

## **Importance of textiles in Hospitality Sector**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In hospitality sector interior designing plays a key role. Interior design is the process of creating and coordinating elements inside many kinds of structures. These elements might include color schemes, surface finishes, furniture, and decorative pieces. This process not only used in residences but also in offices, retail stores and even places like restaurants and airports. Textile is one of the core elements of interior design. It can be made accordingly to fulfill all specific purposes of interior designing. Interior designers use textiles as an important tool to create a mood and set the tone for a space based on a client's needs and the space's intended purpose. Choices are made in accordance with types of textures, colors and patterns to create a desired effect. In hotels sophistication or charm is conveyed through interior atmosphere which includes paint color, furniture and furnishing like carpets, curtains and wall hangings. Textiles add colors to the interior. They are chosen in accordance with the furniture, since the blend of those two add to the overall effect and the theme of the interior. So, need for interior textiles, is increasing rapidly day by day. Interior textiles are also known as home furnishing textiles. They create a cohesive finished appearance in the hospitality sector.

**Key Words :** Hospitality sector, Interior designing, Home furnishing textile

### **INTRODUCTION**

Textiles enliven and beautify interior in the twinkling of an eye. They make us feel at home in strange places, too. Today, more than ever, this feel-good factor is having major impact on the entire home-textile sector and thus also on one of our essential target groups: the hotel industry. For this reason, home textiles and textiles for commercial buildings form a key element for hotels as well as hospitality sector.

Textile Industry is one of the oldest industry in India. It contributes about 13 per cent of total exports by India, contributes to 4 per cent of Indian GDP and 10 per cent in the manufacturing sector. The share of textile industry in generating foreign exchange is 27 per cent (Robert and Rachel, 2016). The market size is domestic textile industry is US\$ 108.8 billion. (IBEF, 2016) One of the largest employment generating industry, since it is more

labour intensive. The textile industry in India employees about 40 million directly and creates 60 million jobs indirectly.

#### **Demand for fabrics by hotel industry in India:**

Textile Industry in India is capable of producing a vast variety of products suitable for different business segments. Hotel Industry is a major business sector which has a huge demand for fabrics, linens, and soft furnishings. Most of the new hotels have a great emphasis on quality and luxury experience of guests using unique fabrics and furnishings (Italia, 2009). Hotels are important consumers of fabrics in the Indian market. There is an expected supply of 200000 budget segment hotel rooms by the year 2018. Some of the hotels allocates 20 per cent of house keeping capital budget for room linen and it is a promising fact that hotel industry demands a large volume of fabrics.

Most of the hotels in India are ready to spend on

quality bedroom linens such as Bedsheet, towels, and other linens. It has been found that during the period of 2001 to 2005, the luxury hotel chain such as West in have a thread count of 180-250, Hilton having a thread count of 250 with a blend of 60% cotton and 40% polyester and Marriot with a thread count of 300 with a blend of 60% cotton and 40% polyester in the room linens (Alexander, 2006). Presently the Indian hospitality has been introduced to the global linen standards. Earlier, the maximum thread count used was 300, today but now it is being stretched to 1500.

Constant upgradation and refurbishment also stimulated the demand for fabrics. Hotels in India are a niche market with vast untapped potential. Fabrics used in bedrooms are now a symbol of luxury and used to enhance the in-room experience and better night sleep that is very important for guest satisfaction and their revisit intention (Sriya, 2004).

In hospitality sector interior designing plays a key role. Interior design is the process of creating and coordinating elements inside many kinds of structures. These elements might include color schemes, surface finishes, furniture, and decorative pieces. This process not only used in residences but also in offices, retail stores and even places like restaurants and airports. Textile is one of the core elements of interior design. It can be made accordingly to fulfill all specific purposes of interior designing. Interior designers use textiles as an important tool to create a mood and set the tone for a space based on a client's needs and the space's intended purpose. Choices are made in accordance with types of textures, colors and patterns to create a desired effect. In hotels sophistication or charm is conveyed through interior atmosphere which includes paint color, furniture and furnishing like carpets, curtains and wall hangings. The need for interior textiles is increasing rapidly day by day, so that it provides a good scope for textile manufactures, traders and retailers.

**Interior textiles**, also known as home furnishing textiles, includes specialised textiles used in homes, offices, hospitals, hotels, schools, aircraft and automobile interiors. Widely used interior fabrics include satin, brocade, corduroy, damask, matelasse, sateen, velour (heavy), velvet (heavy), calico, canvas, terry and taffetta.

#### **How do interior textiles differ from other textiles?:**

Certain features differentiate interior textiles from other textile. These include:

- The weight of the fabric for interiors is heavy. It is thicker since low count yarn and higher constructions of ends per inch (EPI) and picks per inch (PPI) are used.
- The fabric is made wider than other fabrics to cover the wider area of interiors of buildings.
- These fabrics are normally made using dyed yarns instead of dyeing fabric later, because most of the interior textile designs are made in woven designs. The designs are mostly dobby and jacquard designs.
- The finishing applied is mostly functional finishes like flame resistance, soil resistance and stain resistance.
- The expected durability of the interior textile can be for 10 years or more.
- Interior textiles are subjected to rigid testing requirements to see how it stands up with regards to fire repellence, smoke emission and abrasion resistance.

The interior textile industry is classified into

1. Decorative textile
2. Textile floor coverings
3. Wall coverings
4. Manufactured products.

#### **Decorative textiles:**

These are mainly used to decorate the interior of the home rather than for any functional purpose.

#### **Decorative textiles include:**

- (i) Upholstery (ii) Draperies (iii) Wall hangings (iv) Curtains

#### ***Upholstery:***

These are the fabrics used over furniture frames and cushions. These fabrics are subjected to greater in-use stress including being used as seating for several hours.

#### **Properties of upholstery fabrics:**

Upholstery fabrics should have the following properties:

- (1) Very good resistance to wear or abrasion
- (2) Very high tensile strength
- (3) Pleasing handling of the fabric
- (4) Excellent colour fastness

(5) High resistance to seam slipping and yarn distortion

(6) It must not pill or shed

(7) It should be given stain- and soil-repellent finish

(8) It should have good flame-resistance

(9) Striped and plaid designs must be true in grain with no bow or skew

### Quality standard requirements:

The quality standard requirement for upholstery fabrics are as follows:

(1) Abrasion resistance - Light duty (less usage-several times/month - 3000)

(2) Dimensional stability - 3 - 5 per cent

(3) Seam breaking strength - warp (50 lbs), weft (50 lbs)

(4) Seam integrity - 0 to 0.0125" opening (or) yarn slippage

(5) Tear strength - 4-6 lbs (minimum)

(6) Tensile strength - 50 lbs (minimum)

(7) Colour fastness - (i) Cleaning (3-4) (ii) Crocking (3-4) (iii) Light (4) (iv) Gas fume (4)

### Curtains and draperies:

Curtains and draperies, also called window fabrics, cover windows in the home or hotels or offices. They make up the major applications of textiles in the interiors. Curtains are sheer and reflecting light weight fabrics, hung without linings. Draperies are heavy, often opaque and usually have a lining. Casements are medium weight window coverings with a lower degree of transparency than curtains.

### Uses of window fabrics:

The uses of window fabrics are

- To provide privacy to residents
- To eliminate or reduce glare from sunlight
- To hide an undesirable outside view
- To create aesthetic effect
- To give insulation from heat, cold and light

### Properties:

Besides the requirements of common textiles properties, these fabrics require good light fastness and good draping or handling.

### Textile floor coverings:

Textile floor coverings are used inside buildings.

Normally, they are made by weaving, tufting, needle-punching, bonding, flocking and knitting. Also called soft floor coverings as opposed to hard or smooth floor coverings like vinyl, linoleum, cork and rubber tiles or sheets, textile floor coverings are used at home and in hotels, hospitals, airports and automobiles. The fibre content and construction play an important role in the properties and characteristics of textile floor coverings and its selection for use.

### Textile floor coverings include:

- i) Carpets (ii) Rugs (iii) Underlays

### Carpets:

Carpets are heavy fabrics used for soft floor coverings. A carpet usually covers the entire floor and is fastened to it. Rugs are the same as carpets, but have a specific size. They are not fastened to the floor. Carpets are also available as Modular Carpet or Carpet Tile. Each tile is normally 1' x 1' in size. The fibres used in manufacturing carpets include wool, nylon, polypropylene and acrylic.

### Manufacturing of carpets:

Carpets can be manufactured by the following methods or techniques:

- i) Tufting, ii) Weaving, iii) Nonwoven - needle punched and fusion bonding

### Carpet quality specifications:

The quality specifications of carpets are as follows:

- (i) high abrasion resistance, (ii) good resiliency, (iii) good colour fastness, (iv) low piling, (v) high dimensional stability, (vi) good tuft binding strength, (vii) high soiling resistance, (viii) good ease of cleaning, (ix) good flame retardant properties

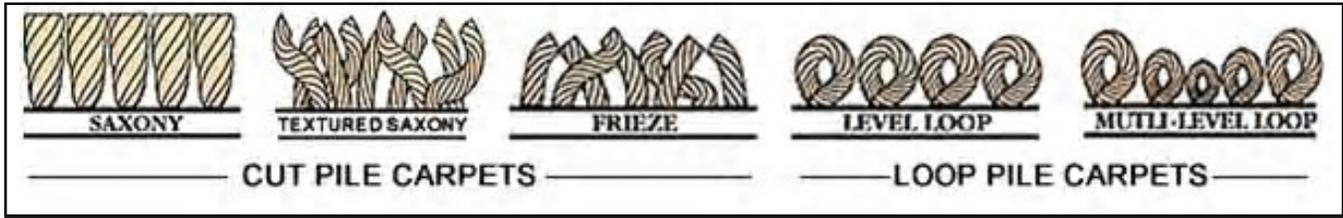
### Special characteristics:

The special characteristics of a carpet are:

- Sound absorption: to avoid sound echoing in a hall or room
- Thermal insulation: to prevent loss of heat from a room
- Static control: to prevent the production of static electricity

### Types of carpet piles:

Tufted carpets will have pile or loops in their face



**Fig. 1 :** Types of carpet pile

side. The piles are of two types:

1. Loop pile
2. Cut pile

In the tufting machine, the substrate or backing cloth is passed over a supporting perforated plate. The creel will supply pile yarn to the needles, mounted in line in reciprocating bar measures to the width of the carpet. This penetrates through the backing cloth and perforated plate. The loops formed under the backing cloth are held by loopers while the needles are going up. The loops formed may be left as they are if a loop pile is required. For a cut pile, the loop is cut with a knife.

**Carpet construction terms:**

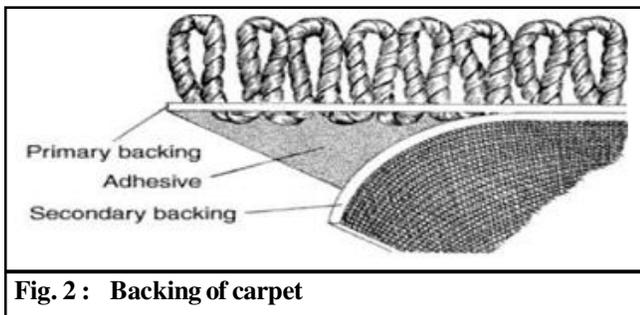
The following parameters are taken into consideration while manufacturing or purchasing a carpet:

- i) Pile height,
- ii) Pile thickness,
- iii) Pile weight,
- iv) Total weight,
- v) Gauge,
- vi) Needles/inch,
- vii) Stitches per inch,
- viii) Rows/inch

**Carpet backing:**

After tufting, the reverse side of the carpet is finished or bounded with a carpet backing or foam underlay. The backing may be done by:

- (i) Plain backing,
- (ii) Mesh fabric backing,
- (iii) Underlay,
- (iv) Foam brushed



**Fig. 2 :** Backing of carpet

**Rugs:**

A rug is a floor covering consisting of a piece of heavy fabric that does not cover the floor's entire

surface. It will cover only a specific area intended for decorative purpose or for seating.

**Wall and ceiling coverings:**

Wall and ceiling coverings are fabrics placed on walls and ceilings. These may be both decorative and functional. These fabrics are normally backed with paper or spun bonded nonwoven. The fabrics used to produce wall and ceiling coverings are macram and tapestry. The major physical properties of these coverings are good flame-, soil- and stain-resistant abilities.

**Manufactured products:**

Manufactured products are made by cutting and sewing home textile. They include areas of bath, kitchen and table tops, and bedding products. They are also referred to as linen because they are normally made of linen.

**Bath products:**

Bath products include towels made of terry and velour (cut loops).

**Bath rugs and mats:**

Bath rugs are small, decorative soft flooring, light in weight. Bath mats are similar but smaller than rugs and meant to be kept in front of a tub, shower etc. Both are for functional purposes.

**Shower curtains:**

Shower curtains are made of plastic sheets and nonwovens and are used to prevent water splashing outside the shower area.

**Bedding products:**

Bedding products are also called Domestic. The vertical includes

- a) Sheets and pillow cases
- b) Blankets - tufted, knitted, needle-punched

nonwovens

- c) Bedspreads - outer bed covers
- d) Quilts - also bed covers but in two layers and using fabric insulative substance
- e) Pillows - bed or decorative made in different shapes and sizes

**Table top products:**

Table tops are items which adorn dining table (table cloth, napkins, placements, etc). They are made of woven fabrics like dobby, jacquard design, stain, sateen, etc. and lace fabrics like Nottingham lace or Raschel lace.

**Kitchen products:**

Textile products used in the kitchen include aprons, gloves, masks and head coverings.

The manufacturing of interior textiles in India is becoming more organised because of availability of various modern technologies and techniques. Changing consumer needs are driving the scope for research and development in interior textiles. The growth potential of the interior textile market in India is positive. Earlier, it was export-oriented. Now, it is becoming more domestic-oriented because of the increasing demand at home as Indian consumers become more conscious about home interior designing and decoration.

**Major trends in usage of fabrics in hotel industry in India:**

1. Use of more quantity of finer threads in square inch that results in soft and smooth feel that is important for luxury experience.
2. Using the bed linen with a large count of thread (600 to 800) and using coloured and textured bed linens. The hotels have now also shifted from regular plains and stripes to even jacquards and patterns. Increase counts of thread will also improve the expected lifetime of bed linen from 90-100 wash cycle to 130 to 150 wash cycle.
3. The composition of linen is also been transformed which earlier used to be 100 per cent cotton which changed to a blend of cotton and polyester or even a 100 per cent polyester based linen. The preference is towards polyester blends as it provide durability to linens. The other compositions preferred include bamboo, organic cotton, Egyptian cotton, microfiber, nylon, etc. (Chatterjee, 2014).
4. Purchasing locally made linens rather than importing.

5. In India, many hotels are now even offering a linen menu to their guests, so as to attain maximum guest satisfaction.

6. With the continuous demand of linens in hotels, the linen manufacturers are now offering the option of customization for properties in India and in abroad which may vary from customized embroidery and prints to customized weaving of their design in the fabric itself.

7. Non-allergic bed lines that have treated with the anti-allergic substances.

8. Using the standard of linen to differentiate the services offered between a suite room and a standard room.

9. The majority of hotels in India continue to favour white linens for its feeling of luxury and cleanliness. Coloured linens are finding its way to bedrooms and restaurant in luxury hotels slowly.

10. Purple, Cayenne, Cobalt, Cabernet and bright yellow are the important choice of colour by hotel designers.

Comfort is one of the most important factors to be taken in account while choosing the perfect fabric for interior. People have varied tastes according to the feel of the fabric, some may prefer silk while some prefer rayon or cotton. The rate of use of fabric should also be checked, since some fabrics can be used for regular use while some for only special occasions.

**Rayon:**

Also known to many designers as “art silk,” rayon is a semi-synthetic fabric that is a great alternative to silk. It has a bright shiny texture to it and is a great choice for many homes that is looking for something that is more durable than silk is.

**Silk:**

Silk provide a rich element to any room when you use it for window coverings, pillows or even as an upholstery covering. It has a soft lustre to it and the fibers themselves are actually prism like, which is why the material shines it reflects light at various angles.

**Olefin:**

Olefin is a very common material that is used in furniture since the fabric is durable, holds color and stain resistant. This is the perfect fabric for comfortable and functional use. Olefin combined with other fabrics to create beauty and function.

**Polyester:**

Usually seen in drapes and bed sheets, mostly polyester blend is used with a variety of other fabrics. Polyester is a synthetic fibre that is used in a variety of ways and can be found in a large number of textures. It, or a polyester blend, is a good choice for sitting areas since polyester is resistant to wrinkles.

**Cotton:**

Cotton is a natural fiber that is found in a lot of different blends and fabrics. It is comfortable and breathable, which makes it an excellent fabric to work with. It also has the wonderful traits of being resistant to fading and other signs of wear and tear. The main problem with cotton is that it tends to stain and become soiled very easily. So cotton blend should be used instead of a pure cotton.

**Acrylic:**

Acrylic, also known as Acrylic fiber, is a synthetic fabric that was created as an alternative to wool and it has begun seeing use as an alternative to cashmere. The fabric is surprisingly soft and comfortable and its durability makes it an excellent choice for decor.

**Nylon:**

Another synthetic fabric, nylon is a resilient fabric that has a silky texture to it. It is usually resistant to stains and it holds color extremely well. Although it is a strong fabric it tends to only be used in blends and not on its own.

**Conclusion:**

Interior Textiles are considered critical for the guests' personal experience of luxury in hotels in India. It is a niche market that promises the huge demand for

fabrics. Textile firms and industry must consider this fact as a great business opportunity. Most of the demands are met by the unorganised sector in the country, that is giving space for organized sector to tap the potential market. Considering the demand of hotel interior textiles, in depth research is need of the hour. Understanding the recent trend will help the textile manufacturer to access this market, which will benefit both textile and hotel industry in India.

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