

Exploring on the Extraction of Attributes of Lacquer Art Fashion Products

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Abstract

With a history of seven thousand years, lacquer art originates in China, and spreads to Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia during the Han and Tang dynasties. Lacquerware is not only decorative but also of practical values such as anti-corrosion and pest resistance. However, as time goes on, lacquer art faces the challenge of market polarization, where the disparity between the high-end and low-end markets has led to a decrease in the demand for lacquer art products. To address this challenge, this study extracts various attributes of lacquer art fashion through an in-depth review of literature and semi-structured interviews with experts, combining insights from lacquer artists, lacquer art collectors, and fashion designers. This study ultimately identifies key attributes in the design of lacquer art fashion products, including heritage, cultural value, innovation, contemporary aesthetics, originality, high quality, delicacy, and craftsmanship. This phase of the research shows that lacquer art fashion products are not only a display of craftsmanship but also a combination of culture, heritage, and innovation. By integrating these attributes, lacquer art fashion products can keep pace with the times while retaining their profound cultural essence and exquisite craftsmanship, becoming a bridge that connects the past and the future.

Keywords

Lacquer, Lacquer Art, Fashion, Attributes of Fashion, Fashion Lacquer Attributes

1. Introduction

As a traditional craft with a long history, lacquer art, according to the earliest unearthed lacquerware relics, has existed for approximately nine thousand years. During the Han and Tang dynasties, traditional Chinese lacquer art was transmitted abroad, initially to Japan and Korea, and later to Vietnam, Thailand, and other Southeast Asian regions. With societal development, lacquer art has continuously progressed, demonstrating a high level of craftsmanship. Lacquer art not only serves decorative purposes but is also used for anti-corrosion, insect prevention, and mothproofing, featuring a wide variety and significant regional attributes. Lacquerware is primarily produced in Asian countries such as China, Japan, Myanmar, and Vietnam. China and Japan are main countries of origin. Historically, lacquerware has been a traditional living utensil for Chinese people, continuing to this day without fading away. It has evolved from a luxury item to a daily living and decorative thing, becoming a representative form of utensil with abundant historical feeling and cultural heritage. Lacquer art is part of the cultural and creative industry, and the transition of the lacquer art industry has always been an important issue in the government's cultural policy (Liu, 2012).

However, as the society progresses and people are getting higher living standards, there is a growing demand for higher quality of life, and the pursuit for aesthetics is changing accordingly. This has led to a polarization in the lacquerware market. Due to different product positioning, lacquer works crafted by master craftsmen are usually aimed at the high-end collection market, characterized by exquisite design, superb craftsmanship, and high pricing. The lower-end lacquerware market, targeted at tourists, features products that are uniform in category, rough in quality, and lower in price (Xu, 2014). Therefore, high-end lacquerware products can only be seen in craft museums and art galleries, while consumers' demand for low-end products and their interest in lacquer art are greatly reduced as they are traditional, old-fashioned in design, and crude in craftsmanship. The polarization of lacquerware products makes it difficult for the industry to thrive. With a relatively conservative atmosphere, existing lacquerware products are short of innovation in variety and craftsmanship, and are essentially repeating the tradition. Besides, the shape, function, patterns, and colors of traditional lacquer art products are associated with ancient lifestyles and religious ideologies (Liu, 2012), making it difficult to integrate into the daily life of the masses (Zhao et al., 2015). Lacquer art has gradually faded from people's view in modern society. Therefore, it is crucial to spark people's interest in lacquer art products and help lacquer art escape its current predicament.

Contemporary fashion brands are increasingly merging with traditional crafts to diversify the market, blending modern aesthetics with historical craftsmanship. Notably, Japanese and Taiwanese (China) brands have innovatively incorporated traditional elements into modern designs, such as Kikuchi Hojudo's cast iron teapots and Franz Collection's porcelain items, infusing them with cultural significance, as shown in **Figure 1** & **Figure 2**. Similarly, collaborations between luxury brands like Van Cleef & Arpels, Chopard, Chanel, and Hermes with Asian artisans and designers showcase the integration of lacquer art into high fashion, reinvigorating traditional crafts with contemporary relevance, as shown in **Figure 3** & **Figure 4**. These partnerships highlight a strategic blend of East and West, where traditional materials and techniques are reinterpreted through



Figure 1. Kikuchi Hojudo's cast iron teapots (Image source: <u>https://www.zens.asia/chaqi/407.html</u>).



Figure 2. Franz Collection's porcelain items (Image source: <u>https://www.franzcollection.com.tw</u>).



Figure 3. Van Cleef & Arpels & Junichi Hakose painted butterfly brooch (Image source: <u>https://www.vancleefarpels.com/tw/zh/the-maison/articles/lacquered-butterflies.html</u>).



Figure 4. Chopard lacquer art watch (Image source: http://www.xbiao.com/chopard/65525.html).

modern design principles, promoting a fusion of tradition and innovation. This approach not only preserves the rich heritage of traditional crafts but also repositions them within the modern lifestyle, illustrating the potential of traditional beauty in contemporary design.

From ancient times to the present, fashion has existed in both Eastern and Western societies. Fashion is not only an indispensable element in the social environment, but it also fulfills our needs for spiritual and material life and plays an undeniable role in promoting economic development. From the perspective of fashion design, it is necessary to convey the expressions of innovation, uniqueness, distinction, and individuality (Liu, 2017). The essence of fashion is to keep up with the times. It is a short-term popular phenomenon or social behavior that has a wide impact on the public psyche, and it is the imitation and pursuit of a certain lifestyle. The foundation of fashion lies in culture, making the traditional culture, design, and fashion correlated. By incorporating design, traditional craft culture is developed into a fashion atmosphere that is closely related to life (Sudjic, 2009). Traditional craft fashion is an attribute branch of slow fashion and a major trend in the field of fashion design (Xue et al., 2022).

By utilizing modern design methods to understand the core elements of traditional lacquer art, it's possible to flexibly showcase cultural essence, visual elements, and design principles. The cultural, artistic, and natural attributes of lacquer art are elements that can be incorporated into modern design, corresponding to the pursuit of a fashion lifestyle that values nature and health, cultural depth, artistic sensibility, quality, and individualization (Chen, 2022). Therefore, in the creation of lacquer art fashion, it is important to grasp the essence of traditional lacquer art and delve into its cultural perspectives. Through the medium of lacquer art, designers can sensitively express their design philosophies and fulfill modern individuals' pursuit of a fashion lifestyle enriched with a sense of culture.

There is a significant gap between traditional lacquer art and modern life needs and aesthetics, making it a worthy topic of discussion on how traditional lacquer art can be inherited and developed within modern design. This requires a reevaluation of traditional lacquer art. In the context of modern development, the traditional lacquer art industry comes to a halt, which is precarious for the inheritance of lacquer art. It's worth exploring whether design improvements can make it adaptive to modern aesthetic needs and enable its sustainable development. Designers should integrate their own cultural traditions into modern design on the foundation of tradition and in combination with fashion attributes and philosophies. New attempts can be made to incorporate traditional lacquer art into modern fashion product design models by analyzing the historical evolution of lacquer art and lacquer culture, and finding any similarities in philosophy and trends within fashion product designs. The integration of tradition and modernity has always been one of the research directions of modern design. Modern design evolves with diversification and differentiation as its main attributes. Various design ideological trends fall and rise. Among others, the trend of design today is moving towards retro, green, and naturalism, making revisiting tradition a future trend. How traditional lacquer culture can survive under the modern context should be explored through the correlation between lacquer art and fashion industry. Allowing traditional lacquer art to respond to the needs of new lifestyles provides more possibilities for revitalizing lacquer art. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the attributes of fashion and lacquer art through existing literature and derive the attributes of lacquer art fashion products through the results of expert interviews.

2. Literature Review

2.1. History of Lacquer Art

Lacquer art encompasses three major areas, namely lacquerware, lacquer paintings, and lacquer sculptures. Broadly speaking, regardless of whether the piece is two-dimensional or three-dimensional, regardless of the material of the base, the production methods used, the form of the piece, or whether it is a utilitarian or decorative item, as long as lacquer is involved in the material, it falls within the scope of lacquer art (Qiao, 2000). As early as in the Zhou Dynasty's "Book of Etiquette", there are records of lacquerware, indicating that people had already begun using lacquer to decorate utensils.

As an important witness to historical customs and a significant carrier of traditional aesthetic concepts, traditional lacquer art has a history of 7000 years, reaching its peak from the Warring States period through to the Qin and Han dynasties, creating a flourishing lacquer culture (Sung et al., 2016). Lacquer art, with its long history, began during the Hemudu Neolithic period and was jointly carried forward by China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asian countries (Wang, 1983). Japanese lacquer art, a national symbol of Japan, originated from China. Later, Japanese lacquer art surpassed China in terms of technical skill and production capacity, subsequently beginning to influence Chinese lacquer art (Yan, 2014). The oldest lacquerware discovered in Japan dates back to the Jomon period, about 6000 years ago. Primarily in black or red, some of Japanese lacquerware works have simple red patterns on black bases. During the era of Prince Shōtoku, Japan sent missions to China during the Sui and Tang dynasties to learn skills, greatly enhancing its lacquering techniques. Lacquerware crafted in Nara period (710-784 AD) features rich decorative techniques such as lacquer painting, gilding, flat gold and silver inlay, and mother-of-pearl inlay, as influenced by foreign elements in pattern contents, with a diversification of patterns incorporating styles from Japan, China, Korea, and other countries (Zhi & Zhu, 2013). In the early 20th century, many Chinese students studied lacquer art in Japan. Upon returning, renowned Chinese lacquer masters like Li Zhiqing and Shen Fuwen started to borrow Japanese lacquer art techniques such as maki-e, sunken gold, and alternative coating, reforming and innovating on the basis of traditional Chinese lacquer art, enriching the expressiveness of Chinese lacquerware art and promoting the development of modern Chinese lacquer art. Vietnamese lacquer art, with its long history, brought a new concept to lacquer art in the 1960s through its unique craft features and artistic expressiveness of polished lacquer paintings. By the 1990s, as culture and art re-connected with the world, polished lacquer paintings were also deeply influenced, ushering Vietnamese lacquer art into an era of creative freedom, allowing traditional lacquer craftsmanship to continue and develop. The history of lacquer art on the Korean peninsula can be traced back to the Goguryeo dynasty, with historical records indicating that Korean lacquer art began during the Chinese Han dynasty. An important factor in the prosperity of Korean lacquer art is the inheritance of folk lacquer art. Korea's local production and processing of various lacquer art raw materials and the wide variety of tools for making lacquer art, along with a comprehensive sales system, are important factors for the successful development of lacquer coating in Korea.

However, lacquer art faces multiple dilemmas in the contemporary era. The crafting process is intricate and time-consuming, lacquerware products are primarily reproductions in the market, and it is difficult to spread knowledge of lacquer art profession, resulting in overlooked market demand. Further, lacquerware sales are polarized, catering to both the high-end market for collectors and the low-end market for small workshop products, which are short of innovative design. Besides, in terms of shapes, colors, and patterns, it fails to meet modern aesthetic needs, as product styles are traditional and lacking a modern touch, leading to the declining desire to purchase.

In modern times, the challenges faced by lacquer art need to be overcome through innovation and adaptation. The complexity of the craftsmanship and the lengthy production cycle mean that lacquerware cannot quickly meet market demand, posing a challenge to the fast-paced modern lifestyle. Moreover, lacquer art pieces are often expensive, which limits their popularity. The polarization in sales also challenges the market position of lacquer art, with exquisite lacquerware catering to the high-end art collection market and products aimed at the low-end tourism souvenir market. This polarization restricts the development space of lacquer art.

Additionally, lacquerware products have failed to meet the demands of modern consumers in the aesthetics and functionality of lacquer art, leading to a shrinkage in its market share. The development of contemporary lacquer art requires the integration of traditional craftsmanship with modern design concepts, innovating product styles and crafting methods to adapt to modern consumers' aesthetic and functional needs for art and lifestyle goods.

2.2. Attributes of Lacquer Art

In the historical development process of lacquer art, lacquer transitioned from traditional craftsmanship to becoming a medium for easel painting art. This shift allowed lacquer art to flourish in various forms, enriching the connotations of materials and techniques used in lacquer art. Thus, the development of modern lacquer art is diversified, exhibiting a strong sense of modernity and craftsmanship that integrates lacquer techniques with the era, whether in terms of materials, colors, techniques, shapes, or decorative patterns. This progress in craftsmanship enhances the exquisite nature brought about by lacquer art.

In terms of the attributes of lacquer art, it can be explored from multiple perspectives such as culture, art, greenness, texture, and functionality. The cultural aspect emphasizes the deep historical sedimentation and cultural heritage of lacquer art, which has undergone more than 7000 years of inheritance and development in China. Lacquer culture possesses a profound historical and cultural significance. Evolving and changing over time, it yet always maintains its distinctive attributes of the era. The transition from traditional Chinese lacquerware to modern lacquer art represents a process of inheritance and creation. The cultural value of traditional lacquer art lies in its complete and accurate representation of historical civilizations and cultural forms, embodying the wisdom and cultural achievements of creators from different eras and cultures, and possessing its own cultural inclusiveness and substantial historical and cultural information content (Wu, 2015; Chen, 2022).

The artistic aspect showcases the craftsmanship and pictorial features of lacquer art. Lacquer possesses both craftsmanship and pictorial qualities; the pictorial aspect involves using lacquer materials in paintings creation to logically arrange forms, structures, colors, lines, textures, and spatial visual attributes to express the common rules of modern painting art, conveying the specific emotions of the lacquer painter. The craftsmanship aspect, guided by profound cultural and artistic cultivation, leverages the attributes of the lacquer materials used, allowing them to harmonize with the colors, qualities, and aesthetic beauty of the lacquer materials in the creation process (Guo, 2021a; Li, 2016).

The greenness aspect highlights the natural property of lacquer and its environmental friendliness. The natural properties of lacquer include adhesiveness, decorativeness, and rheology, showcasing the natural beauty of the material. Compared to other materials, lacquer's unique aesthetic gives a sense of deep, introspective beauty that appears naturally formed. Lacquerware features elegant and solemn color tones and a design philosophy that respects nature (Yu, 2021).

The texture aspect reflects the noble and elegant material texture of lacquer art. The material of raw lacquer is restrained and subtle, with a texture that is noble, elegant, calm, and gentle (Wu, 2015). The functional aspect relates to the practical purposes of modern lacquer art development, which is to be applicable to modern life. The initial integration of lacquer art into daily production and life focused on the practicality of lacquer. Decorative lacquer painting on traditional utensils not only serves the function of protecting the base and extending its lifespan but also provides an aesthetic decorative effect. Lacquerware is durable, impact-resistant, non-peeling, and fade-resistant, requiring a high level of craftsmanship from craftsmen (Chen et al., 2020).

2.3. Attributes of Fashion

Fashion's essence lies in its rapid societal uptake and profound influence on public behaviors and attitudes, marking it as a phenomenon both fleeting and deeply imitative. Veblen (1898) and others like Barnard (2013) view fashion as a display of social status and a cycle of transient tastes, respectively, while Liu (2017) broadens the definition to include fashion's roles as both material and behavioral culture. Baudelaire (2018) connects fashion to the flux of modern life, valuing its ability to capture contemporary beauty and individual desire for uniqueness.

The distinction between fashion and popularity, as outlined by Norman (2004) and Gao (2003), emphasizes fashion's class-based nature versus the mass appeal of popularity, with both contributing to the tapestry of popular culture. This dichotomy suggests that while fashion initiates as a novel trend among certain social echelons, it becomes widespread, transitioning into popularity (Wang, 2005; Li, 2019). In this cycle, fashion serves not just as a trend but as a cultural expression, challenging individuals to navigate between innovation and tradition, reflecting broader societal values and the continuous evolution of social identities.

Fashion leads trend within specific spatial and temporal contexts, and possesses significant cultural influence. It can become a classic or a transitory phenomenon that gradually loses its appeal over time. Fashion serves as a form of innovation and a driving force for cultural change (Sudjic, 2009), meeting people's need for sensory stimulation by introducing novelty, thereby becoming the core momentum behind fashion changes. Fashion reflects the aesthetic values of a group and the pursuit for novelty and uniqueness. This motivation of consumption and pursuit prompts continuous updates and retrospection in fashion. In the diverse contemporary era, fashion is not limited to material aspects; concepts, ideas, and language are all closely related to fashion. The fashionable life pursued by people today not only emphasizes natural health, cultural awareness, artistic sensibility, quality, and individualization (Chen, 2022) but also includes multiple attributes such as cultural value, sociability, class, imitativeness, sustainability, naturalness, high quality, and artistry (Liu, 2017; Veblen, 1898; Gao, 2003; Jocić, 2022).

In terms of cultural value, fashion is seen as an expression of cultural influence, potentially becoming a timeless classic or merely a transitory trend. This cultural value reflects fashion's profound impact on society, whether through enduring heritage or short-term trend (Chen, 2022; Xue et al., 2022). Fashion plays multiple roles in society, not only signaling the social status of an individual or a group, but also embodying a social logic that transcends the matter itself.

As Liu (2017) and Veblen (1898) pointed out, the selection and display in fashion are not merely pursuits for the aesthetic feeling of substance; they also reflect complex social relationship and structure. In this sense, fashion becomes a communication tool for non-verbal conveyance of social status, personal values, and the identity and expectation of the social culture in which they live. Fashion spreads across and is accepted by different social strata, often in a top-down pattern (Gao, 2003; Simmel, 1904), where the fashion choices and trends of the upper social echelons become the model for the lower groups to imitate. This phenomenon highlights fashion's role in distinguishing social classes and reflects the interaction and influence mechanisms between them. Imitation is one of the core mechanisms of fashion diffusion within groups, where individuals achieve social identification by mimicking society's elites or those perceived as having higher status (Jocić, 2022; Liu, 2017).

This imitation behavior involves not only outward appearance but also lifestyle and behavioral habits. Through imitation, individuals can feel associated with the group or individuals they admire, thereby gaining a sense of social identity. However, this imitation can also lead to a loss of exploration and innovation in personal style, reflecting the fashion industry and society's ongoing exploration of the balance between individual expression and group identity. This also prompts continual innovation and transformation in the fashion industry to satisfy people's desires for novelty, uniqueness, and individualization. Additionally, fashion emphasizes sustainability, highlighting the importance of environmental protection and sustainable development (Jocić, 2022; Xue et al., 2022; Henninger et al., 2016), with the pursuit of naturalness reflected in the use of natural, healthy, and friendly materials (Chen, 2022; Xue et al., 2022). High quality is particularly emphasized in fashion design, reflecting the research outcomes of designers' creative inspirations (Chen, 2022; Negm, 2019; Cinar, 2017; Leung et al., 2015). Moreover, a major feature distinguishing fashion products from ordinary products is their artistry, which provides a sense of beauty and experience (Chen, 2022; Liu, 2017; Guo, 2021a).

It is evident that fashion, as a form of cultural expression through its constant changes and innovations, not only reflects the dynamic changes and cultural diversity of society but also promotes interaction and communication between individuals and society. It serves both as a means of personal self-expression and as a bridge for the exchange of social cultural values and aesthetic concepts. In contemporary life, where there is a pursuit of natural health, cultural richness, artistic sensibility, quality, and individualization, the attributes of fashion such as sustainability, naturalness, high quality, and artistry further highlight the importance placed on environmental responsibility, cultural depth, and quality of life.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Selection of Respondents

Respondents involved in this study consist of 9 experts, as shown in **Table 1**, including 3 lacquer artists, 3 lacquer art collectors, and 3 fashion designers. The interviews were conducted one-on-one via video or telephone calls, focusing on understanding different experts' perspectives and views on the attributes of lacquer art fashion. Open-ended questions were used for in-depth discussions, with each expert interview lasting between 30 and 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded and documented, including the respondents' verbal and non-verbal information, such as body movements, tone of conversation, facial expressions, and volume of voice. Key phrases were recorded during the interviews to enable more accurate analysis afterward. The audio recordings were then transcribed into text and sent to the experts for content confirmation.

3.2. Aspects of Lacquer Art Fashion

This study defines the key attributes of fashion and lacquer art through relevant books, journal literature, etc., and extracts the necessary attributes of lacquer art fashion, as shown in **Table 2**. The attributes of lacquer art fashion products are divided into seven aspects: culture, art, leadership, greenness, design, texture,

Artist No.	Sex	Age	Education	Period of Actual Operation	Background
A1	М	36	Junior college	16	Lacquer master from Fujian Province
A2	М	36	Technical secondary school	21	Lacquer artist
A3	М	40	Bachelor	20	Member of China Arts and Crafts Society
B1	М	36	Bachelor	15	more than 50 pieces of lacquer art works and products collected
B2	М	45	Bachelor	20	more than 30 pieces of lacquer art works and products collected
B3	М	37	Bachelor	18	more than 30 pieces of lacquer art works and products collected
C1	F	27	Graduate	5	Fashion design brand manager
C2	F	28	Bachelor	6	Fashion goods brand manager
C3	М	37	Doctor	10	Jewelry brand designer

Table 1. Basic data of experts interviewed.

Aspect	Attribute	Definition		
Culture	Historic significance	With a development history of thousands of years, lacquer art has a strong cultural heritage.		
	Heritage	Lacquer art belongs to an intangible culture and is worth preserving.		
	Cultural identity	Fashion design is concerned with human feelings and cultural memory. Through the creativity and interaction of different cultures, by the interpretation of products, the presented works have cultural identity behind.		
	Cultural value	Traditional fashion consumers are also more concerned about quality and fashion, so traditional handicraft fashion products need to have cultural value.		
Art	Craftmanship	It creates a picture of changing colors, rich texture, different materials of beauty through superb technical performance.		
	Pictorial quality	Through the use of realistic, freehand, abstract, figurative and other expression techniques, lacquer techniques and skills are used to express a variety of objects, to convey the specific emotions of lacquer artists.		
	Visual appeal	Viewers are given a beautiful sensory experience.		
Leadership	Class consciousness	It creates a sense of superiority.		
	Sociality	It exerts influence on others, and makes others want to have, and it is contagious.		
	Individuation	It shows distinctive personal taste.		
Greenness	Naturalness	Lacquer originates from the sumac tree, and is natural.		
	Sustainability	Lacquer is renewable.		
	Pluralism	Lacquer can be created with a variety of media, such as minerals, gold and silver powder.		
	Protectiveness	Lacquer protects the base and extends service life.		
Design	Retroactivity	It retains the original characteristics of lacquer art, combined with contemporary aesthetic sensibility.		
	Innovation	It breaks the shackles of tradition and generates new ideas.		
	Experimental spirituality	It needs to experiment with techniques, colors and materials.		
	Contemporary aesthetic sensibility	In addition to the functional needs of the product, it is also necessary to consider the emotional needs and contemporary aesthetic needs.		
	Originality	The product is original and makes the consumer feel special.		
Texture	Delicacy	Lacquer gives a delicate texture.		
	Emotionality	Lacquer art is mostly made by hand, with emotion, so it is necessary to pay attention to the spirit of objects, the expression and transmission of emotion.		
	Warmth	Lacquer gives a warm feeling.		
	Nobility and elegance	The lacquer material is restrained and implicit, and the texture is noble, elegant, quiet and gentle.		
	High quality	Fashion pursues a sense of quality, and it is necessary to pay attention to quality in design.		
functionality	Functionality	The function of lacquer art products can be designed according to people's needs.		
	Collectability	Lacquer art has the characteristics of collection.		
	Practicability	Lacquer art fashion products are practical.		
	Security	Product handling is safe.		
	Usability	The products are easy to use.		

 Table 2. Aspects and attributes of lacquer art summarized in the study.

and functionality. The cultural aspect includes the historical and hereditary attributes of lacquer and the cultural identification and value of fashion attributes. The artistic aspect encompasses the craftsmanship, pictorial quality, and visual appeal of lacquer attributes. The leadership aspect includes the class-consciousness, sociality, and individualization of fashion attributes. The green aspect contains the naturalness common to both fashion and lacquer attributes, as well as the sustainability of fashion attributes and the diversity and protective nature of lacquer attributes. The design aspect includes the retro aspect of fashion attributes, along with the innovation, experimental spirit, contemporary aesthetic sensibility, and originality required by researchers. Retro does not mean blindly pursuing traditional restoration but rather a symbiosis integrating modern design concepts. The retro and innovation of lacquerware can be expressed through the deconstruction and reorganization of modern design techniques, simplifying complexity to achieve the design concept of retro styling. The texture aspect includes the delicacy, emotional handcrafting, warmth, and noble elegance of lacquer art, as well as the high-quality attribute of fashion. The functionality aspect includes the functionality, collectability, and practicality of lacquer attributes, along with the safety and usability deemed necessary by researchers.

3.3. Semi-Structured Interview

This study employs a semi-structured interview method, where an interview outline is prepared in advance, including a series of open-ended questions to facilitate a deeper exploration of the respondents' views. This approach allows respondents to freely express their thoughts and provides more insights into their perspectives on lacquer art fashion products. The interview outline is shown in **Table 3**.

3.4. Data Analysis

The steps for analyzing the research data are as follows: First, transcribe the entire recorded contents of the interviews into verbatim transcripts and conduct a preliminary organization of these transcripts. Carefully read the text to extract descriptions related to the attributes of lacquer art fashion products and compile the contents of related sentences by categories, and finally, perform category analysis and coding. The coding process follows these steps:

1) Open coding: Extract the basic attributes and concepts of lacquer art fashion from the interviews. These preliminary ideas have not yet been fully integrated or organized at this stage. This stage is conducted with an open attitude,

 Table 3. Outline of Semi-Structural Formula.

2) Please rank the importance of the above 25 attributes (the most important is 1)?

¹⁾ Do you think that the attributes summarized by the researchers (**Table 1**) meet the conditions of lacquer art fashion products? (Please rate on a scale of 1 - 5)

coding the interview data item by item. An example of the coding diagram is shown in **Table 4**.

2) Axial coding: At this stage, look for interrelations among the attributes of lacquer art fashion, aiming to find repetitions and conceptual similarities between codes, further clarifying the main themes and related sub-attributes. An example of the coding diagram is shown in Table 5.

3) Selective coding: Based on the discussions in the first two stages, integrate all codes into a complete framework of lacquer art fashion products. This framework demonstrates the core features and direction of lacquer art fashion products.

4) Theme analysis: Through the above coding process, key attributes of lacquer art fashion products can be identified. Each attribute is subjected to in-depth analysis, and the final results are organized to determine the attributes of lacquer art fashion products.

To ensure the reliability and validity of this study, various strategies were

Table 4. Schematic diagram of open coding.

Question 1: What do you think is the definition of "lacquer art fashion products"? What are the conditions?					
Original interview statement	Open coding				
Lacquer art fashion products are artworks or daily items that combine traditional lacquer techniques with modern fashion concepts	Tradition combined with modernity				
It not only retains the exquisite skills and historical heritage of lacquer art, but also integrates modern design concepts and market trends	Preservation and innovation of lacquer art				
It is to modernize the lacquer skills of our ancestors and add some current popular elements	Modernity of traditional lacquer art				
A lacquer art fashion product is not just an object or a work of art, it is a bridge between contemporary design language and ancient craft	The correlation between contemporary design and ancient craftsmanship				
Once a product is widely available and owned by everyone, it may lose its original fashion quality	Homogenization and lose of its fashion quality				
The direction of the product should be determined according to the market demand	Need to consider the market demand				

Table 5. Schematic diagram of axial coding.

Question 1: What do you think is the definition of "lacquer art fashion products"? What are the conditions?				
Axial coding				
Modern translation of lacquer art				
Market and consumer demand				

implemented to enhance the trustworthiness and accuracy of the data. First, triangulation was used by verifying the consistency and correctness of the data through in-depth interviews and reference to existing literature. Second, respondent feedback was obtained by presenting preliminary analysis results to the respondents for confirmation and revision. Lastly, to ensure the transparency of the research, each step of the study was meticulously documented, allowing other researchers to replicate and verify the process. Through these methods, the study aims to achieve a high degree of reliability and accuracy in its results.

4. Results

4.1. Lacquer Artist's Interview Results

Lacquer artists, as the inheritors and innovators of this ancient craft, hold a deep respect for its traditional values, underscoring the cultural heritage and artistic expression inherent in lacquer art. Their perspectives reveal a commitment to preserving the craft's history while also pushing its boundaries to stay relevant in contemporary contexts.

Lacquer artists rated heritage as the most important attribute, reflecting their role in maintaining the continuity of this traditional art form. They view themselves as custodians of an invaluable legacy, with a responsibility to transmit this heritage to future generations. Artist A1 emphasized, "The rich historical background of lacquer art is an indispensable part of understanding this art form. When designing, this depth of history and culture provides endless inspiration for my creations." This sentiment underscores the importance of heritage in informing and inspiring contemporary lacquer art creations.

Despite recognizing the importance of cultural identity, lacquer artists expressed concerns about its perception in modern society, which they feel can sometimes be superficial. They advocate for a deeper understanding and appreciation of lacquer art's cultural and technical aspects, beyond its aesthetic appeal. The contrast between the high value placed on heritage and the lower scores for cultural identity reflects a nuanced understanding of how lacquer art resonates with contemporary audiences.

Lacquer artists focus on the intricate balance between traditional craftsmanship and artistic innovation. They believe in the power of lacquer art to convey emotions, stories, and cultural narratives, making each piece unique. Artist A3 highlighted, "The production process of lacquer art is a highly professional craft, each step requires us to strive for perfection, showing our passion and focus on art" emphasizing the dedication to excellence and the expressive potential of lacquer work.

Lacquer artists are not only concerned with preserving the past but also with making lacquer art relevant for today's audience. They strive to innovate within the bounds of tradition, ensuring that lacquer art remains a vibrant and evolving form of cultural expression. The integration of painting arts into lacquer work, as noted by the artists, serves as an example of how they are broadening the scope of traditional lacquer techniques to include more contemporary artistic elements.

In summary, lacquer artists value the heritage, cultural identity, and artistic expression of lacquer art, viewing their work as a bridge between the past and the present. They are dedicated to preserving the traditional values of lacquer art while also embracing innovation and broader cultural resonance. Through their creations, they seek to engage with both the history and the future of lacquer art, ensuring its continued relevance and appreciation in the modern world.

4.2. Collector Interview Results

Lacquer art collectors bring a unique perspective to the appreciation of lacquer works, emphasizing the historical significance, craftsmanship, and emotional depth of the pieces they choose to collect. Their insights reveal a deep appreciation for the tradition and artistry of lacquerwork, as well as a keen eye for the potential of these pieces to bridge cultural and temporal divides.

Collectors place a high value on the historical significance and heritage of lacquer art, often seeking pieces that carry a rich narrative of the past. They view their collections as more than just assortments of objects; each piece is a portal to a different era, offering insights into the cultural and historical contexts from which it emerged. Collector B2 captures this sentiment, noting the emotional and intellectual engagement elicited by historically significant pieces: "Whenever I see a piece of lacquer art that carries history, it's like flipping through a precious history book, feeling the emotions and wisdom of each generation."

The appreciation of craftsmanship is paramount for collectors, who recognize the skill and dedication required to produce high-quality lacquer works. They are particularly attentive to the pictorial quality of lacquer art, valuing the integration of painting and lacquer techniques that result in visually stunning and emotionally resonant pieces. This appreciation is rooted in an understanding of the complexity of lacquer art production and a respect for the artisans' mastery over their craft. As B3 states, "For me, lacquer art is not just a craft item; it's also a carrier of emotions and stories," highlighting the importance of craftsmanship in conveying depth and meaning.

Collectors are drawn to lacquer art that establishes a strong emotional connection, often through its representation of cultural identity and values. They seek pieces that not only display technical proficiency but also resonate on a personal and cultural level, reflecting the broader cultural significance and personal narratives encapsulated in the art. Collector B1's remark, "Each time I view a piece of lacquer art, I can strongly feel the call of culture," underscores the desire for works that embody cultural identity and evoke a deep emotional response.

Lacquer art collectors play a critical role in the preservation and promotion of lacquer art, serving as custodians of cultural heritage and advocates for the art form's continued relevance. Their collections act as living archives that not only safeguard the tradition but also facilitate cultural exchange and understanding. By valuing the historical, artistic, and emotional dimensions of lacquer art, collectors contribute to a broader appreciation of its significance and ensure its legacy endures for future generations.

In conclusion, lacquer art collectors are driven by a passion for the historical depth, craftsmanship, and emotional richness of lacquer works. Their perspectives highlight the multifaceted value of lacquer art, encompassing both its artistic merit and its cultural significance. Through their collections, they foster an environment of appreciation and preservation, ensuring that the art form remains vibrant and relevant in the contemporary world.

4.3. Fashion Designer Interview Results

Fashion designers approach lacquer art with a keen eye for integrating contemporary design with traditional craftsmanship. Their insights reveal a forwardthinking attitude toward making lacquer art accessible and relevant in today's fashion and design landscapes.

Fashion designers unanimously value innovation, with all parties scoring it highly. This focus on innovation is about more than just aesthetics; it's about redefining the role of traditional arts in contemporary contexts. Designer C2 encapsulates this sentiment, "When creating, I often think about how to combine the traditional charm of lacquer art with contemporary design concepts to create works that have historical depth and conform to modern aesthetics." This approach highlights a desire to honor the tradition while making it resonate with today's audience

The experimental spirit and originality are crucial for fashion designers as they navigate the blend of traditional lacquer techniques with modern design principles. The drive for originality is not just about creating unique pieces but about pushing the boundaries of what lacquer art can represent. Designer C1's statement, "The charm of lacquer art lies in its constant innovation, which keeps it vibrant and relevant," underscores the importance of continually exploring new possibilities and techniques to keep lacquer art dynamic and appealing.

Fashion designers also emphasize the functionality of lacquer art in modern design, recognizing the importance of creating pieces that are not only beautiful but also practical and usable in everyday life. This practical approach to design reflects a broader trend in the design world towards products that marry form with function, ensuring that beauty and usability go hand in hand. Designer C1 highlighted this approach, saying, "In lacquer art design, we strive to ensure that the product is both beautiful and functionally comprehensive to meet the every-day needs of consumers".

Fashion designers view lacquer art as a medium for cultural exchange and societal reflection, using it to bridge different cultures and explore contemporary social trends. The emphasis on individualization and sociality suggests a belief in the power of design to reflect personal identity and facilitate connections within a diverse global community. This perspective positions lacquer art as a tool for personal expression and a reflection of the artist's personality and inner world, as noted by designer C2.

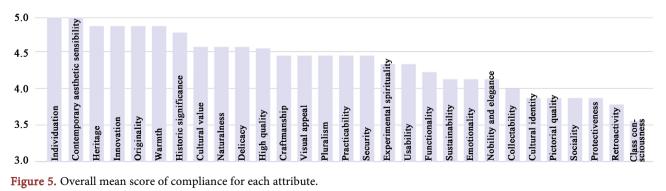
Sustainability and environmental friendliness are also significant concerns for fashion designers, who score these aspects highly. Their focus on eco-friendly materials and sustainable development practices reflects a commitment to responsible design that respects the environment. Designer C3's comment, "Lacquer art is inherently related to nature ... not only resonates with their natural origins but also creates works with more depth and layers," showcases the importance of maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature through design.

In conclusion, fashion designers approach lacquer art with an emphasis on innovation, functionality, and the integration of contemporary design principles. Their perspectives highlight the dynamic potential of lacquer art to remain relevant and appealing in modern design, driven by a commitment to originality, practicality, and environmental sustainability. Through their work, fashion designers play a crucial role in evolving the tradition of lacquer art, ensuring its continued significance and appreciation in the contemporary art and design landscape.

4.4. Extraction of Lacquer Art Fashion Product Attributes

This study, aimed at extracting the attributes of lacquer art fashion products, based on the results of expert interviews, uses the overall average score of whether the attributes conform to those of lacquer art fashion as the screening criterion. Attributes with an average score higher than 4.5 were selected, indicating that respondents generally believe these attributes highly conform. The following attributes scored above 4.5: Historicity (4.78), Heritage (4.89), Cultural Value (4.56), Individualization (5.0), Naturalness (4.56), Innovation (4.89), Contemporary Aesthetic Sensibility (5.00), Originality (4.89), Delicacy (4.56), Warmth (4.89), High Quality (4.55), as shown in **Figure 5**.

Subsequently, based on the experts' ranking of the importance of attributes, the top ten attributes ranked by each lacquer artist, lacquer art collector, and fashion designer were selected, and the frequency of their occurrence was totaled. The results are shown in **Figure 6**. The majority of respondents believe the important attributes, in order, are Originality (9 occurrences), Cultural Identity



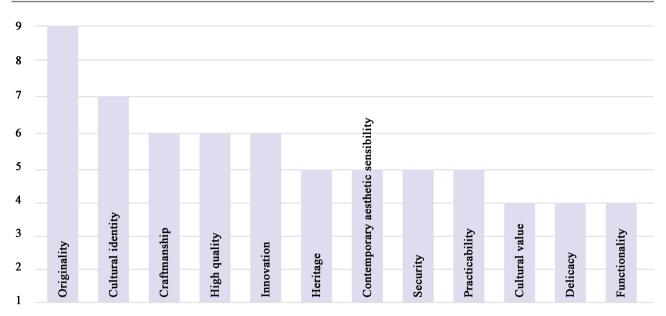


Figure 6. The number of occurrences an attribute appears in the top ten most important rankings.

(7 occurrences), Craftsmanship (6 occurrences), High Quality (6 occurrences), Innovation (6 occurrences), Heritage (5 occurrences), Contemporary Aesthetic Sensibility (5 occurrences), Safety (5 occurrences), Practicality (5 occurrences), Cultural Value (4 occurrences), Delicacy (4 occurrences), and Functionality (4 occurrences).

According to the results above, the top ten attributes with higher conformity and the top ten important attributes have been extracted as the traits of lacquer art fashion. This indicates that respondents believe these attributes are not only important when designing lacquer art fashion products but also possess a high degree of conformity. The extracted attributes of lacquer art fashion products are Heritage, Cultural Value, Innovation, Contemporary Aesthetic Sensibility, Originality, High Quality, Delicacy, and Craftsmanship.

5. Discussions

Through expert interviews, this study has extracted eight core attributes of lacquer art fashion products, with an in-depth discussion of each attribute as follows:

1) Heritage

Lacquer art, as an intangible cultural heritage, has been recognized by numerous scholars for its value in culture, history, economy, art, and craftsmanship (Lin, 2023; Fan et al., 2020; Dai, 2020). For example, Lin (2023) in their study on the Xiamen lacquer line carving art in Fujian emphasized its high cultural and artistic value and noted the profound significance of its inheritance and protection. Furthermore, research by Fan et al. (2020) also affirmed the heritage value of lacquer art in the eyes of most people, who believe it should be passed down.

In this study, the results indicate that lacquer art has a long historical founda-

tion, and its traditional crafts continue to be inherited in modern society. This not only shows the close connection between lacquer art and its historical and cultural background but also highlights that contemporary lacquer art products are not just a display of craftsmanship but a continuation of cultural heritage. The results also reveal that lacquer artists, as direct inheritors of this craft, hold a strong sense of identity towards the heritage of lacquer art; meanwhile, collectors and fashion designers also highly respect and recognize its value, viewing lacquer art not merely as an art form but as an important carrier of history and culture.

Therefore, it is evident that lacquer art holds an important position in history and culture, highly valued by all parties involved. The continuation of traditional knowledge and skills of lacquer art is crucial, ensuring its enduring significance and value in contemporary times.

2) Cultural Value

In lacquer art fashion products, the attribute of cultural value is particularly significant. This trait highlights the story and meaning behind each lacquer art product, making every piece a profound narrative history book. It not only displays the beauty of art but also encapsulates the emotions and attributes of a specific culture with every stroke. This aligns with the findings of Chen (2022), who noted that traditional lacquer craftsmanship carries rich cultural value, imbuing everyday lacquer items with cultural personality and a traditional, composed temperament. The culture of Chinese lacquer art, extending beyond original art, represents the profound essence of the Orient, exuding mystery, nobility, and elegance while advocating for the unity of people, objects, and the environment, as well as the harmonious coexistence with utensils.

In fact, the study results indicate that not only do lacquer artists have a deep understanding and appreciation of this, but lacquer art collectors and fashion designers also recognize the profound cultural and artistic value of lacquer art. This view is consistent with Zhang & Romainoor (2023), who believes that the aesthetic expression of artwork is inseparable from its cultural and historical background. Furthermore, the research by McCallum et al. (2020) emphasizes that different audiences interpret and appreciate artworks based on their backgrounds and experiences. Therefore, from the perspective of collectors and fashion designers, they view lacquer art as a manifestation of cultural symbols and social values, undeniably deepening the importance of cultural value attributes in lacquer art fashion products.

3) Innovation

In the development of lacquer art fashion products, innovation is a crucial attribute. However, the current market shows a relatively conservative and repetitive pattern of lacquer art product development. Ma Junying (2016) pointed out that modern lacquer products are still overly conservative in terms of types and craftsmanship, essentially repeating and imitating traditional patterns. Zhao et al. (2015) also mentioned that many traditional lacquer art products, in terms of shape, function, patterns, and colors, are closely related to ancient life and religious beliefs, making them difficult to integrate into modern society and meet

the needs of new lifestyles and times. Chen (2019) emphasized that, facing constantly changing social needs, as an ancient art, lacquer art needs to be interpreted in a more modern and popular way to meet people's material and spiritual needs. This means that, although lacquer art is rooted in deep traditions, it must continue to innovate, integrating modern styles and techniques to ensure its appeal in an ever-changing era. Wu & Feng (2023) further pointed out that this is not only a manifestation of the progress of lacquer art but also how it can continuously innovate while retaining tradition, thus ensuring its vitality.

The results of this study show that whether its lacquer artists, collectors, or fashion designers, all highly value the attribute of innovation. Li & Lin (2018) also stated that although the core of lacquer art is still its traditional elements, in the current art and design fields, continuous updates in technology and creativity are crucial. Contemporary lacquer artists are no longer just restoring the ancient glory of lacquer art but are trying to reveal a new understanding and interpretation of lacquer art in modern society through different forms of expression. Innovation is not just about pursuing novelty but ensuring that lacquer art can continue to develop and be widely recognized. Therefore, in the design of lacquer art fashion products, we must find a balance between inheritance and innovation to ensure that lacquer art products can both continue their historical value and adapt to the needs and changes of modern society.

4) Contemporary Aesthetic Sensibility

The core idea of contemporary aesthetic sensibility in the design of lacquer art fashion products is about how these products cater to and reflect the current aesthetic standards and values. As time progresses and society changes, people's aesthetic perceptions continuously evolve. Therefore, lacquer art products must not only embody traditional craftsmanship but also possess a modern aesthetic to adapt to these changes.

Lacquer artists, collectors, and fashion designers all emphasize that lacquer art works must reflect contemporary cultural values and design trends. They should not only be closely related to the current art and design community but also establish deep emotional connections with contemporary audiences, thus making them more broadly appealing in the market. Hence, when creating or selecting lacquer art works, careful consideration must be given to their compatibility with contemporary aesthetics, ensuring they resonate with the public.

Furthermore, as Li & Lin (2018) pointed out, contemporary artists and designers create based on the current social environment. They draw inspiration from everyday life, discovering elements and key points related to contemporary attributes. Through this approach, not only are works with attributes of the era created, but these works also ensure to meet people's needs, closely connecting with people's lifestyles, values, and aesthetic perceptions, fulfilling modern expectations and demands.

5) Originality

In lacquer art fashion products, originality is a crucial attribute that not only highlights the uniqueness of each piece but also the unique thought processes and styles of the artists. This embodiment of originality transcends mere craftsmanship and further reflects the profound artistic value of the work.

Research results show that for lacquer artists and fashion designers, they place great importance on this originality, believing that lacquer art works should not be imitations or repetitions but should have their distinctiveness and break-throughs. Kate Cullinane (2013) indicates that true originality is not just about creating something entirely new or unprecedented, but lies in how to cleverly utilize existing elements, recombine them, and endow them with new life and meaning. This act of creativity is not always easy, but for true artists and designers, it is their way of expressing their viewpoints and emotions.

As for collectors, while they do value the originality of the work, they might also focus more on other attributes of the work, such as its unique artistic value or potential collectible value.

Therefore, originality holds a significant place in the design of lacquer art fashion products, not only giving the work its uniqueness but also bringing it profound artistic value. However, in pursuing originality, we should also pay attention to maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the design, ensuring it can truly resonate with the target audience.

6) High Quality

In contemporary society, as consumers increasingly focus on product quality, the high-quality attribute of lacquer art fashion products becomes particularly important. For lacquer art products, quality represents not only their appearance and design but more importantly, their manufacturing process, material selection, and durability. High-quality lacquer art products can satisfy consumers' aesthetic needs and ensure their long-term usability and enduring artistic value.

The value of traditional handicrafts lies in their uniqueness and the process of handcrafting, which requires high quality. When discussing quality, it refers not only to the physical properties of the product but also to the overall experience it provides to the user. A high-quality lacquer art product should be visually appealing and also offer comfort and convenience in use. This requires artists and designers to deeply understand consumers' needs and integrate traditional craftsmanship with modern technology to achieve optimal design. As Dong & Geng (2021) mentioned, this may involve adjusting the original design, choosing more suitable materials, or adding new functionalities to ensure they have not only aesthetic value in modern spaces but also practical utility.

Therefore, the high-quality attribute of lacquer art fashion products is key to their success. By combining traditional handicraft with modern design concepts and maintaining their practicality and durability, these products not only meet consumers' aesthetic demands but also become highly usable items in daily life.

7) Delicacy

In the context of contemporary design, the delicacy of lacquer art products represents a pursuit of craftsmanship perfection. Lacquer artists convey a pursuit of beauty and exquisite skill in every brushstroke and line they create, while lacquer art collectors appreciate these details from the perspectives of collection and market value. At the same time, fashion designers must also integrate refined design and craftsmanship into the product, enhancing its overall value.

Previous research has suggested that lacquer art is regarded not only as practical decorative crafts but also as artworks, possessing delicacy and artistic value (Guo, 2021b). The results of this study indicate that delicacy is seen as a display of craftsmanship, permeating every detail of lacquer art, not only enhancing its aesthetic value but also increasing its market competitiveness.

Therefore, in the design process, delicacy becomes an important consideration for designers, requiring them to meticulously handle every detail while preserving traditional craftsmanship. This approach ensures that the product not only displays the spirit of craftsmanship but also presents profound cultural value.

8) Craftsmanship

In contemporary society, as the market's demands for craftsmanship in lacquer art products continue to increase, this attribute becomes crucial in the design of lacquer art fashion products. Previous studies have shown that lacquer art encompasses various forms, including lacquer painting and lacquerware crafts, with rich and diverse techniques such as carved lacquer, piled lacquer, engraved lacquer, inlaid lacquer, painted lacquer, and polished lacquer, demonstrating the duality of painting and craftsmanship (Qiao, 2000). The results of this study indicate that the craftsmanship of lacquer art products is not only reflected in their unique appearance design but more importantly, in the profound mastery of colors, textures, and materials. Excellent lacquer art products, by combining traditional handcraft with innovative thinking, not only meet consumers' aesthetic demands but also enhance the cultural value and market competitiveness of the product. This requires designers to deeply understand consumer needs, integrate contemporary design trends, choose suitable materials, and apply them innovatively to ensure that products have both aesthetic value and practical functionality.

Therefore, craftsmanship becomes the key to the success of lacquer art fashion product design, not only reflected in exquisite handcraft but also in creating works that possess artistic value and reflect modern aesthetics.

6. Conclusion

Lacquer art fashion products are not only a presentation of technology, but also a blend of culture, inheritance and innovation. In this study, the following core attributes were extracted: heritage, cultural value, innovation, contemporary aesthetic sensibility, originality, high quality, delicacy, and craftsmanship.

Heritage highlights the deep correlation between lacquer art fashion products and history and techniques, which not only ensures the continuation of techniques, but also provides a rich cultural heritage for contemporary creation. In product design, traditional techniques and design elements of lacquer art need to be preserved and reproduced, ensuring that the design is linked to its historical roots. Cultural value means that each lacquer art fashion product is a historical and cultural narrative. They become a specific expression of cultural characteristics and emotions. The design integrates patterns and signs of cultural symbolism into the product design to enhance cultural expression. Innovation ensures that lacquer art fashion products keep pace with the times. It not only maintains the traditional charm, but also shows the modern style and concept, so the design of products needs to explore new design concepts and production technology, break the traditional boundaries, and put forward a unique product concept. Contemporary aesthetic sensibility allows lacquer art products to be designed in line with the current aesthetic trend and meet the aesthetic needs of modern consumers. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the current design trend before designing products, and integrate modern aesthetics into lacquer art products to attract modern consumers. Originality injects a unique charm into the products, making it representative of the artist's unique thinking and style, and the design should consider the development of unique design concepts, avoid imitation, and emphasize the original spirit of creation. High quality is the evaluation standard of lacquer art products, to ensure that the products in the production process, material selection, and durability have reached the best standard, so the design needs to choose high-quality materials and pay attention to details, to ensure that the products meet the high standard of quality. Delicacy is reflected in every detail of the process. The design needs to take into account hand-made and delicate surface treatment, showing the delicate beauty of lacquer art. Craftsmanship is to display the unique beauty of lacquer art through exquisite manual technology, so it is necessary to strengthen the technological characteristics of lacquer art in product design, such as the natural fluidity and texture of lacquer materials, so that every piece of work has the value in craftmanship. These eight core attributes not only highlight the uniqueness of lacquer art fashion products, but also reflect the common expectations of lacquer artists, lacquer collectors and fashion designers.

7. Limitations

This study provides valuable insights into the attributes of lacquer art fashion products. However, there are several limitations to consider. Firstly, the sample size of experts interviewed may not capture the full diversity of perspectives within the field. Future research could benefit from a broader range of participants. Secondly, the study focused primarily on specific aspects of lacquer art fashion, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Despite these limitations, this study contributes to the ongoing dialogue on integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern fashion, offering a foundation for further exploration.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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