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CONCEPT-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO MATERIALS SELECTION IN INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

النهج المبني على المفهوم لاختيار الخامات بناءا على المفهوم في العمارة الداخلية

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the strategic role of concept-driven material selection in innovative retail interior design. The research demonstrates how interior architecture designers leverage specific material properties to embody and translate their conceptual visions into physical interior environments.The findings illustrate the relationship between overarching interior design concepts and the materiality of the space, showing how this approach can enhance the overall spatial experience, brand identity, and customer engagement. By exploring various conceptual frameworks and corresponding material choices, the paper highlights how interior designers use materials to create immersive shopping experiences that resonate with brand values.

This research adds to our understanding of how materials are strategically used to shape experiential retail design, emphasizing that effective material selection goes beyond aesthetics to forge meaningful connections among the brand, the space, and the customer. Ultimately, it underscores the importance of integrating materiality with design concepts to elevate the retail environment.

KEYWORDS

Materials; concept; retail.

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة الدور الحيوي لاختيار مواد البناء والتشطيب المعتمدة على أسس تصميمية في تطوير العمارة الداخلية لتصميم حيزات المحلات التجارية. يسلط البحث الضوء على كيفية استفادة مصممي العمارة الداخلية من خصائص المواد والتشطيبات لتعكس رؤاهم الإبداعية، مما يساعد على تشكيل مساحات فعلية تُستغل بشكل مثالي وتلبي احتياجات العملاء .توضح نتائج الدراسة العلاقة العميقة بين المفاهيم المعمارية والأفكار التصميمية المختلفة، بالإضافة إلى الأثر المادي للمساحة على تجربة العميل وهوية الحيز التجاري. من خلال تحليل الأفكار التصميمية المتنوعة والاختيارات المناسبة لمواد النهو والتشطيب، يُظهر البحث كيف يمكن للمصممين خلق تجارب تسوق مشوقة وجذابة تعكس هوية الحيز التجاري وتعزز من تفاعل العملاء مع المساحات التجارية .تسهم هذه الدراسة في تعزيز الفهم حول الاستخدام الاستراتيجي لمواد التشطيب في تصميم حيزات المحلات، مؤكدةً أن الاختيار الذكي لمواد النهو والتشطيب يتجاوز مجرد الجمالية ليؤسس روابط حقيقية بين الهوية التجارية والحيزات والعميل.

في النهاية، تؤكد النتائج على أهمية الدمج بين الجوانب المادية والتصميمية لتحسين الفراغات الداخلية للمحلات التجارية، مما يؤدي إلى خلق بيئات تسوق فعالة تسهم في تعزيز تجربة العملاء وتلبية تطلعاتهم. بهذا، تعد الدراسة كمرجع مهم للمصممين والممارسين في هذا المجال.

الكلمات المفتاحية

مواد؛ مفهوم؛ بيع بالتجزئة.

1. INTRODUCTION

The selection of materials in interior architecture is crucial for shaping spatial experiences. This paper examines conceptual methods for material selection, highlighting how designers incorporate various design concepts to guide their choices. By investigating these frameworks, the paper emphasizes the benefits and challenges of each approach.

The research delves into the potential and limitations of material-driven design concepts, focusing on the complexities of implementing innovative ideas in real-world settings. It analyzes how designers can transform conceptual ideas into specific materials, textures, colors, and finishes.

The study reveals that strategic concept-based material selection can significantly influence spatial experiences, fostering emotional responses and enhancing functionality.

By providing a comprehensive understanding of these approaches, the paper aims to contribute to ongoing discussions in interior architecture, offering insights for designers and industry professionals navigating the evolving realm of material-centric design. Ultimately, it aspires to empower practitioners to make informed decisions in their designed projects.

1.1 Problem Statement:

Retail interior design is a critical aspect of the overall customer experience, as it has the power to shape perceptions, emotions, and behaviors. In an increasingly competitive and experiential-driven retail landscape, designers are challenged to create innovative and captivating spaces that effectively communicate a brand's identity and ethos. The selection of materials plays a pivotal role in this process, as it directly impacts the visual, tactile, and sensorial qualities of the environment. However, the existing literature often focuses on the functional and technical aspects of material selection, overlooking the ways in which materials can be leveraged to embody and express conceptual design narratives. By examining how concept-driven material selections might improve overall design and user experience in the context of store interiors, this study seeks to close this gap.

1.2 Aim:

This paper's main goal is to present a thorough analysis of concept-based methods for choosing materials in interior architecture. By examining the ways in which designers use design concepts to inform their material selections, the paper seeks to offer important insights into the benefits, difficulties, prospects, and constraints related to each conceptual approach.

Furthermore, the paper seeks to analyze case studies and examples of contemporary interior architecture projects that exemplify the practical application of concept-based material selection. Through these case studies, the paper aims to gain a deeper understanding of how designers effectively translate their conceptual ideas into tangible use of specific materials, textures, colors and finishes, and to examine the impact of these conceptually based approaches on the overall spatial experience.

By providing this nuanced understanding of concept-based material selection, the paper aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse in interior architecture, serving as a resource that can guide designers and practitioners in making informed concept-based decisions that elevate the quality and experience of interior design.

1.3 Objectives

1. Exploring different concept-based approaches to selecting materials in interior architecture:

a. Investigating how designers incorporate concepts to inform and guide their material choices.

b. Analyze the advantages, challenges, opportunities and limitations associated with each conceptual approach.

2. Study case studies and examples of contemporary interior architecture projects that illustrate concept-based material selection:

a. Show how designers effectively implement their design concepts through the use of specific textures, textures, colors, and finishes.

b. Providing valuable insights into the practical application of concept-based approaches and their impact on the overall spatial experience.

1-4 Methodology

This research employed a comparative case study approach to investigate the role of materials in creating unique and memorable retail experiences. Four recent interior design projects for retail spaces were selected as the case studies, each demonstrating a strong conceptual approach and the strategic use of specific materials.

The case studies included:

1. One of Zaha Hadid architectural designs is Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store
2. Diesel Denim Gallery Aoyama in Tokyo by Chikara Ohno of Sinato
3. SND Fashion Store in China by Francesco Gatti and collaborators
4. Studio 10 Design in Geijoeng Concept Store in China.

For each case, the research documented the project's concept, the rationale behind the material choices, and the ways in which the materials were employed to realize the design vision.

2. STUART WEITZMAN FLAGSHIP STORE: The design concept developed by the renowned architect Zaha Hadid strongly reinforces and aligns with Stuart Weitzman's own vision and commitment to pushing the boundaries of style and design. The Weitzman flagship store in Milan not only demonstrates that the footwear brand is at the forefront of fashionable innovation, but it can now be added to the impressive list of Zaha Hadid's iconic architectural projects that have captivated and drawn crowds of visitors around the world.

Hadid's bold, visionary designs like the MAXXI National Museum in Rome, The Guangzhou Opera House in China, the Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art in Cincinnati, and the London Aquatics Centre for the 2012 Olympics are all recognized as transformative works of architecture that challenge and expand our very notion of the future. By coupling her signature sculptural, futuristic forms with a keen spatial sensibility, Hadid has redefined what's possible in the built environment. Similarly, the Weitzman flagship store in Milan exemplifies Hadid's ability to create awe-inspiring, immersive experiences through the strategic use of materials and spatial articulation. This project further cements Weitzman's reputation as a brand that is unafraid to push creative boundaries and deliver experiences that leave a lasting impression on consumers. The collaboration between Weitzman's vision and Hadid's architectural genius has resulted in a truly remarkable retail space that transports visitors into the future of design.

The Stuart Weitman collection is featured in the store's central display displays, which also offer seating. (figure1)

Sleek cream-colored shoe stands with silver details adorn the interior. The entire store is lighted with flowing metal loops. The material used for the freestanding display parts and curved modular seating is fiberglass that has been dipped in rose gold using a method akin to that employed in boat construction to complement a palette of subdued monochromatic hues. The store has an ultramodern appearance thanks to the mix of muted hues and metallic embellishments. (figure2).

Figure 1, the interior Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store by Zaha Hadid (Jacopo Spilimbergo) https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/luxury/tapestry-now-sees-china-as-a-key-market/

Figure 2, the interior Stuart Weitzman Store by Zaha Hadid (Jacopo Spilimbergo) https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/luxury/tapestry-now-sees-china-as-a-key-market/

Organic architecture is characterized by several key features, which can be effectively achieved through the use of Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC) materials. The Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store serves as a prime example of how concept-driven approaches to materials selection can create a harmonious and dynamic interior environment as following:

- **Complex Curvilinearity**:
  The fluidity and complexity of organic architecture are often expressed through the use of curved forms. GFRC materials enable the realization of these complex curvilinear designs, allowing the architect to translate the initial sketch or drawing into a physical reality while preserving the sense of randomness and complexity inherent in the concept.
- **Dynamic Fluidity: Dynamic Fluidity**:
  Organic buildings are intended to engage with and respond to human interaction. GFRC materials facilitate the creation of structures that convey a sense of motion, further enhancing the connection between the building and its occupants.
- **Coherent Integration**:
  The seamless integration of the concept, building mass, site, and interior-exterior relationships is a hallmark of organic architecture. GFRC materials support this coherent integration, enabling the landscape to become an essential component of the design that extends the internal lines and balances the building's masses.

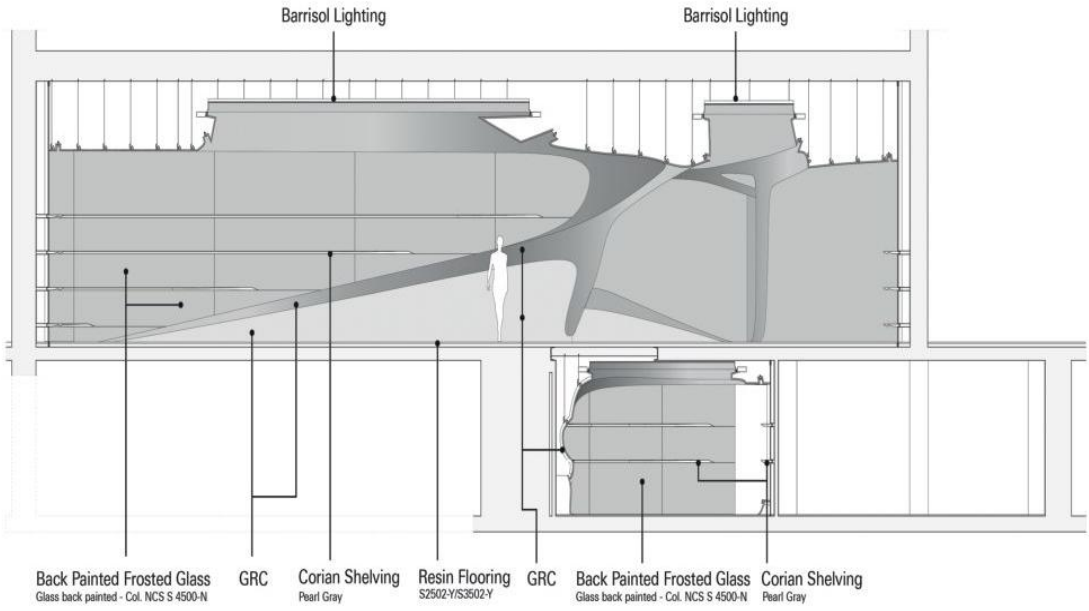


Figure 3, section in the interior Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store by Zaha Hadid ArchitectStuart Weitzman Flagship Store by Zaha Hadid Architects (Jacopo Spilimbergo)

https://pld-m.com/en/article/lighting-design/keeping-heels-standards-and-sales-high#pid=3

- **Parametricism**:

The flexibility and customizability of GFRC materials allow for the implementation of parametric design approaches, enabling architects to explore complex geometries and dynamic forms that respond to specific design parameters (figure3).

-Elegance and Balance:

Organic architecture often strives to achieve a sense of elegance and balance. The versatility of GFRC materials, combined with their inherent strength and durability, facilitates the creation of structures that embody these aesthetic qualities.

- **Connection to Nature:**

Organic architecture seeks to establish a strong connection with nature, either through imitation or inspiration. GFRC materials, with their natural and earthy qualities, can help integrate the built environment with the surrounding landscape, creating a harmonious and sustainable design.

So The Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store exemplifies how a concept-driven approach to materials selection, specifically the use of GFRC, can realize the core principles of organic architecture. By leveraging the unique properties of GFRC, architects can translate their vision into a dynamic, integrated, and sustainable interior environment that responds to the needs of both the building and its occupants. (Anna 2019)

Table1,Stuart Weitzman Flagship Store by Zaha Hadid Architects materials (Author, 2024)

Year of construction	2013-2014 in Milan ,Italy
Designer	Zaha Hadid Architects
concept	elements with a space and futuristic concept to provide a distinctive and unforgettable shopping experience by designing Sculptural elements span from the ceiling and reach down to the floor level, showcasing the brand .
walls	glass-reinforced concrete (GFRC)
ceiling	the glass-reinforced concrete (GFRC)
Flooring	Resin
Shelving	Corian

2- Tokyo's DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA:

in Tokyo at the Diesel Denim Gallery Aoyama.Chikara Ohno, a Japanese designer from Sinato, has incorporated coils of aluminum sheets. (figure4)

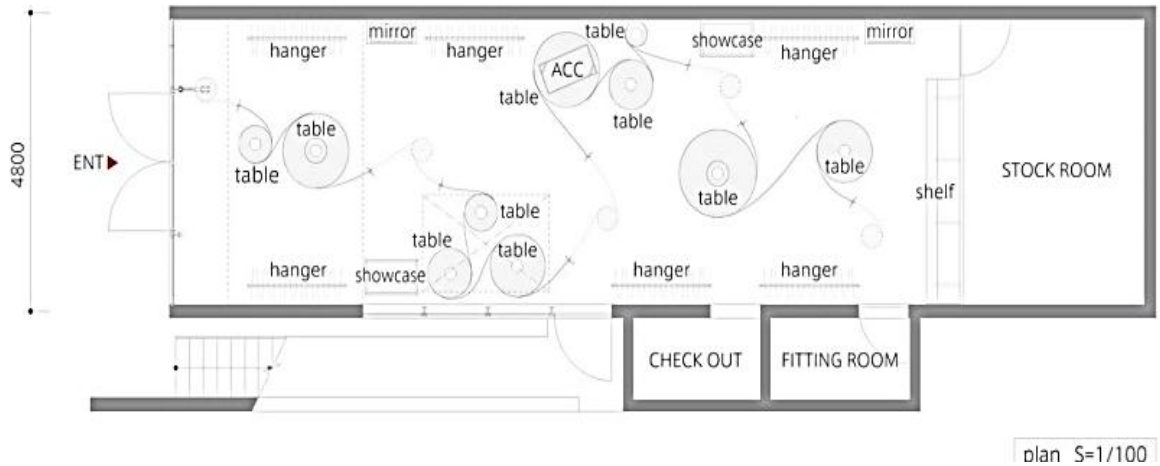


Figure 4, the plan of Tokyo's DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA by Chikara Ohno of Sinato

https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/30/rolls-by-sinato/

The rolls' ends are hanging from the ceiling. (Figure 5) Some of the rolls' centers have been pushed upward, and the glass panels on top of them can be utilized to showcase goods. **(**Joe Mills 2010)

Figure 5, a section in DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA in Tokyo by Chikara Ohno of Sinato

https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/30/rolls-by-sinato/

Because it is so thin, hands may readily bend aluminum. The single, continuous metal strip was wound and occasionally extended by the designer to produce a distinctive and flowing piece that extended from the entrance to the back of the room. It has both soft and hard qualities as a result.

Figure 6, the interior of DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA in Tokyo by Chikara Ohno of Sinato
Photographs are by Toshiyuki Yano.
https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/30/rolls-by-sinato/

figure 7, the interior of DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA in Tokyo by Chikara Ohno of Sinato
Photographs are by Toshiyuki Yano.
https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/30/rolls-by-sinato/

The distinctive quality of the aluminum material used for this installation is that it is extremely thin and malleable, allowing it to be easily bent and manipulated by hand, yet it remains more rigid and durable than softer materials like cloth or paper. This flexible quality of the material represents a gentle connection between the softness of clothes and hardness of architecture. (Figure ٨)

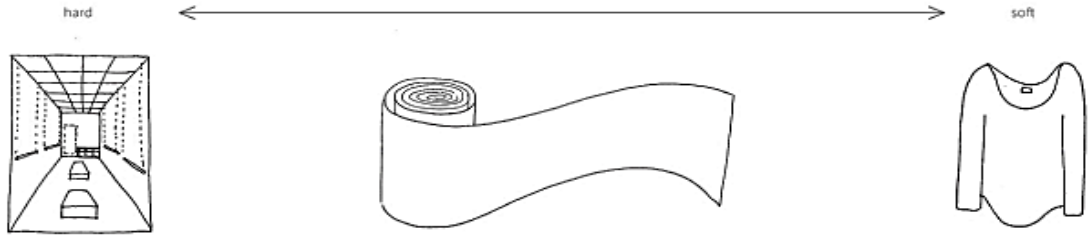


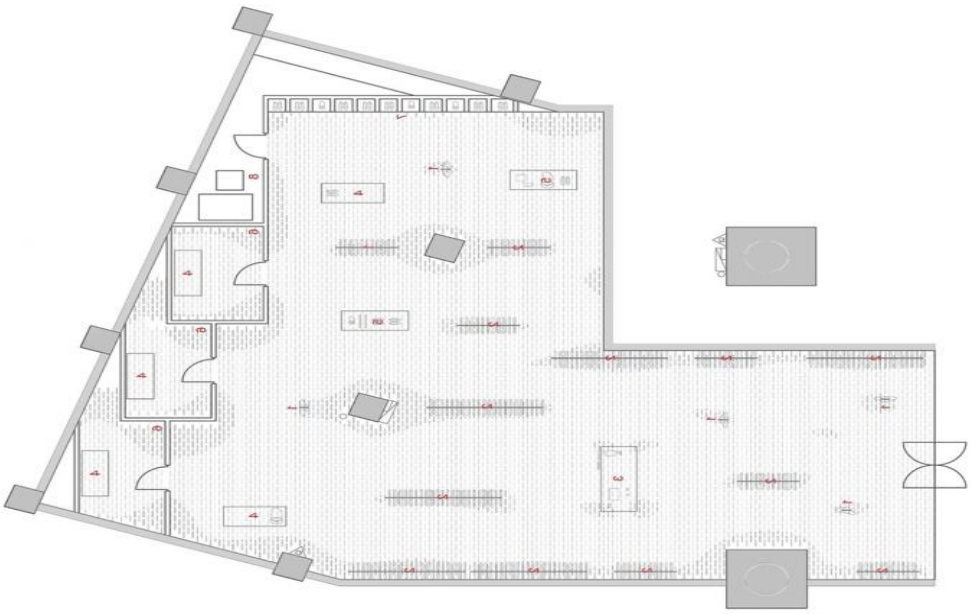
Figure 8, the concept of the interior of DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA in Tokyo by Chikara Ohno of Sinato
https://www.dezeen.com/2010/07/30/rolls-by-sinato/

Table2:DIESEL DENIM GALLERY AOYAMA in Tokyo (Author, 2024)	
Year of construction	2010 in Tokyo
Designer	Chikara Ohno of Sinato
Concept	soft and hard quality.(figure5) (the softness of clothes and hardness of architecture)
Installation material	aluminum

3- SND Fashion Store, China

Francesco Gatti's concept for this retail project was straightforward and eye-catching: everything would be hung from the ceiling, and furniture and merchandise would be moved out of the way to allow consumers to freely move around the full floor area. Through the use of specialized software that models the physics and behavior of real-world materials, the designer envisioned an elastic, suspended ceiling that appeared to be weighed down and pulled by the various objects attached to it.

The next step was to consider the technical equipment necessary for the store, such as lighting, speakers, sprinklers, cameras, air conditioning, and ventilation. It was then natural for him to envision this ceiling as a permeable surface, capable of seamlessly integrating these essential elements.



Floor-plan

Figure9, the Floor plan of the SND Fashion Store, China by Francesco Gatti. 2014

https://www.archdaily.com/565201/snd-fashion-store-3gatti/545c4906e58ece70e0000090-snd-fashion-store-3gatti-

The ethereal white ceiling, which serves as a transient backdrop for the transient items on exhibit in the store, was inspired by this idea. This approach to materials selection and design exemplifies the principles of concept-driven interior architecture, where the initial idea shapes the selection and integration of materials to create a harmonious and dynamic retail environment. By leveraging the versatility and adaptability of the chosen materials, the designer was able to translate his vision into a physical reality, where the ceiling becomes more than just a structural element – it becomes an integral part of the overall design concept, providing a seamless and visually striking backdrop for the merchandise and customer experience.

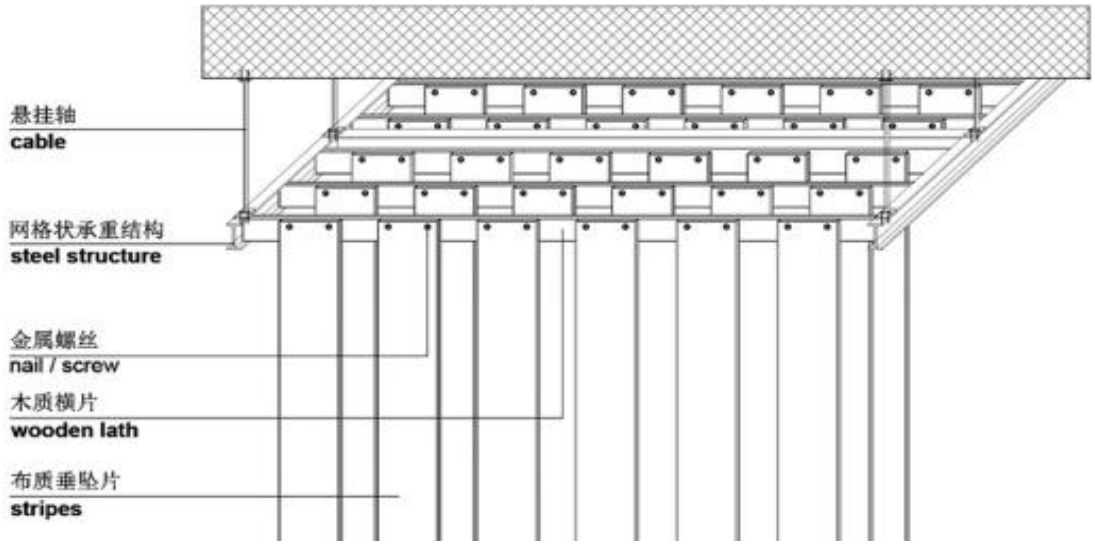
He gave the factory a file with over 10,000 distinct striped designs that were meant to be suspended from the ceiling. Luckily, each piece was precisely cut by machines in an exceptionally short amount of time rather than being handcrafted by Chinese laborers. This effective manufacturing method was essential to bringing the designer's vision to life.

(Figure 10)Because of the material's resistance to fire and its response to light reflection, he chose a very thin, translucent white fiberglass. With the help of this material selection, he was able to construct a ceiling landscape that would act as the space's ideal backdrop, providing an amazing source of light, beauty, and emptiness.(Figure11)

Figure 10, 11 the interior of the SND Fashion Store, China by Francesco Gatti .2014
Photographs:Shen Qiang
https://www.archdaily.com/565201/snd-fashion-store-3gatti/545c4906e58ece70e0000090-snd-fashion-store-3gatti-

Despite the store's modest size, the positioning of the mirror walls creates the illusion that the ceiling landscape extends forever. These mirrored surfaces disoriented visitors, creating a captivating and ethereal ceiling cavity that became the protagonist of the space.

To ensure the ceiling emerged as the focal point, he chose recycled timber for the floor and walls, providing a dark background that allowed the ceiling to take center stage. Additionally, he designed simple cubic volumes covered in soft grey felt, which served as the only furniture – functioning as sofas, a cash desk, and product displayers.



(Floor-plan)
*Figure 12, the striped section of the ceiling in the SND Fashion Store, China by Francesco Gatti.*2014
https://www.archdaily.com/565201/snd-fashion-store-3gatti/545c4906e58ece70e0000090-snd-fashion-store-3gatti-

The store's façade was left transparent, showcasing the striped section of the ceiling volume and creating a sculptural attraction for visitors to the Chongqing World Financial Center. This concept-driven approach to materials selection and design resulted in a harmonious and dynamic retail environment that captivated the senses and elevated the overall shopping experience.

Table3,SND Fashion Store s (Author, 2024)	
Year of construction	2014 in **China**
Designer	Gatti Francesco, YingLing Kong, Bogdan Chipara, Jovan Kocic, Carole Chan Liat, Cianan Alexander Crowley, and Pao Yee Lim were collaborators.
Area	180 m²
Concept	A straightforward concept of suspending everything from the ceiling to allow consumers to move freely across the entire floor
Installation material	A very thin translucent white fiberglass material that responded well to light reflection and was fire resistant.

4- Geijoeng Concept Store / Studio 10

The Geijoeng concept store, a minimalist women's wear brand from China, recently opened in Coastal City. The interior design by Studio 10 explores the interactive interplay between various materials, light transmission, refraction, reflection, and the fabrics used in the clothing collection.

Within the 120-square-meter space, the designers used layers of transparent, translucent, and reflecting materials along with a Kvadrat Raf Simons green velour curtain and precisely calibrated artificial lighting. The goal of this material palette is to contrast with the opulent textures of the Fall/Winter collection, which includes velvet, silk, wool, and cashmere, and instead create a rich spatial hierarchy and airy spatial dimensions that are in line with Geijoeng's minimalist and joyful brand identity. Here is the passage rewritten in different words and related to the research topic:

The entryway and storefront display area are constructed using glass bricks, which allow the brand's signature grayish-green color to faintly shine through.

This design element ties directly into the research topic by using strategic material selection and transparency to create a visually compelling and branded first impression for customers. The use of glass bricks, which are a semi-translucent building material, enables the core brand color to be subtly communicated even before customers enter the physical retail space.

This architectural choice reinforces the brand's identity and helps set the tone for the overall shopping experience. By carefully controlling how the brand color is revealed and experienced, the designer is able to pique the customer's curiosity and draw them further into the store. The translucent quality of the glass bricks also contributes to a sense of lightness and openness at the entryway, inviting customers to step inside and explore.

Figure 13, 14, the interior of, Geijoeng Concept Store.2019
By Chao Zhang
https://www.archdaily.com/930475/geijoeng-concept-store-studio-10

Overall, this design decision regarding the entrance and window display demonstrates a thoughtful, research-driven approach to leveraging material properties and visual cues to align with and enhance the brand's positioning and the desired in-store experience.

New spatial compositions and visual projections are created by the semi-reflective glass wall, the mirrored lowered ceiling, and the half glass brick wall in the background.

As you pass down the hallway and enter the store, you can see how the designers employed channel glass along the walls with a silver mirrored material behind it to reflect and refract the green colors throughout the room. In the middle of the shop, an acrylic-tube-enclosed fitting room is placed, resembling a small stage. A green velour curtain hangs inside, ensuring privacy while also evoking a theatrical ambiance, as the curtain opens to reveal the fitting room's exterior and inside in weak light.

The frosted acrylic rods of the unique garment hanging system are joined by silver scaffolding metal connections, providing an extremely flexible and customizable display option. Some of the green marble bases that these acrylic rods are put in are utilized as benches, storage platforms, or exhibition stands.

The interior flooring is a custom-made grayish-green terrazzo with large dark green and white marble aggregates, reflecting the brand's attention to materiality and craftsmanship. The close collaboration between the Geijoeng team and Studio 10 was crucial in the design and execution of this project.

Table 4, Geijoeng Concept Store / Studio 10 (Author, 2024)	
Year of construction	2019 in **China**
Designer	Cristina Moreno Cabello, An Huang, Chunhui Mo, Zixia Huang, Yue Yu, and Feifei comprised the Shi Zhou design team.
Area	120 m²
Concept	The client wanted to create a retail space encouraging people to take photos and share them on social media," mentions the studio. The interaction of fabrics, materials, refraction, reflection, and light transmission.
material	- glass bricks and - acrylic-tube- enclosed fitting room
ceiling	mirrored dropped ceiling
flooring	The interaction of fabrics, materials, refraction, reflection, and light transmission.

5-Results:

The findings of this study highlight the importance of a concept-driven approach to materials selection in retail interior design. By carefully aligning the choice of materials with the overarching design concept, designers can create cohesive and immersive environments that effectively communicate brand identity and cultivate memorable customer experiences. The case studies demonstrate how diverse material applications, from glass-reinforced concrete and resin to aluminum and fiberglass, can be leveraged to embody and translate conceptual narratives. Further research could explore the role of emerging materials and technologies in the context of retail design, as well as the impact of concept-driven materiality on customer engagement and brand loyalty.

6- Future Research Directions

The research on concept-driven materiality in retail interior design opens up several avenues for future exploration and investigation. Some potential directions for future research include:

6.1. Empirical studies on customer perception and experience:

- Investigate how different material choices impact customer engagement, satisfaction, and purchasing behavior in retail spaces.
- Analyze the emotional and sensory responses evoked by various material applications in retail interiors.
- Explore the role of materiality in enhancing brand identity and creating a memorable shopping experience.

6.2. Sustainability and environmental impact of materials:

- Assess the lifecycle analysis and environmental footprint of materials used in retail interior design.
- Explore the incorporation of sustainable and eco-friendly materials in retail spaces.
- Investigate the potential for circular design strategies in the reuse and repurposing of materials.

6.3. Technological integration and smart materiality:

- Examine the integration of smart materials, sensors, and digital interfaces in retail interiors to enable interactive and responsive experiences.
- Explore the potential of augmented reality and virtual reality technologies to enhance the materiality and spatial experiences in retail environments.
- Investigate the role of data-driven design and optimization in material selection and application.

6.4. Cross-disciplinary collaborations:

- Encourage collaborative research between interior designers, material scientists, psychologists, and technology experts to holistically address the challenges and opportunities in concept-driven materiality.
- Explore the integration of design thinking, user-centered approaches, and interdisciplinary knowledge to drive innovation in retail interior design.

6.5. Comparative analysis and benchmarking:

- Conduct comparative studies of retail interior design projects from different regions, cultures, and market segments to identify best practices and emerging trends.
- Develop frameworks or typologies for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of material-driven design strategies in retail environments.

6.6 Pedagogical implications:

- Investigate the integration of concept-driven materiality and innovative retail design principles into interior design curricula.
- Develop educational resources, case studies, and design workshops to enhance the understanding and implementation of these concepts among design students and professionals.

By pursuing these future research directions, the field of retail interior design can continue to evolve, incorporating cutting-edge material technologies, user-centric approaches, and interdisciplinary collaborations to create exceptional shopping experiences that resonate with both customers and brands.

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