2013). They are not only ornamental additions to the visual plane but letters and symbols of cosmic harmony, mythology, and state of power. The detail and ornamentation was an expression of the social status of the user. Arts a mastery of sculptural and artistic techniques was possible even in royal furniture like the throne of Tutankhamun, which has elements of symbolic storytelling, and has often been described as a prototype of furniture as a cultural artifact (Killen et al., 2017) .





**Picture 1**, illustrates The Ancient Egyptian symbolism from popular patterns such as lotus (rebirth), used in ancient pharaonic temples' columns. **Source:** <https://pharaonic-egy.blogspot.com/2013/05/ancient-egyptian-lotus.html>, 2019

**Picture 2**, illustrates The Ancient Egyptian symbolism from papyrus (life, growth). **Source:** Gaudet et al., 2014

### 2.1.2. Spatial Identity and the Role of Furniture

Through this lens furniture is seen as an agent in the formation of spatial identity, and is not considered as a passive object in the interior design. It is based on interior architecture theories, theories of environmental psychology and phenomenology (Cook et al., 2013).

Furniture sets boundaries way around and shapes the psychological environment of interior space. It is largely instrumental in the formation of how space is perceived, navigated and emotionally attached to (Patricio et al., 2019; Postell et al., 2012).

Spaces have identities which are transmitted by the objects in it. Furniture has been interpreted in most cultures (such as the Egyptian culture) as a materialistic essence, a symbolic earmark, a symbolization of rituals, power and collectiveness of functions, and religious activities (Elnaggar et al., 2017). Thus, having furniture that is culturally integrated assists in the taking back of meanings lost in modern spaces. With reference to such theorists as Edward Relph and Christian Norberg-Schulz, the issue of spatial identity revolves around the coherence of memory, attachment to place and sense of belonging. Cultural furniture plays a role in the authenticity and story in interiors when applied correctly. In such a way, the piece of furniture is not just a design object but a kind of a spatial culture carrier who embodied the communication in the spatial experience through cultural communication (Anzani et al., 2020).

### *2.1.3. Cultural Heritage Preservation in Design Practice*

This axis explores how tangible and intangible cultural heritage may be maintained (Anzani et al., 2020), intervened in and renewed by design as opposed to conservation. The heritage preservation in design is not a duplication of the old ones, it is only to interpret the values and aesthetics of the old in a way in which is applicable to modern life style (Hassan Abdou et al., 2020). This means that symbols, materials or even proportions will be translated into new design languages. Design has been argued as a tool of cultural continuity, especially in the ageless art of architecture. Furniture, though, is a human-scale, portable, and personal form of articulating heritage which can be embedded within the everyday context (Ziyadeh et al., 2018). Most people are in danger of indigenous styles being overtaken by the high rate of urbanization, standardization, and importation of foreign designs (El-Zeiny et al., 2019). Through furniture, the designer transforms to be a preserver and decoder of identity by reviving the dormant cultural codes.

#### *2.1.3.1. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)*

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is cultural patrimony as defined by the UNESCO and consists of practices, expressions and knowledge systems that are transmitted through generations. In this regard, furniture design might reflect aesthetic, beliefs, rituals and material logic of a culture. This lens contributes to the thought that design innovation and cultural preservation are not mutually incompatible, but they can be mutually enforcing when put into perspective in a wise manner (Lenzerini et al., 2011).

#### *2.1.4. Globalization and Technology and the crisis of authenticity*

The component is critical because it analyses the effect of global design homogenization and the technological mode of producing goods and their effects on the authenticity of design in specific cultures such as in Egypt. The process of globalization of design has resulted in a loss in regional differences as well as local influences in furniture design due to the overwhelming influence of Euro-American minimalism and Scandinavian design with mass-produced aesthetics. This translates into generic interiors which have no cultural connotation or local context in Egypt (Vannini et al., 2017).

**Crisis of Authenticity:** According to researchers such as David Harvey and Marc Augé, modernity is able to generate the inauthentic experience and

non-places. In designing, authenticity means context, birthplace and transformation of the cultural elements and incorporation into design to be purposeful (Ahmed et al., 2019). The positive side of the economical technology is that traditional motifs can be reinterpreted in new geometries, materials, and applications thereby becoming accessible to world-wide audiences with a local identity (Koc et al., 2006). Accordingly, it is seen that such a lens emphasizes the consequence of a deliberate incorporation of technology, where innovation is used to supplement and not to eliminate heritage.

## 2.2. Phase 2: Analytic Study

Egyptian Interior Design has Notable Qualities of the Ancient Egypt's Architecture, Rich with golden tones, regal fabrics, elaborate artistry, and elegant furnishings, Ancient Egypt's interior design typically has a bold feeling with a strong “sacred” and “wealthy” expression immediately upon viewing these designs (Killen et al., 2017). With Re-thinking an ancient design, taking an example, the of Chair of Reniseneb ca. 1450 B.C., See picture 3, 4 &5. The back of this wooden chair, which belonged to the scribe Reniseneb, is handsomely veneered with ivory and embellished with incised decoration showing an identical renovated form.

Taking advantage of the heritage values of Pharaonic culture characters as concepts with a contemporary vision on furniture design (Patricio et al., 2019), Innovation is the key of that axis. Given the most powerful symbols in the ancient pharaonic civilization: The Ankh: key of life, The Eye of Horus: the great protector, The Lotus: flower of awakening, Nebu: is the Egyptian symbol for gold, Uraeus : the risen one. Emphasis the role of Sketching to claim an idea from variable Egyptian culture & heritage elements as concept in furniture design, reaching Geometric projections of a Furniture piece (Harrison-Moore et al., 2017). Starts with an early phase of the design process, in which the broad outlines of function and form of furniture design are articulated (Miet et al., 2019).



**Picture 2**, Chair of Reniseneb ca 1450 BC. **Source:** Ahmed et al., 2014



Furniture was often featuring symbols related to the rising of the sun, the wings of Isis , connecting the function of that object to the religious significance of the sun's daily journey, See picture 4, along with focusing on apparel and custom ornamentation depending on culturally and socially. Picture 5, illustrates the Re-Thinking Wings of Isis in a sofa design by Shosha Kamal, the Egyptian designer who been shortlisted for a Sofa Award.



**Picture 4,** Wings of Isis. **Source:** Pinch et al., 2004

**Picture 5,** Re-Thinking Wings of Isis in a sofa design.

**Source:** <https://thedesignsoc.com/congratulations-shosha-kamal-shortlisted-sofa-award/>, 2020.

Taking advantage of the heritage values of Pharaonic Symbols as concepts such as: The Ankh “Key of life” see picture 6, 7, The Wadjet eye”eye of Horus” See picture 8, 9, Sacarab” the egyptian beetle” see picture 10, 11, and many others that have important meanings according to their reliance in various aspects of the ancient Egyptian life, whether social, religious, cultural and recreational that come back to life through renovation of the heritage and utilizing them in furniture designs used in our daily life (Bandarin et al., 2012).



**Picture 6,** shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Ankh “Key of life”.

**Source:** Verner et al., 2007

**Picture 7,** Re-Thinking the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Ankh “Key of life in a chair design.

**Source:** <https://thedesignsoc.com/congratulations-shosha-kamal-shortlisted-sofa-award/>, 2020).



**Picture 8**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Wadjet eye”eye of Horus”

**Source:** Irigaray et al., 2017

**Picture 9**, Re-Thinking the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Wadjet eye”eye of Horus”in a sofa design.

**Source:** <https://thedesignsoc.com/congratulations-shosha-kamal-shortlisted-sofa-award/>, 2020).



**Picture 10**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Sacarb”The Egyptian Beetle”

**Source:** Brier et al., 2008

**Picture 11**, Re-Thinking the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Sacarb”The Egyptian Beetle” in a chair design.

**Source:** <https://thedesignsoc.com/congratulations-shosha-kamal-shortlisted-sofa-award/>, 2020).

Many Egyptian decorative motifs are stylized from natural forms associated with the life-giving Nile (Fortier et al., 2020). The lotus bud and flower, the papyrus, and the palm appear constantly with borders of checkered patterns or coiled, ropelike spirals, giving an air of space and elegance, See picture 12, 13. The palace of the pharaoh Akhenaton and other large houses at Tell El-Amarna (c. 1365 BC) reflect a tendency toward naturalism in their ornamentations (Riggs et al., 2014). Akhenaton, his queen Nefertiti, and their daughters are frequently represented, usually grouped affectionately together. Primary colors were the most common, a brilliant yellow being among the most frequently used, but terra-cotta, gray, black, and white were all added to give contrast.



**Picture 12**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The lotus bud and flower

**Source:** Verner et al., 2007

**Picture 13**, Re-Thinking the ancient Egyptian symbol: shows the lotus bud and flower, appear constantly with borders of checkered patterns or coiled, ropelike spirals, giving an air of space and elegance.

**Source:** <https://www.britannica.com/art/interior-design/Interior-design-in-the-West>, 2020

An effective furniture design is a careful balance between usage and presentation, which is fundamental in the reinvention of Egypt Pharaonic legacy in contemporary interior settings (Riggs et al., 2014). Low-profile shapes, frequently having animal-shaped legs, sloped beds and the use of organic materials such as wood, leather, ivory, and gold leaf characterized the ancient Egyptian furniture (Killen et al., 2017). These designs were not entirely functional but also carried symbolic as well as cultural and social meanings, particularly when it comes to elite, such as thrones, gold decorations, and carved representations of gods and royal personalities (Peck et al., 2013).

Drawn by this rich heritage, modern designers like Mahgoub and Kamal draw symbolic inspiration based on the forms of the past and translate them into functional, ergonomic and visually contemporary furniture pieces (Smardzewski et al., 2015). In their work, the redesign of antique motifs, materials, and handicraft into modern symbols of the individual and the comfortable is illustrated (Postell et al., 2012). This is done through methods including: Ergonomic testing processes to test the comfort of the users, Experimentation of material (combination of old and new such as wood, leather, and gold leaf), and the concept of form follows a functionality where the decoration was invariable connected with functionality (Vink et al., 2006).

Moreover, the antiquity of furniture, as typified in a bed of wove flax or wood and lion-legged chairs, shows a culture in which usefulness was highly intertwined with ritualized use and prestige as well as artistic storytelling (Killen et al. 2017; Peck et al., 2013). With such precedents, modern Egyptian furniture design will be not just recreating the past, but an extension of the past and its spirit in contemporary life: credibly offering us



furniture at once beautiful and meaningful: rooted in tradition but uplifted by innovation (Fry et al., 2012) .

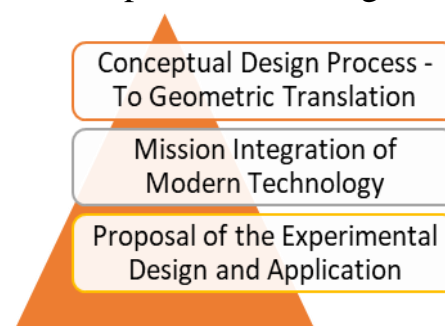
This study, therefore, supports the re-emergence and development of the Egyptian identity in the interiors sector, a platform that can be used to present a culturally grounded yet outside-looking outlook of the furniture (McCarter et al., 2016).

### 2.3. Phase 3: Experimental Design Proposal

The research methodology lays upon a conceptual design procedure through which different elements of Egyptian culture and heritage are utilized as a foundation to the introduction of new furniture design proposal. This is of the propositions to depict the present and realistic Egyptian identity with a current mode and a development of a new language of design based on the cultural identity. Connecting the tradition and innovation, this research can generate a new understanding of furniture design as the bridge within the present-day design tools and materials in combination with using symbolic elements of heritage (Fortier et al., 2020). As well, it is strategically placed at the crossroad between modern art and national identity, creating new investment opportunities in the cultural heritage via modern technologies (Ahmed et al., 2019) .

The conception and delivery of new vision in Egyptian furniture design lies in Axis 3. See figure 3, demonstrates phase 3 including the feasibility of converting heritage-related ideas into the furniture units that will have a luxury, one-of-a-kind, and culturally authentic flair, which will make Egyptian identity not only quite visceral but also relevant to the contemporary interior where the furniture item will find its use (El-Zeiny et al., 2019; Ahmed et al., 2019; Curl et al., 2013).

This Phase holds 3 axis: Axis 1: Conceptual Design Process - To Geometric Translation, Axis 2: Mission Integration of Modern Technology, and Axis 3: Proposal of the Experimental Design and Application.




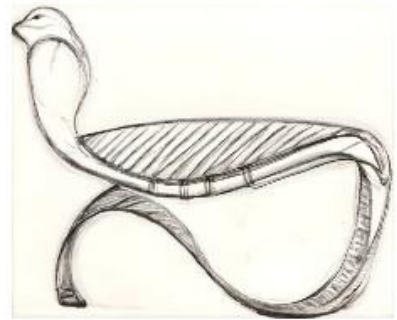
**Figure 3**, shows phase 3 axis: Axis 1: Conceptual Design Process - To Geometric Translation, Axis 2: Mission Integration of Modern Technology, and Axis 3: Proposal of the Experimental Design and Application. **Source:** Researcher, 2021

### 2.3.1. Axis 1: Conceptual Design Process - To Geometric Translation

The stage deals with the creative ideation process during which symbolic and aesthetic forms of the Pharaonic culture are singled out and generalized in forms of abstraction. It is based on a conceptual design process that employs various aspects of the Egyptian culture and heritage as the basis of implementing new designing of furniture. This will seek to portray the actual and contemporary Egyptian identity that will reflect a modern mode, and help build a language of Egyptian contemporary furniture. With its combination of the cultural symbolism with the contemporary tools and materials of design such study frames furniture design as a connecting point between the traditional heritage and the innovative approach to design (Fortier et al., 2020). It is also an intersection between modern art and national identity, and it raises the investment opportunities in cultural heritage on the basis of modern technologies (Ahmed et al., 2019). Major techniques are: Analysis of cultural symbol (e.g. Ankh, Eye of Horus, papyrus motifs) to know historical, spiritual and social meaning (Cook et al., 2013). Drawing and shaping, during which the heritage look is being transformed into a compiled geometric version that is again convertible to a day-to-day furniture shape (Bumgardner et al., 2020).

**Table 1. Illustrates Axis 1 from the Experimental Design Proposal: Conceptual Design Process - To Geometric Translation for 5 Furniture Units.**

Source: Researcher, 2021

Experiment al Design Proposals by Researcher	The Inspiration from the Egyptian Heritage Symbols	The Axis Outcome
<b>Furniture Unit 1: The Uraeus- Seating</b>	<p><b>Inspirations:</b> The Uraeus, a stylized, rearing cobra, is a powerful symbol in ancient Egyptian culture, representing royalty, divinity, and protection.</p>  <p><b>Picture 14,</b> Shows the Uraeus on an ancient egyptian illustration.</p> <p><b>Source:</b> Vasiljević et al., 2012</p>	 <p><b>Picture 15,</b> Shows the sketch developed from the inspiration: Uraeus</p> <p><b>Source:</b> Researcher, 2021</p>



The Wings of Isis, in Egyptian mythology, are a powerful symbol associated with the goddess Isis, representing protection, magic, and resurrection.

**Furniture  
Unit 2:  
The Isis Sofa**



**Picture 16**, Shows the Wings of Isis on an ancient egyptian illustration.

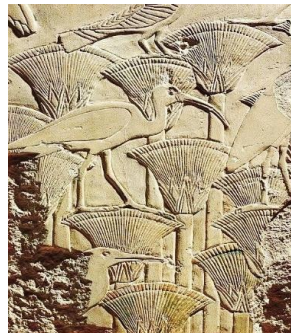
**Source:** Pinch et al., 2004



**Picture 17**, Shows the sketch developed from the inspiration: The Wings of Isis

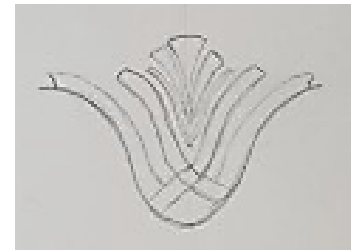
**Source:** Researcher, 2021

**Furniture  
Unit 3:  
The Lotus Table**



**Picture 18**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The lotus bud and flower.

**Source:** Brier et al., 2008



**Picture 19**, Shows the sketch developed from the inspiration: The lotus bud and flower

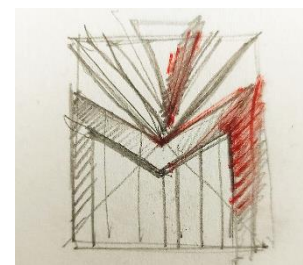
**Source:** Researcher, 2021

**Furniture  
Unit 4:  
The Pyramid Partition**



**Picture 20**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: The Pyramids.

**Source:** Verner et al., 2007

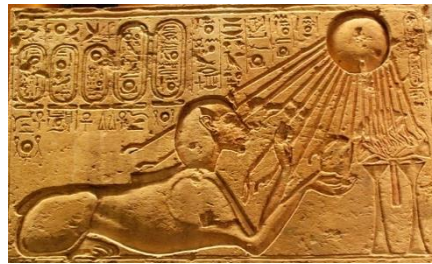


**Picture 21**, Shows the sketch developed from the inspiration: The Pyramids.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

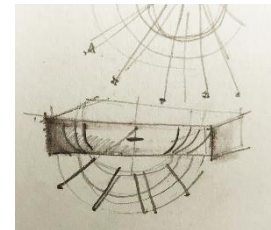
### Furniture Unit 5:

#### Aten Wall-Unit



**Picture 22**, shows the ancient Egyptian symbol: Aten; the sun disk, initially an aspect of the sun god Ra and the symbol of Life.

**Source:** Pinch et al., 2004



**Picture 23**, Shows the sketch developed from the inspiration: Aten

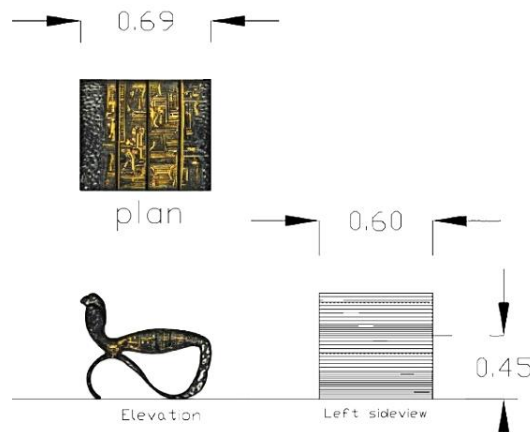
**Source:** Researcher, 2021

### 2.3.2. Axis 2: Mission Integration of Modern Technology

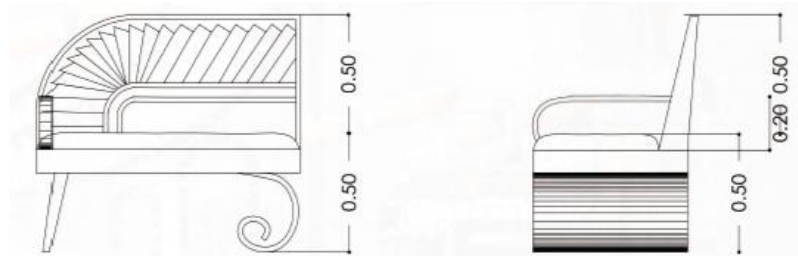
The second phase involves how to use digital tools and sustainable materials during the design and prototyping. The important actions are: Optimization of form and parametric modelling with the use of computer aided design (CAD) and structural experimentation. Moreover, to rethink conventional motives through the accurate form and purpose, the eco-friendly material is chosen, and the local material is as well used, a fact that supports sustainability and the authenticity of the culture in the production of furniture (Bumgardner et al., 2020).

**Table 2. Illustrates Axis 2 from the Experimental Design Proposal: Mission Integration of Modern Technology during the design and prototyping with the use of computer aided design (CAD) and structural experimentation for the 5 Furniture Units.**

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

Experimental Design Proposals by Researcher	The Axis Outcome	
<b>Furniture Unit 1:</b>  <b>The Uraeus- Seating</b>		<p><b>Picture 24</b>, Shows the use of computer aided design (CAD) in the Uraeus-Seating.</p> <p><b>Source:</b> Researcher, 2021</p>

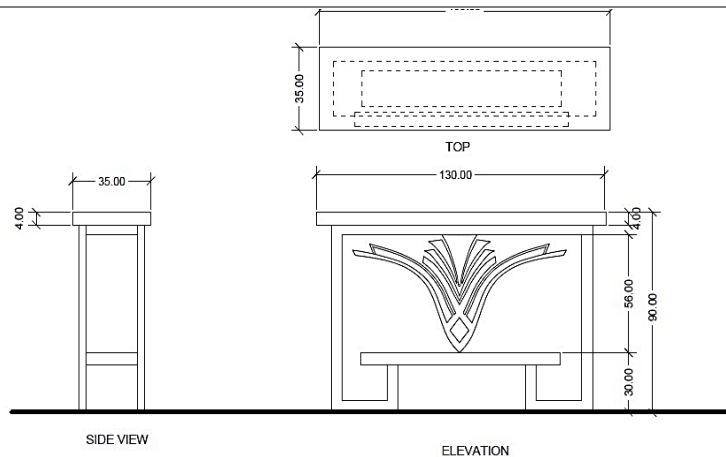
**Furniture Unit  
2:  
The Isis Sofa**



**Picture 25,** Shows the use of computer aided design (CAD) in the Isis Sofa.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

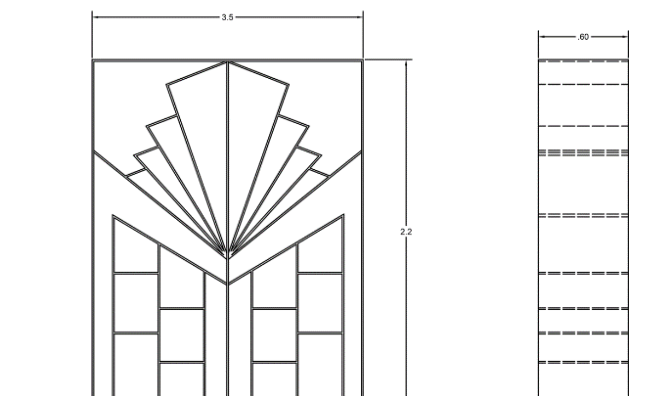
**Furniture Unit  
3:  
The Lotus Table**



**Picture 26,** Shows the use of computer aided design (CAD) in the Lotus Table.

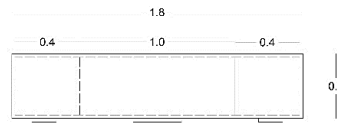
**Source:** Researcher, 2021

**Furniture Unit  
4:  
The Pyramid Partition**



**Picture 27,** Shows the use of computer aided design (CAD) in the Pyramid Partition

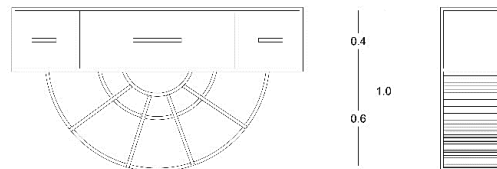
**Source:** Researcher, 2021



### Furniture Unit

5:

### Aten Wall-Unit



**Picture 28,** Shows the use of computer aided design (CAD) in the Aten Wall-Unit.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

### 2.3.2. Axis 3: Proposal of the Experimental Design and Application.

The last axis is dedicated to the implementation and assessment of design outcomes by means of development and testing of prototypes and context. This includes: The development of a range of modern furniture items with reference to the Egyptian traditions was oriented at the correlation between the identity reflection and its marketability. Spatial simulations and interior renderings to expedite an impression of integration on contemporary interiors (El-Zeiny et al., 2019). To determine the effectiveness of the design in expressing identities and ease of use, user-based assessment (based on functional and arguably aesthetic as well as cultural resonance), a future recommendation should be conducted by means of surveys or expert judgment.

**Table 3. Illustrates Axis 3 from the Experimental Design Proposal .for the 5 Furniture Units.**

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

Experimental Design Proposals by Researcher	The Axis Outcome
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### Furniture Unit 1:

#### The Uraeus- Seating

##### Materials:

- Solid Wood (Oak)
- Natural Leather with High-Density Foam with Fabric Upholstery



**Picture 29**, Shows the Experimental Design Proposal 1

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

### Furniture Unit 2:

#### The Isis Sofa

##### Materials:

- Plywood (High-grade) – Veneered
- High-Density Foam with Fabric Upholstery (Linen)
- Locally sourced materials: Date leaf panels



**Picture 30**, Shows the Experimental Design Proposal 2

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

### Furniture Unit 3:

#### The Lotus Table

##### Materials:

- Metal (Powder-coated Steel)
- Nile silt-based ceramics
- Glass with Etched Motifs (Hieroglyphs)



**Picture 31**, Shows the Experimental Design Proposal 3

**Source:**  
Researcher, 2021



#### Furniture Unit 4: The Pyramid Partition

**Materials:**

- Solid Wood (Oak)



**Picture 32,** Shows the Experimental Design Proposal 4

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

#### Furniture Unit 5: Aten Wall-Unit

**Materials:**

- Metal (Powder-coated Steel)
- Plywood (High-grade) – Veneered
- Glass with Etched Motifs (Hieroglyphs)



**Picture 33,** Shows the Experimental Design Proposal 5

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

### 2.4. Phase 4: User-Centered Assessment based on a structured Questionnaire

To make these identity-dependent designs appeal to modern users, a user-based validation to establish the functionality, aesthetic and cultural influence of the suggested designs was applied through a structured Questionnaire utilizing Google forms and self-distributed Online. A clearly defined rubric is used to measure the form which is based on: 1. Aesthetic Identity: Culture affiliation, visual congruency and particularization, 2. Functional Evaluation: Ergonomic, usability, comfort and durability, and 3. Cultural/Emotional Connection: Pride, identification and market appeal. See table 4, illustrating the Interpretation Rubric (In accord with Axes of

the Experimental Design Proposal) and the corresponding questions in the questionnaire.

**Table 4. Illustrating the Interpretation Rubric (In accord with Axes of the Experimental Design Proposal) and the corresponding questions in the questionnaire.**

Source: Researcher, 2021

Evaluation Rubric	Criteria	Related Axis in the Experimental Design Proposal	Corresponding questions in the questionnaire.
<b>Aesthetic Identity</b>	Heritage symbolism, contemporary reinterpretation	<i>Axis 1:</i> Conceptual Design → Geometric Form	The design effectively represents Egyptian cultural heritage.
			The furniture integrates traditional motifs in a modern way.
			The visual appeal enhances the identity of the space.
			The form and symbolism feel unique and innovative.
<b>Functionality</b>	Ergonomics, usability	<i>Axis 2:</i> Integration of Modern Technology (e.g. CAD)	The furniture is comfortable and ergonomically designed.
			The dimensions and proportions suit modern-day interior use.
			The materials used feel durable and appropriate.
			The integration of traditional symbols doesn't affect practical usability.
<b>Cultural Connection</b>	Pride, symbolism, identity expression	<i>Axis 3:</i> Experimental Design & Application	I feel a sense of cultural pride when viewing/using this furniture.
			The design communicates a meaningful story or identity.

			I would consider purchasing or recommending this furniture.
			The furniture fosters a sense of authenticity and locality.
<b>Market Relevance</b>	Purchase interest, usability, global/local appeal	Recommendations for Market Strategy	Which Furniture Unit design did you find most appealing?
			Any recommendations for improvement?
			Do you believe such identity-based designs could be marketable internationally? Why or why not?

The inclusion of the user perception in the design phase of the experiment will not only make the proposed furniture to be culturally meaningful, but also market responsive and functional. Such dual focus justifies the contribution of the study to the current state of the furniture design characterized by the combination of the sense of the Egyptian identity and the ability to satisfy the needs of the contemporary consumers.

#### 2.4.1. The Study Sample

A sample consisting of different age categories (e.g. 20-30y, 31-40y, above 40y) was selected and composed of forty three people from all the age groups and various fields. The subjects consisted of both sexes, males and females, who are highly-qualified and have similar economic and social circumstances. The data collected is consisted of various profession categories (e.g. Designer, Architect, Tourism and Hospitality, Academic and Furniture User). The participants (design students, professionals and general users) were invited to rate their experience on a Likert scale and provide qualitative feedback. This information about the user is very important to determine the relevance of the heritage-inspired furniture at a modern setting and making the designs be functional and purposeful as well as culturally significant. The questionnaire started with the introduction of five identity based furniture units that were created in Phase III but with accompanied visual images that highlighted the aspect of cultural expression that included: color, ratio, ornament, identity and

repeat. The level of agreement was assessed on the basis of five-point Likert scale, on a series of statements grouped into three major evaluation scales: Aesthetic Identity, Functional Evaluation, and Cultural/Emotional Connection, with the possible responses, i.e., Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

#### 2.4.2. The Data collected

The data collected from the sample showed that the majority of respondents are Female with 69.8% while Male respondents were around 30.2%, see figure 4. The most of the respondents are in the age group of young adults (20-30 years), which indicates the survey might indicate views that are towards the younger population group. 20 - 30 Y: 81.4% of the respondents, 31 - 40 Y: approximately 7% of the respondents and Over 40 Y: approximately 11.6% of respondents as shown in figure 5.

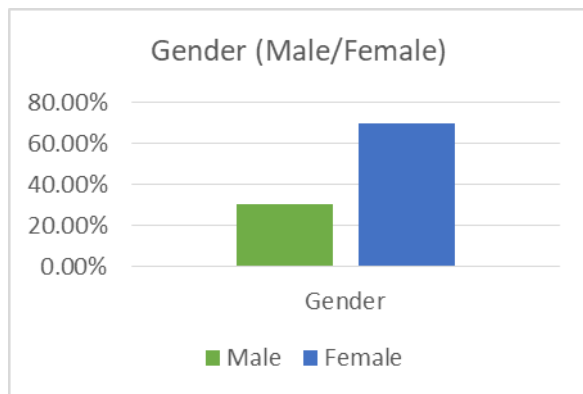


Figure 4, shows the analysis of the respondents' gender.  
Source: Researcher. 2021

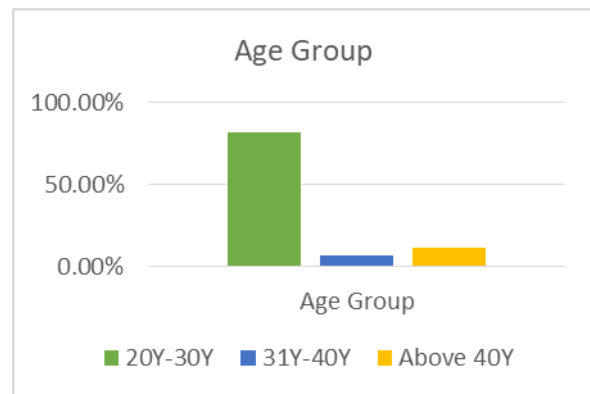
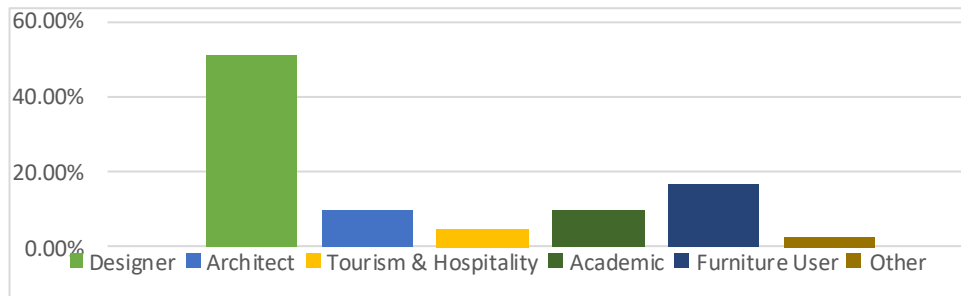


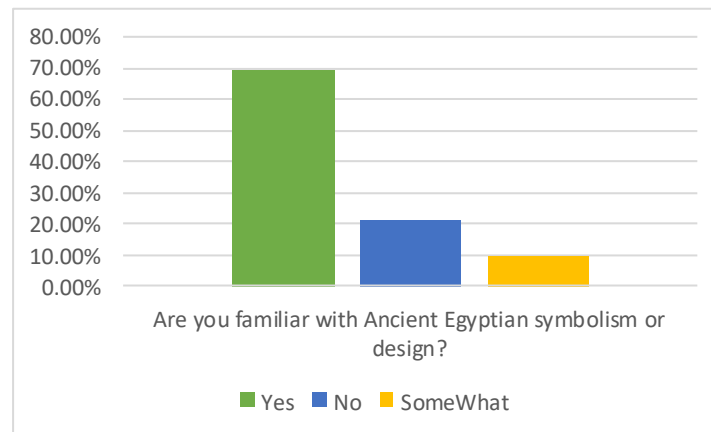
Figure 5, shows the analysis of the respondents' age group.  
Source: Researcher. 2021

The analysis shows that the majority of the respondents are designers with 51.2%, 16.30% of the respondents are furniture users which highlights the validation of the User-Centered Assessment. Academic and Staff members in the field of furniture design were 9.30%. Tourism and Hospitality sector was interested in the identity-dependent designs appeal and formed 4.70% of the respondents. Other professions also showed their participation from various fields (e.g. Media management graduate, legal representative) with approximately 2.30% of the respondents. See figure 6 that illustrates the profession analysis of the respondents.



**Figure 6**, shows the analysis of the respondents' Profession. **Source:** Researcher, 2021

To start along with the assessment of the furniture units, the participants were questioned on whether they had a knowledge of Ancient Egyptian symbolism or design. The answers to this Yes/No/Somewhat question provide valuable information regarding the acceptance of the units. By the majority of respondents were familiar with Ancient Egyptian symbolism in design with 69.8%, their culture awareness led to a better appreciation of the subtle visual language within each work. Moreover, it has been revealed that 9.30% and 20.90% of the total participants were not and rather familiar with the Ancient Egyptian symbolism respectively, meaning that most of the participants had the appropriate cultural background, which most probably allowed them to like the heritage-based furniture designs most, see figure 7. This attests to the power of the design language to convey identity and narrative, even outside of audiences who have started with a cultural initiation.



**Figure 7**, shows the analysis of the respondents' knowledge with the Ancient Egyptian symbolism.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

The analysis of the reviewed furniture units will be conducted according to the rubrics that comprises three pivotal dimensions, namely, the aesthetic satisfaction, functional performance, and emotional-cultural resonance.



This organized methodology helps better interpolate the findings in terms of numerical analysis as well as greater number of insights on percentages.

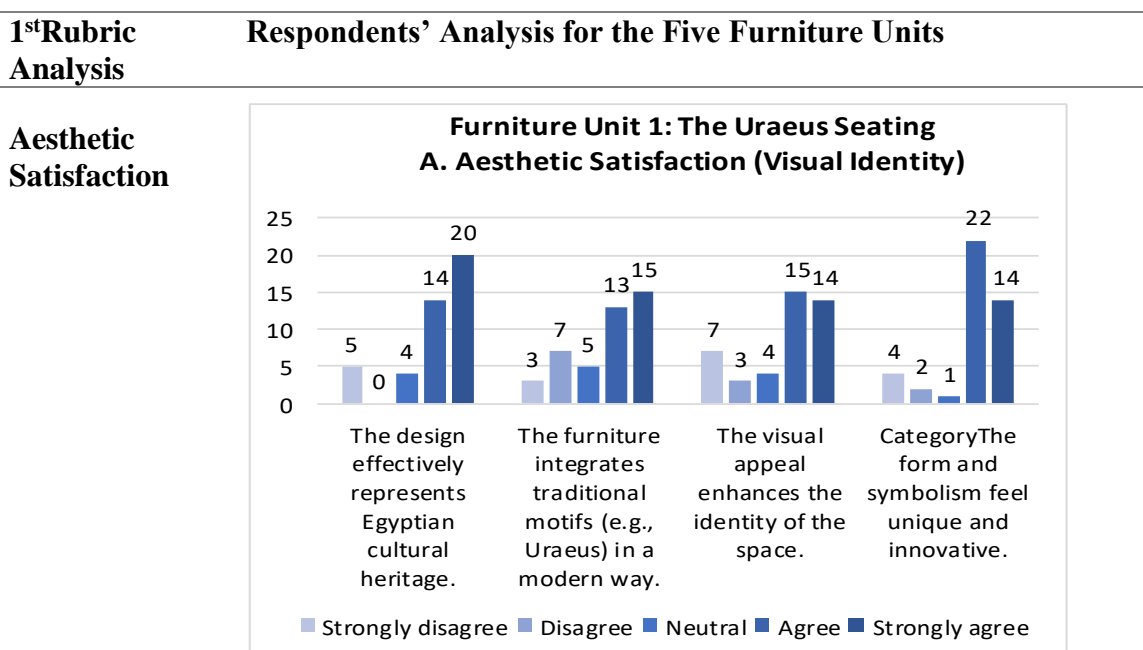
#### 2.4.2.1. Aesthetic Satisfaction (Visual Identity)

Respondents were questioned about the whether the furniture can contextually represent the Egyptian cultural heritage, whether it incorporated traditional patterns (e.g., the Uraeus or Lotus flower) into a modern setting and whether the aesthetic attributes of the visual appearance support spatial identity, see Table 5. Furniture Units 3 (Lotus Table) and 5 (Aten Wall-Unit) scored highest, with over 23–25 respondents strongly agreeing that these designs successfully communicate cultural identity and visual congruency. The Isis Sofa (Furniture Unit 2) also performed positively, with 18–19 respondents strongly agreeing across visual aspects.

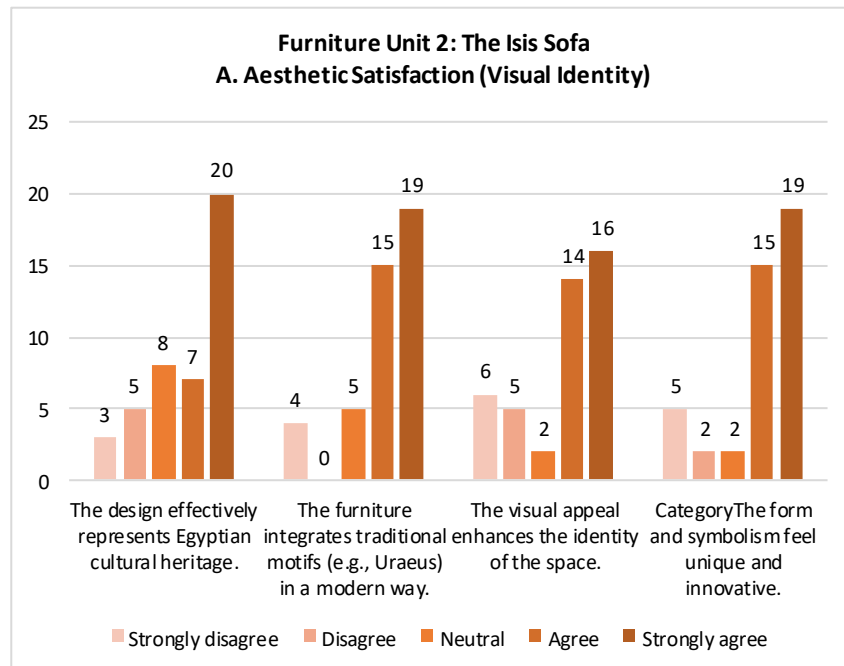
In contrast, the Uraeus Seating (Furniture Unit 1) showed lower ratings, where only 4 strongly agreed, and 13–14 respondents strongly disagreed with its representation of heritage and visual integration, suggesting issues with clarity or over-stylization. The visual alignment between traditional references and modern form appeared most successful in units where symbolism was abstracted or stylized subtly rather than applied literally.

**Table 5. Illustrating the 1<sup>st</sup> Rubric Analysis: Aesthetic Satisfaction for the five experimental Furniture Units.**

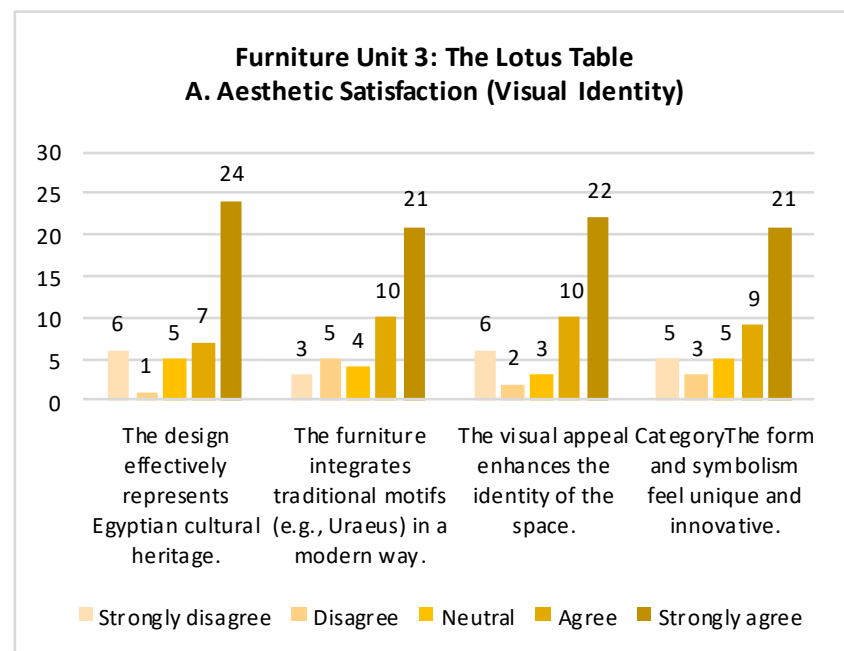
Source: Researcher, 2021



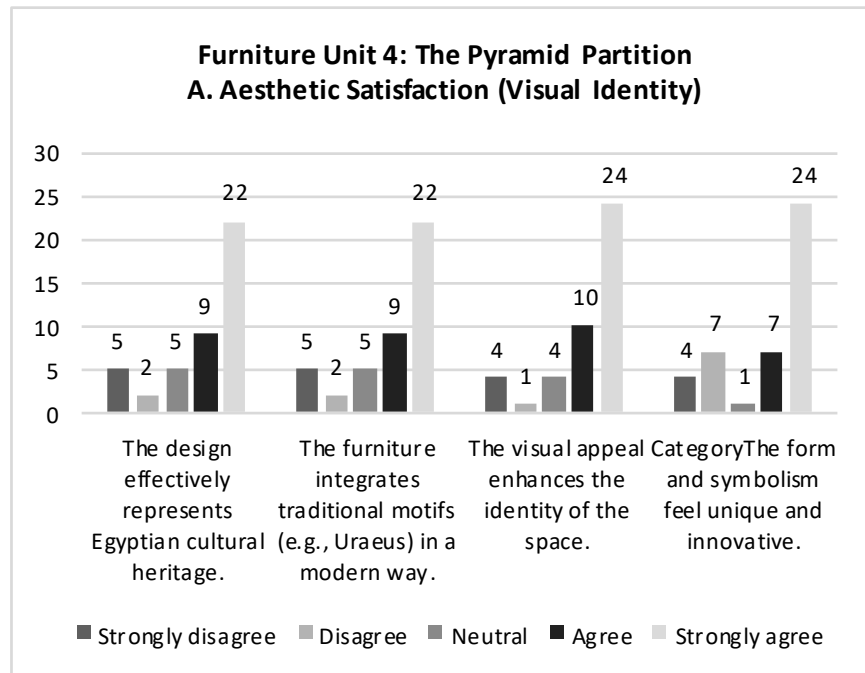
**Figure 8,** shows the Aesthetic Satisfaction in Furniture Unit 1.  
Source: Researcher, 2021



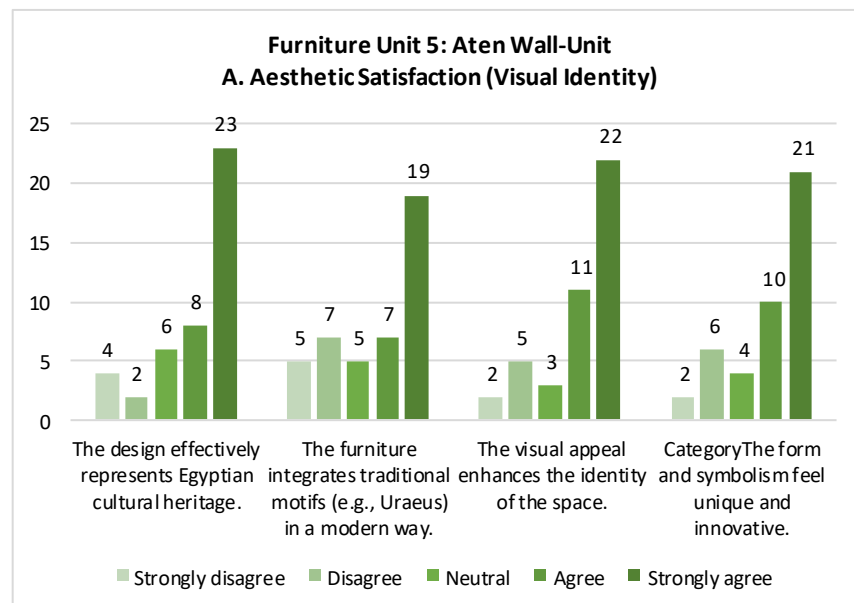
**Figure 9**, shows the Aesthetic Satisfaction in Furniture Unit 2.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 10**, shows the Aesthetic Satisfaction in Furniture Unit 3.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 11**, shows the Aesthetic Satisfaction in Furniture Unit 4.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 12**, shows the Aesthetic Satisfaction in Furniture Unit 5.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021

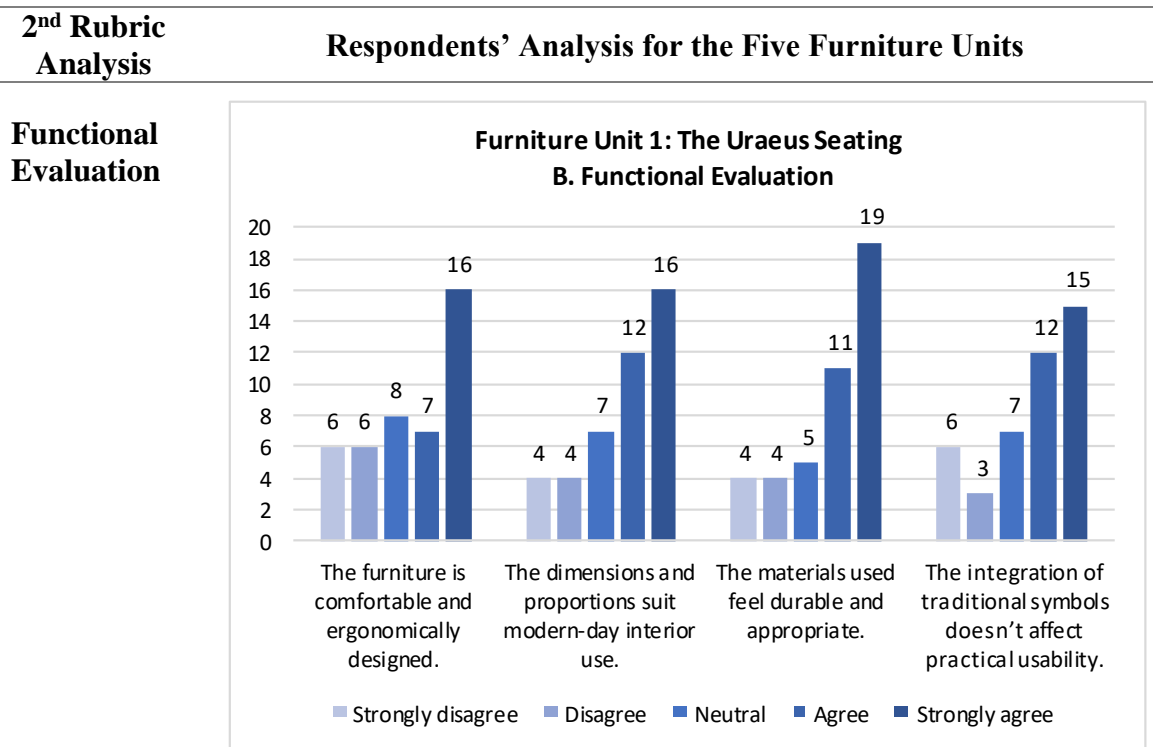
#### 2.4.2.2. Functional Evaluation

The Functional Evaluation was assessed how well the furniture units performed in practical terms, focusing on comfort, suitability of proportions, material durability, and whether traditional motifs hindered

usability. See table 6, the Lotus Table and Aten Wall-Unit again led with 21–26 respondents strongly agreeing that the designs were comfortable, well-proportioned, and practically usable, showing that cultural elements did not impede function. Isis Sofa scored similarly high in this rubric, especially in ergonomics and material use, reinforcing its perception as a well-balanced design. While Uraeus Seating, however, received the lowest functional satisfaction, with 7 respondents strongly disagreeing on comfort and ergonomics, and a relatively lower level of agreement on usability and proportions. This highlights a potential design gap where symbolism may have compromised practical user experience.

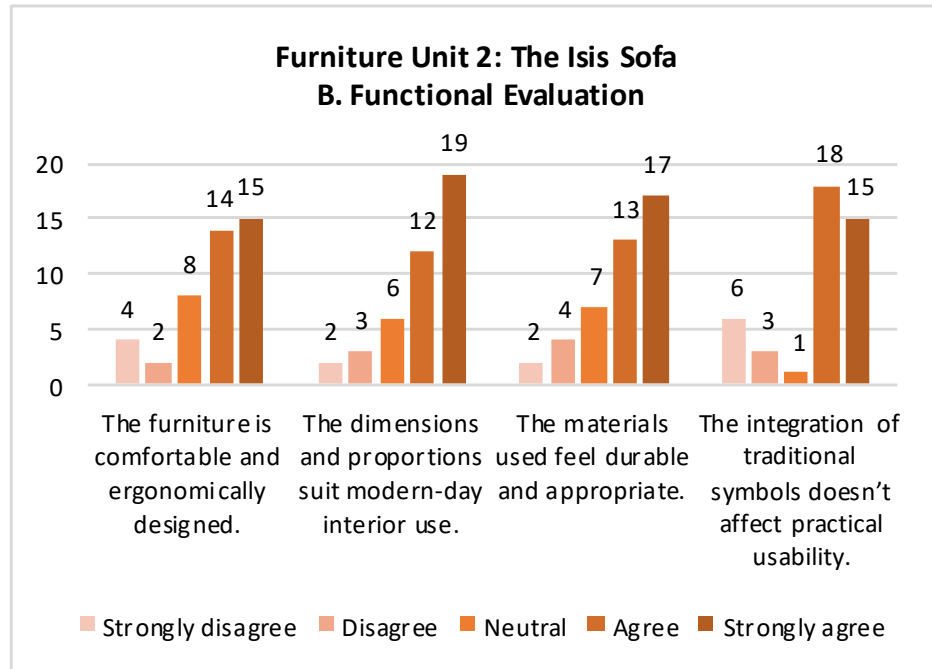
**Table 6. Illustrating the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rubric Analysis: Functional Evaluation for the five experimental Furniture Units.**

Source: Researcher, 2021

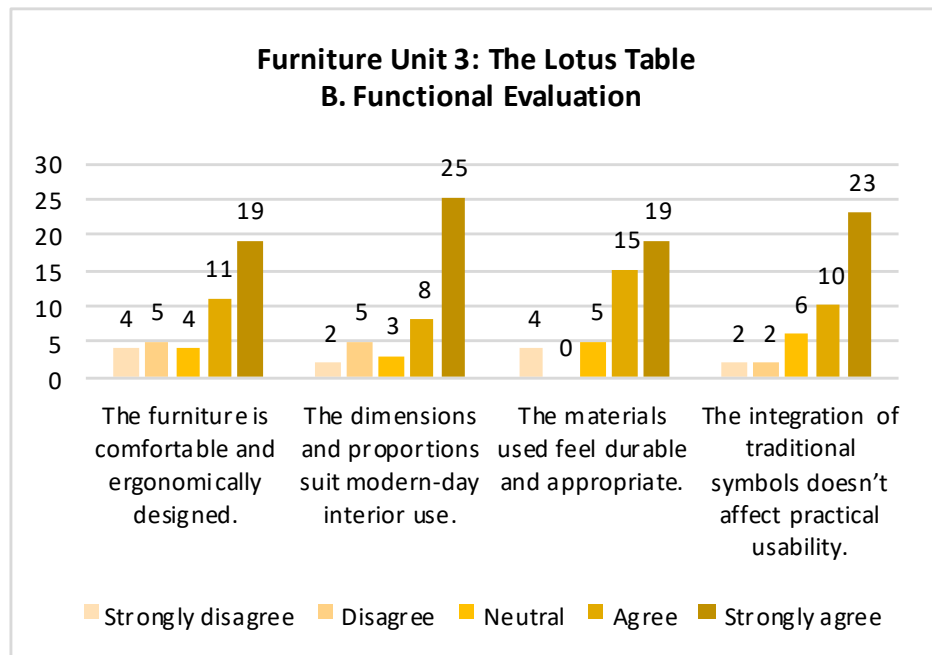


**Figure 13,** shows the Functional Evaluation in Furniture Unit 1.

Source: Researcher, 2021

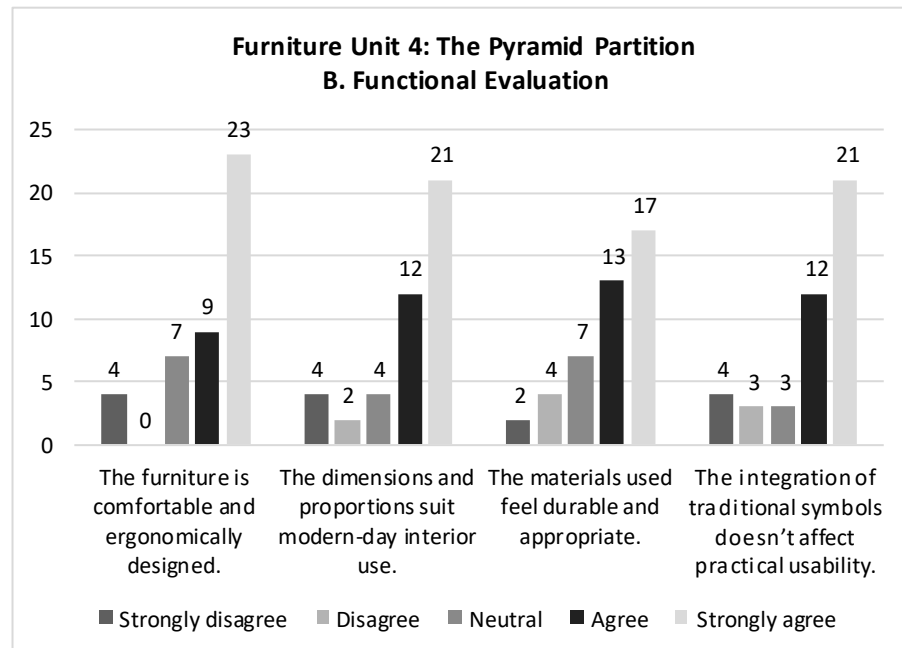


**Figure 14**, shows the Functional Evaluation in Furniture Unit 2.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021



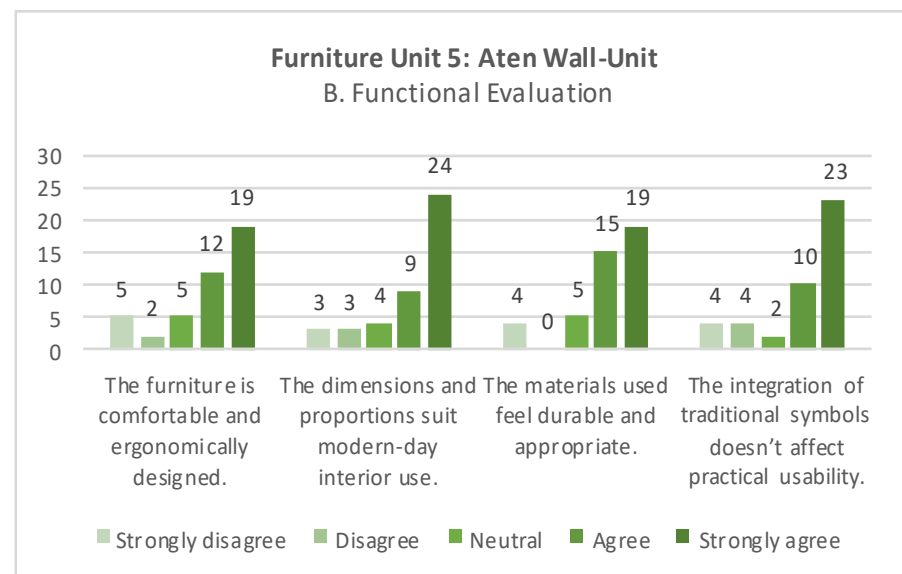
**Figure 15**, shows the Functional Evaluation in Furniture Unit 3.  
**Source:** Researcher, 2021





**Figure 16**, shows the Functional Evaluation in Furniture Unit 4.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 17**, shows the Functional Evaluation in Furniture Unit 5.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

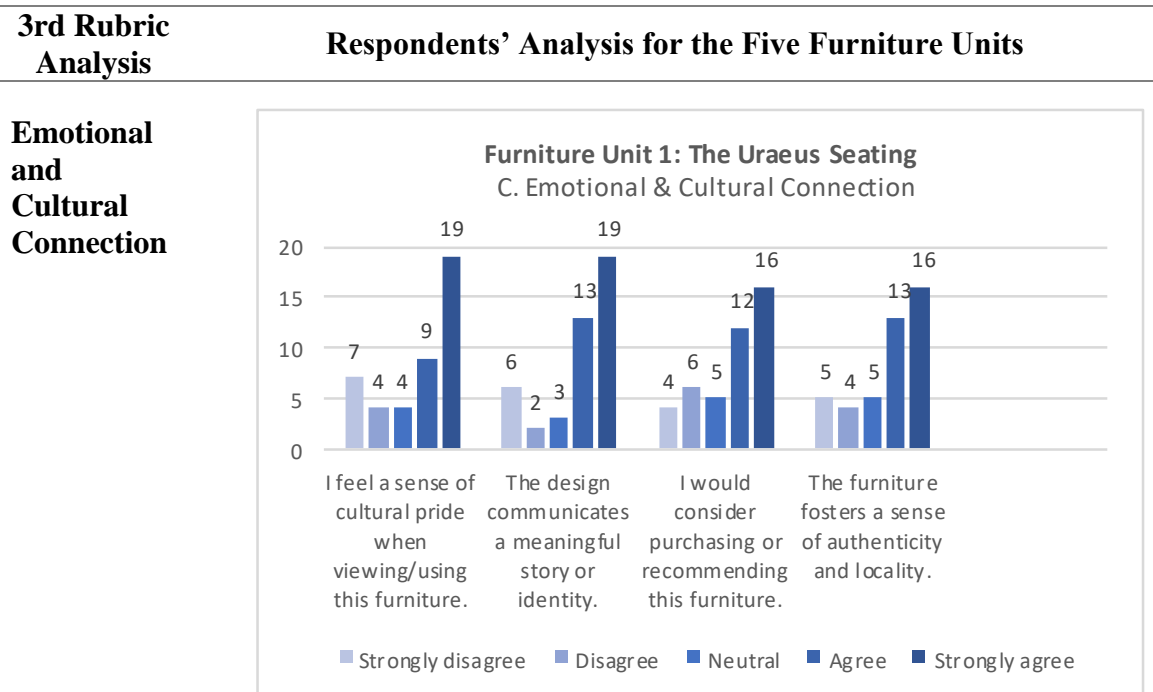
#### 2.4.2.3. Emotional and Cultural Connection

The final rubric explored respondents' emotional engagement and perception of cultural authenticity and relevance, particularly whether the designs evoked a sense of pride, communicated a meaningful identity, and had marketability potential. See table 7, Furniture Units 3 (Lotus Table)

and 5 (Aten Wall-Unit) received the highest emotional connection, with 22–24 respondents strongly agreeing they felt cultural pride, could identify with the design, and would recommend or purchase the piece. Unit 2 (Isis Sofa) also ranked well, showing clear emotional resonance, especially in its storytelling capacity and cultural symbolism. Uraeus Seating, in contrast, elicited less emotional identification. Only 5 strongly agreed that it fostered pride, with similar numbers disagreeing or remaining neutral, suggesting a weaker cultural-emotional link and less perceived market appeal.

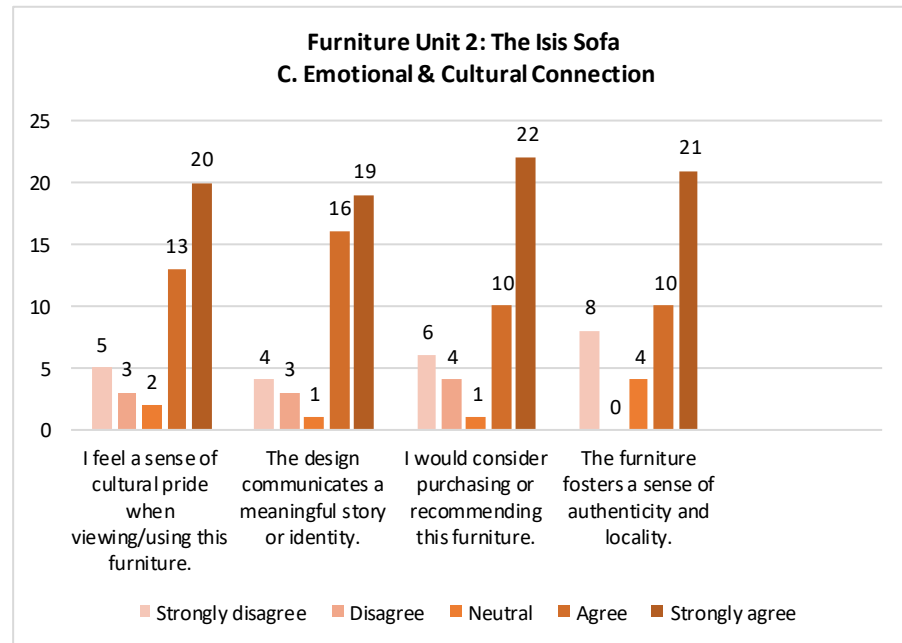
**Table 7. Illustrating the 3<sup>rd</sup> Rubric Analysis: Emotional and Cultural Connection for the five experimental Furniture Units.**

Source: Researcher, 2021



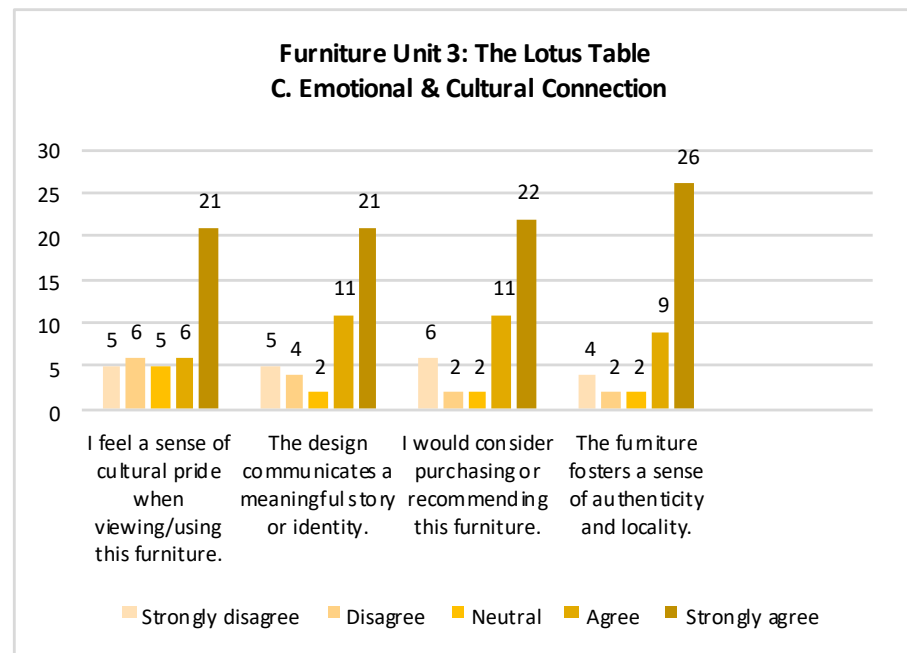
**Figure 18,** shows the Emotional and Cultural Connection in Furniture Unit 1.

Source: Researcher, 2021



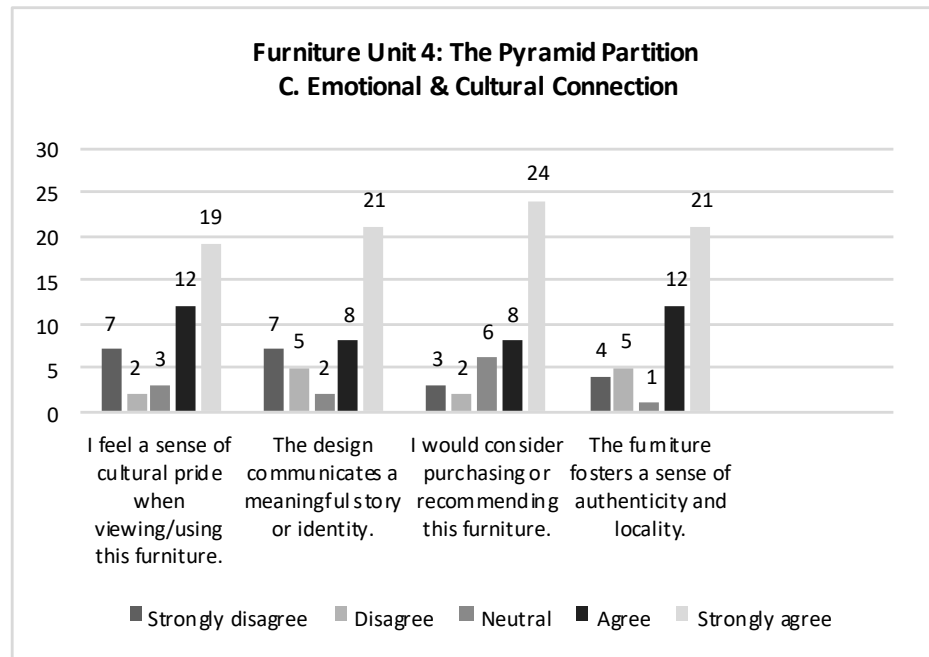
**Figure 19**, shows the Emotional and Cultural Connection in Furniture Unit 2.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021



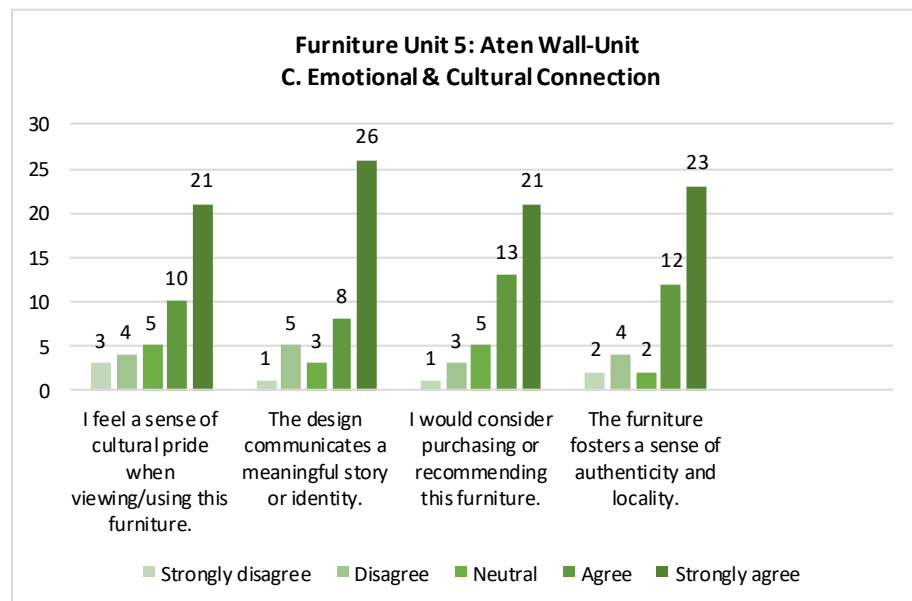
**Figure 20**, shows the Emotional and Cultural Connection in Furniture Unit 3.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 21**, shows the Emotional and Cultural Connection in Furniture Unit 4.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021



**Figure 22**, shows the Emotional and Cultural Connection in Furniture Unit 5.

**Source:** Researcher, 2021

#### 2.4.2.4. Market Relevance

To assess the commercial viability of identity furniture designs, the participants were asked questions about: “Which Furniture Unit design did you find most appealing?”, “Any recommendations for improvement?”, and “Do you believe such identity-based designs could be marketable internationally? Why or why not?” In a way to evaluate the Purchase interest, usability, global/local appeal of the proposed furniture units and if there is any Recommendations for Market Strategy.

In response to the question of which unit of furniture was most attractive, the Lotus Table and Aten Wall-Unit scored the highest, as 53% (24 out of 43) of the respondents would be interested in buying it or would recommend the Lotus Table and Aten Wall-Unit. What made these units special was their ability to integrate aesthetics, high cultural symbolism as well as functionality. In terms of being marketable internationally, more than 60% were positive that heritage based designs can have appeal to other markets across the world. The respondents claimed a strong narrative value, visual identity connected with the increasing need in culturally inspired, artisanal products.

The participants also provided useful recommendations in making market fit: One respondent proposed an inclusion of customizing elements in order to fit in the different interior styles. The need to improve on the ergonomic comfort especially during seating units was highlighted by 15.6% (7 respondents). The option to restore decorative features to a more minimalist and international approach was proposed by 13.3 % (6 respondents).

### 3. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of this research indicate the functional capability of incorporating the Pharaonic symbolic and the Ancient Egyptian design concepts in modern interior furnishing items. Consistent with the research purpose, that is, to fill the gap between the ancient cultural heritage and modernity in furniture practice of Egypt, this study has managed to come up with design prototypes that not only borders aesthetic authenticity but also practicalness.

The questionnaire results with the majority of respondents are Female. All responses so far fall within the 20–30 years category. In all the five furniture units, analysis indicates that the best Performers in the three categories (aesthetic, functional, emotional) with the highest satisfaction



scores were always recorded by Lotus Table and Aten Wall-Unit. Moreover, Isis Sofa has also proved to be a tough Competitor particularly in emotional and functional dimensions. In the meanwhile, the analysis indicated that the lowest scores were recorded by Uraeus Seating, especially in terms of comfort, cultural resonance and visual appeal and needs Improvement. Its heritage representation was highly denied by 14 respondents. This also highlights the possibilities of rethinking in form, proportion and symbolic clarity .

Highlighting that the highest scores were awarded to designs in which balance between symbolism, ergonomics, and modern aesthetics were subtly achieved (e.g. Lotus Table, Aten Wall-Unit), Emotional and cultural attachment is also a major factor of satisfaction to which the good aesthetic and functional outcomes are often related. The willingness to recommend and to purchase was high in most users when the identity-based elements were authentic, modernized, and not intrusive to operate.

This qualitative approach of the study, which was based on the design of the study, incorporated research outcomes following the three stages (theoretical exploration, symbolic analysis, and experimental design), allowed a complex comprehension of the possibilities to translate the traditional Egyptian visual language (the symbols of the Wings of Isis, Aten, Pyramids, Lotus, and Uraeus) into a modern interior. The research did not use these motifs as decorative, but rather identity marker to establish a horizontal distance between the past and present, space wise. The approach is a direct answer to the mentioned gaps in research: there is currently no focused academic attention to the heritage of Egyptian designs in contemporary practices; the lack of empirical user assessments and application of the legacy of a civilization that has been so rich in history in the existing production lines.

The Conceptual phase and computer-aided design (CAD) approach were used to steam up the prototypes of the experimental furniture, i.e. the Uraeus Seating and Isis Sofa and others. These digital devices came in handy in converting the rich symbolic legacies into evolved geometric framework which complies with contemporary ergonomics, materials and aesthetics theories. Notably, the materials used were collaboratively sustainable, locally appropriate, maintaining cultural and environmental sensitivity, meeting the global design expectations and at the same time globally celebrating the local.

Moreover, the study illustrates that the comparative study of global furniture design practices has highlighted that cultural aesthetics are increasingly becoming homogenized. This highlights the necessity of a swift action in the search of locally grounded, adaptive design strategies, which is what this study specifically focuses on.

Summing up, the research proves that the rediscovery of Ancient Egyptian legacy through the lens of contemporary design is something culturally necessary and commercially persistent. When identity becomes central to interior architecture, it preconditions the Egyptian contemporary design language that may be exported, sustainable, and absolutely authentic. More to the point, it proves that design can be a wonderful instrument of cultural heritage preservation no longer through mimicry, but through interpretation, making sure that old values and aesthetics can still influence contemporary conditions of living and habitation.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the results of this study that proved the prospects of such heritage-implied furniture and its ability to hold cultural identity and fulfill contemporary design requirements, the following recommendations are suggested to enhance widespread use and strength of this design direction:

- *Incorporate Heritage Based Design in Education Programs*

Topics such as a cultural heritage, symbolism, and inherent design principles should be incorporated in architecture and design education. The reinterpretation of traditional Egyptian motifs in a creative way should be encouraged through curriculum change, where future designers will develop both the theoretical and practical frameworks to conserve identity by being innovative.

- *Promote Cross-sector Collaboration over Innovation*

Designers, heritage institutions (including museums), and digital fabrication experts should be promoted to work closely as close partners. Such partnerships have the potential to have knowledge of the past connect with modern manufacturing processes to convert traditions of symbolic value into modern furniture that can scale and have functions.

- *Develop Design Guidelines of Heritage Furniture Designs*

This should come up as a plan, a set of codified design principles and best practices to follow to integrate Pharaonic elements into modern furniture. These must take care of matters such as choice of material, ergonomic and functional needs, fabrication method, and authenticity of the design in terms of culture- maintaining a balance between being traditional and practical.

- *Use Digital Resources on Heritage Translation*

CAD, parametric modeling and other related digital fabrication technologies should become more heavily utilized as a means of precisely revisiting traditional motifs and producing scaleable, high-quality design samples. These are the tools that are essential both to the maintenance of the integrity of ancient symbolism and experiment with the modern forms.

- *Conduct Real-Life Pilot Projects*

Furniture designs inspired by heritage must be tried out in a few projects at the higher-end residential settings, boutique hotels, cultural and institutional facilities. To further validate the user-centered design approach and to determine the commercial feasibility, they will also collect both qualitative and quantitative feedback about such environments.

- *Formulate a National Branding Approach of Egyptian Furniture*

A branding strategic framework should be created to make Egyptian heritage furniture appear as authentic and competent in the global market. Publicizing different identity-motivated design as a commodity that can be exported can boost cultural economy in addition to diversifying the creative industries in the global industry.

- *Promote Heritage Design Cross-Cultural investigation*

It is suggested that further interdisciplinary and cross-geographical research be carried out on the topic of ways in which heritage can be embraced in the contemporary design practice across the world. Cross-cultural research on other culturally rich areas can develop a common understanding of design knowledge and help create globally relevant innovation, but with local roots.

- *Conserve by Innovation, Not Imitation*

The restoration of Egyptian furniture design is finally possible through viewing the cultural heritage not as something dead but alive and constantly developing as a source of inspiration. This paper confirms that incorporation of tradition with modern aesthetics, digital applications, and user responses could work to create designs that acknowledge traditions rich background of Egypt and give attention to the necessities and the demands of the times.

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## هوية التصميم الداخلي كوسيلة للحفاظ على التراث: رؤية معاصرة لتصميم الأثاث المصري

### Preserving Heritage through Interior Space Identity: A contemporary vision for Egyptian Furniture Design

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#### ملخص البحث:

التصميم الداخلي، كعدسة ثقافية، يُجسّد هوية المجتمع، ويعيد سرد قصص تاريخه، ويُبرز ثرائه التاريخي، ويُثير حوارًا قويًا بين التقاليد القديمة واللغة المكانية الحديثة. يُعدّ الأثاث في التصميم الداخلي عنصراً أساسياً في تشكيل الهوية المكانية والسرد الثقافي. يعي البحث الحالي الي سد الفجوة بين التراث والابتكار من خلال هيكّل جديد لتصميم الأثاث المصري، يجمع بين الأسلوب والجماليات المعاصرة في إطار الطابع التاريخي المستوحى من الثقافة الفرعونية.. الهدف هو خلق بيئات داخلية تعكس مفهوم الفخامة مع الحفاظ على الهوية الثقافية الأصيلة لمصر، وتحديداً باستخدام الجانب البصري للثقافة الفرعونية الخالدة، وهو ما يُميّز المصري. عادةً ما تقتل أساليب التصميم المعاصرة التي تُولّدها السوق في مراعاة قوة الخطاب الثقافي الأصيل في السعي نحو تصميم مُعولم. تُتيح هذه الفجوة فرصة لاستعادة التراث وإدخاله في البيئة الداخلية المصرية المعاصرة.

يركز البحث الحالي على فهم كيفية تطبيق رموز الثقافة الفرعونية كمصدر الهام لتصميم أثاث أصيل قائم على الهوية، والذي يعزز الهوية البصرية ويخلق تأثيراً لاستمرارية الثقافة. يهدف البحث إلى التوصل إلى عمليات تصميم تدمج رمزية التراث وسط ممارسات التصميم المعاصرة لإنتاج قطع مثل الأثاث الوظيفية والرمزية للهوية المصرية. تتبع الدراسة منهجية مزدوجة تشمل مراجعة الأدبيات الشاملة والمقارنة، كما تستخدم منهجية بحثية نوعية تعتمد على التصميم، مدعومة بأساليب التقييم القائم على المستخدم، وذلك لسد الفجوة بين التاريخ الغني لتصميم الأثاث في مصر وتمثيله غير البارز في الممارسات المعاصرة. سيتم تنظيم المنهج على شكل ثلاث مراحل مترابطة ومتسلسلة، بحيث تلعب كل مرحلة دوراً فريداً في تحقيق هدف البحث. وتنتهي بنمذجة قطع أثاث جديدة ذات مظهر معاصر مع إشارات إلى الرموز الفرعونية، واستخدامها في بيئة من التصميمات الداخلية الحديثة لاختبار مدى الجمالية والوظيفية والهوية. ستساهم الورقة في النقاش حول التصميم المتكامل ثقافياً من خلال تقديم إرشادات حول كيفية استيعاب التراث والابتكارات معاً لتعزيز الهوية المصرية في التصميمات الداخلية المعاصرة وتقديم اتجاه تصميم عملي وقابل للتصدير، والذي يتماشى مع متطلبات الأسواق العالمية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الحضارة المصرية، الحفاظ على التراث، الهوية المكانية، الرمزية، الدراسة المقارنة