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Reimagining
the future for retail
and
service design
theory and practices

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These proceedings were created by compiling the papers presented at the first colloquium of the **Special Interest Group** (SIG) **Designing Retail & Service Futures** from the Design Research Society (DRS). The SIG was established in 2021 under the guidance of the Design Research Society. The SIG strives to gain a better understanding of the value of design in the commercial sector, including disciplines, such as interior design, architecture, retail and hospitality, branding, marketing, strategic design, design management and consumer psychology. Design and its value have been a subject of study for many years and from many different disciplinary perspectives (ranging from product design to marketing, business economics, service design, management, environmental psychology, (interior)architecture, etc.). However, these perspectives have been developed in a fragmented way with discrete research methods and results that present limitations to practically applying these findings holistically across the inter-related fields of design, retail, and services

Recent developments, that have been accelerated by the pandemic and the current economic crisis, show that in practice, services are becoming integral to retail and vice versa. The consumers' needs and the dedication of retailers to serve these needs have sparked new approaches that unite both service and retail design. Whether it be online or offline (or both), for a product or a service or an experience, or all together… It is only natural that the research community support the development of this field through furthering insights. This colloquium focuses on bringing together various disciplines to contribute their related knowledge and insights with the objective of calibrating terms and meanings that strive for consensus across disciplines related to retail and service design. This is to work towards knowledge and practice-based contributions that strive for a more holistic and encompassing retail and service design future.

OVERVIEW OF EXTENDED ABSTRACTS

Designing Retail & Service Futures

To play, to learn? Exploring social sustainability as an experiential dimension in retail design

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This paper aims to investigate past and current social sustainability considerations and developments in scientific research and practice in the context of retail space design. An explorative content analysis is used to identify major research areas and design disciplines in the sustainability literature relevant to social participation, and sustainability considerations in retail practice. On this basis, a case study approach is used to derive strategies for integrating approaches for social sustainability into retail design.

Sustainability-related issues have been discussed for many years, but the "social" aspect was integrated late into debates on sustainable development. In retail design research, there seems to be a lack of theoretically oriented social sustainable design approaches for instore touch points and experiences. However, various indications can already be traced from retail design practices. In summary, socially sustainable approaches in retail design can be addressed as 1) sustainability storytelling, 2) social responsibility areas, 3) inclusive design, 4) collecting communities, 5) educative engagement, 6) sustainable mobility.

Sustainable design has received considerable attention in the retail trade literature. However, no summative scholarly studies have been identified that demonstrate how a retailer's approach to store design has put into practice a commitment to the environment through social sustainability in (interior) design principles. This study intends to encourage educators and practitioners to incorporate principles from the discipline into the retail approaches.

Keywords Social sustainability, Retailtainment, Interior Design, Digitalization, Consumer Engagement.

Introduction

Retail industry is being challenged by rapid digital transformation and environmental crisis. In this sector, with the passage of time, consumers' expectations and behavior also keep changing. On one hand, from the perspective of digital transformation, as a response to the increasing power of online and offline retailers and the development of new customer needs, companies improved the traditional store by exploiting new technologies to create innovative formats to fight competition. Retailing has become a technologically intense industry. Technology is transforming the way retailers shape their supply chain, manage their operations and interact with customers. Retailers have all the tools to offer a unique multichannel experience enriched by technologies that allow satisfying the needs of convenience, quality and usefulness through four main levers: comfort, service, uniqueness, and socialness (Lamberti, 2015). On the other hand, sustainability has become an influential strategy for the future development of retail corporates. According to an investigation by McKinsey (2022), in the sporting goods area, two-thirds of consumers are aware that sustainability is an important factor when purchasing apparel (Becker et al., 2022). Although a variety of sustainability definitions exist in the literature, however, the recent research has mainly agreed on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model developed by Elkington (1997), which incorporates the economic, environmental and social dimensions of sustainability and highlights the interdependencies between them (Wiese et al., 2012).

The digital and sustainable transformation of retail generates bridges in socialness. In digital transformation, the main principles of socialness are responsibility, solidarity, and sharing. Socialness can enter different types of business at different levels. It can result in innovative business models (Lamberti, 2015). From the perspective of sustainable development, socialness is 'development', to meeting basic needs, inter- and intra-generational equity, etc., 'bridge', to change behavior to meet bio-physical environmental goals, and 'maintenance' refers to what can be sustained in social terms (Vallance et al., 2011).

The objective of this paper is to examine the existing research and practices in designing digitalized retail spaces with a particular emphasis on social sustainability. While the academic sphere of interior design research and practice has investigated how to apply sustainability approaches in physical stores, well there is a shortage of systematic interpretation of the social aspect. Although the marketing, sociology, and management literature (Boström, 2012; Davidson, 2010; Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017; Marín-García et al., 2022; Sundström et al., 2021; Vallance et al., 2011), already provide relevant arguments on social

sustainability, the available evidence has not been consolidated and applied to practical considerations of retail design approaches.

In this paper, we present an exploratory study that aims to provide a more comprehensive view of social sustainability in retail environments, with the objective of being insightful to retailers, and retail designers in the context of practicing. Following a preliminary literature review, case studies are analyzed and justified in order to provide a more synthetic view of the topic.

In particular, this paper addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. What is social sustainability in retail? Why is social sustainability an important aspect to retailers, designers, and consumers?

RQ2. What can social sustainability progress be observed in retail practice? How to employ social sustainability in designing retail spaces?

RQ3. Which implications can be drawn for retail research and practice based on the findings presented?

Define social sustainability
Since the Brundtland Report was published in 1987, the notion of sustainable development has come to inform efforts to reform the environment by both public and private organizations and to facilitate interaction among participants from various societal spheres. It is customary to characterize sustainable development in a familiar typology comprising three pillars: environmental, economic, and social (Boström, 2012). However, the literature reveals that the "social" was integrated late into debates on sustainable development (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017). Within the social sciences, the discipline of sociology has been invisible in professional circles, and public and policy discussions have focused on climate change and sustainability (Lever-Tracy, 2008), nevertheless, it is accepted that a triad model, in which the ecological is interwoven with the economic and the social, is required to formulate methods of sustainable development (Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2017; Hopwood et al., 2005). Yet, a review of the literature shows that social sustainability is a chaotic concept in the academic world, and a consensus definition has not been reached.

Vallance et al.'s (2011) described the three components of social sustainability, 'Development' social sustainability, is concerned with meeting basic needs, inter- and intra-generational equity, and so on. 'Bridge sustainability' focuses on changing behavior so as to achieve bio-physical environmental goals. 'Maintenance sustainability' refers to social acceptance or what can be sustained in social terms (fig 1).
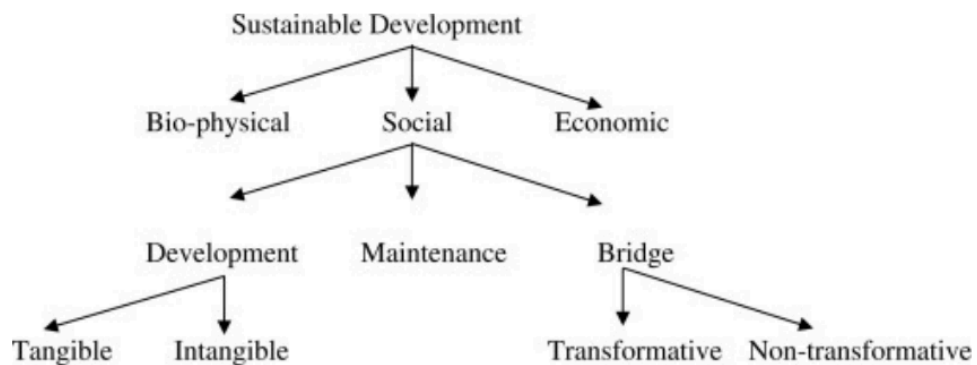
Figure 1. Three strands of 'social sustainability', image by Vallance et al (2011).

A commonly accepted theory in retail research was introduced by Elkington, in 1994, who coined the term the "triple bottom line" to represent the three component areas of sustainability: social, environmental, and economic or 'people, planet profit' (Elkington & Rowlands, 1999). From the point of view of social sustainability, many arguments have been made that commodities are consumed not only to satisfy needs or wants but also to construct a social identity and structure interpersonal interactions (Lunt & Livingstone, 1992; Ogle et al., 2004; Schor, 1998; Twitchell, 1999), there is growing evidence that some consumers' purchase and post-purchase behaviors and intentions also are influenced by their strong social consciousness (Domina & Koch, 2002; H.-S. Kim & Damhorst, 1998; S. Kim et al., 1999; Minton & Rose, 1997; Ray & Anderson, 2001; Shaw & Newholm, 2002). From the perspective of the management and marketing disciplines of retail, social sustainability in a retail environment may be reflected in 1) improving the quality of life of customers, such as healthy living and inclusivity issues, 2) employment policies, such as employee training and development, health, safety and inclusivity, and 3) achieving the wellbeing of a

widespread community, such as charitable giving and initiatives to support local communities (Jones et al., 2005, 2007; Marín-García et al., 2022).

In retail, sustainable development can include both the building design (e.g., efficient energy systems, low-impact materials, and natural light) as well as store features (e.g., countertops, flooring, wall coverings, and product fixtures that incorporate recycled or recyclable materials) (Walthers, 1999; Wilson, 2000). Although prior research has demonstrated the importance of retail store design (i.e., atmospherics) in creating an image and influencing consumer behavior (e.g., Baker et al., 1994; Bitner, 1992; Donovan et al., 1994; Sherman et al., 1997; Sirgy et al., 2000; Turley & Chebat, 2002; Turley & Milliman, 2000, 2000), few empirical studies that explore consumer response to sustainable store design have been identified. In the retail design sustainability certification protocols (Green Building Rating Systems - GBRSs) (e.g., LEED, BREEAM, WELL, SUSTAINABLE INTERIORS, etc.), clear guidelines can be observed for the construction of store interiors, but not for the attention to social sustainability in retail design at the consumer awareness dimension.

In summary, in this study, we attempted to explore the tangible representation of this concept in retail design research by incorporating theoretical frameworks such as Vallance et al. (2011) and the triple bottom line on the definition of social sustainability in sociology and related notions in retail research, for which we mapped a sustainable design framework for retail spaces (fig 2).
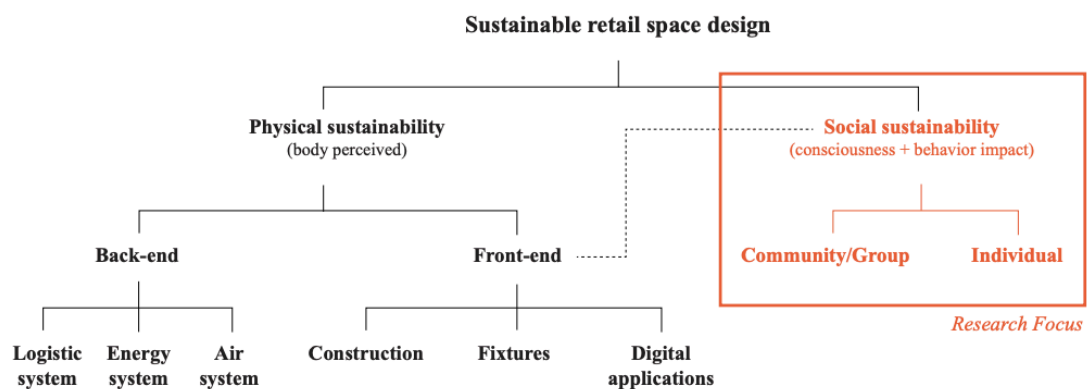

Figure 2. Sustainable design framework for retail spaces, image by authors.

Consumer engagement for social sustainability in retail design

Retailtainment aspect

In the past few decades, e-commerce has brought an anytime, anywhere experience to shopping, and the role of brick-and-mortar retail spaces has continued to shift, actively or passively, one aspect of which is to serve not only as a place for commercial exchanges but also as a meeting place, a place for communication and social exchange, often beyond the confines of adjacent neighborhoods (Barbara & Ma, 2021; Ceylan, 2019). A new concept of shopping is emerging which is characterized by a combination of essential shopping functions and the non-commercial or even recreational attributes of shopping areas (Kunc et al., 2012). This concept of shopping is referred to as "leisure shopping" or "retailtainment" (Ritzer, 1999) that is emphasized as an important form of the currently widely understood shopping process in the classification of consumer behavior (Guy, 1998). This is also the main motive of the "experience economy" theories. Rizer (1999) describes "retailtainment" as the "use of ambiance, emotion, sound and activity to get customers interested in the merchandise and in a mood to buy." In retail design, the ultimate objective is to remove all types of borders between the brand and the customer in order to establish warm relationships between the two (Ceylan, 2019).

People want a higher return on investment in their time (Shechtman, 2015). Experimental and radical retail experiments such as the STORY store by Rachel Shechtman transform the retail space into a magazine concept that changes like an exhibition. Every four to eight weeks, the store layout will be completely redesigned and transformed, so the motivation for opening the store changes from selling to providing consumers with experiences, activities and emotional value. This approach, through the creation of experiences in brand marketing and store spaces, can be an important means of building sustainable relationships between retailers and consumers. As well as a way to create experiences in bricks-and-mortar

retail that are irreplaceable online is also an important motivator to increase the value, competitiveness and attractiveness of stores.

Education aspect

The European Commission (2009) attests to retailers' "enormous power to raise awareness and influence shopping choices". Retailers increasingly try to live up to this expectation and a growing number of major retailers claim to be integrating sustainability into their business strategy (Jones, Comfort, et al., 2011). Consumers are both more aware and more concerned about social and environmental problems now than ever before (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Peattie, 2001), sceptics claim that consumers' expression of good ethical intentions must not be taken for anything more than just that; good intentions (Thøgersen, 2010). Retailers need to satisfy the diverging expectations of society on the one hand and consumers on the other hand (Jones, Hillier, et al., 2011; Maignan et al., 2005).

In recent literature, a view of sustainable consumption emerges in which a consumer's decision to act sustainably is to a great extent the result of factors such as the context in which a purchase is made and the wider socio-psychological context within which individuals live their lives (Devinney et al., 2010; Lehner, 2015; Ottman et al., 2006; Warde, 2005). Therefore, by incorporating educational features and tools into the retail space, retailers can, on the one hand, demonstrate to consumers the sustainable transparency of their business and improve communication between the two; on the other hand, through educational activities retailers can help consumers understand sustainable lifestyles that are relevant to their interests.

Touch point of social sustainability in retail stores

By reviewing brands' annual sustainability reports and related coverage, we found that many brands have invested in emphasis and initiatives on social impact, such as committing to create positive change in the communities where they operate, launching initiatives to reduce carbon footprint and promoting social equality (Nike Inc., 2022; Port, 2021), and integrating these commitments and initiatives into their corporate development plans for 2025 or 2030 from a corporate social responsibility (CSR) and social sustainability perspective. For instance, Lululemon and Timberland support a range of social and environmental causes through their community-giving programs. The company has established partnerships with local organizations to support health and wellness, support education, social justice, and environmental causes (Lululemon, 2023; VF Corporation, 2020).

In this section, we demonstrate a case study approach to analyze how stores in the digital context can design experiences to achieve social sustainability goals and enhance consumer engagement in the retail space.

We have selected several projects to examine the embodiment of social sustainability in the design of physical retail spaces through physical touchpoints. The selected cases were based on several criteria. Firstly, they are stores that opened within five years, because the lifespan of most retail interiors is said to be five years or less (Christiaans & Almendra, 2012). The consideration is based on the most recent projects with a more updated representation of digital integration in brick-and-mortar stores. Secondly, they are located in modern cities with regionally important retail activity. Thirdly, in each project, social sustainable initiatives are applied. Fourthly, in each case study, we can recognize the projects, by considering the measures of social sustainability practiced in the design of retail spaces focusing on social sustainable design strategies.

Data were collected by reviewing professional publications, observing photos, or watching videos of designer interviews. The detected retail design touchpoints may follow several strategies, 1) inclusivity of the local communities, supplier and consumer, 2) educating consumers and supportive activities, 3) active design to shift consumer awareness and behaviors, 4) engaging consumers to be part of the brand sustainable vision and seeking for a sustainable relationship.

Case 1: Adidas Store in Mönckebergstrasse, Hamburg, Germany, 2021

Various brands and retailers have included sustainability initiatives in their development strategies. While this may include utilitarian motives to enhance the brand image, acting on CSR in practice from an ethical point of view contributes, in a positive way, on one hand, to society's sustainability goals, on the one hand, to activate consumer engagement. For the case in point, the sports and lifestyle brand Adidas' End Plastic Waste sustainability strategy focuses on sustainable practices in its brick-and-mortar retail network, in addition to its product focus. In its recently opened store in Mönckebergstrasse, Hamburg in 2021, we also found traces of experiential social sustainable design in spite of the usual green building standards. For instance, the store has installed a water filling station to encourage customers to refill their bottles; it's designed a flexible area for sustainability, education and interaction; digital screens for sustainable storytelling and gamification experience to educate consumers through hedonic activity on the interactive screen.

Figure 3. Water refill point in Adidas Hamburg Store to educate consumers on reducing plastic bottle waste.
(Source from Frame, 2022, available at: https://www.frameweb.com/project/adidas-home-of-sport-hamburg)

Case 2: The Body Shop in Singapore, 2020
The Body Shop store launching in Singapore in 2020 also employs a similar physical touchpoint of refill, the difference being that this touchpoint focuses on product refill, where consumers can purchase refillable aluminum bottles and fill them with a variety of shower gels, in addition to the brand's other sustainable program in the store, 'Return Recycle Repeat' encourages consumers to return their empty bottles, jars, tubes and tubs in exchange for vouchers for future purchases, a reflection as an activist that also promotes the habit of reducing resource waste to consumers. Moreover, by installing an "activism corner" in the store as a dedicated space where customers can learn about the brand's activist roots and social change movements around issues ranging from gender equality to the fight against animal testing of cosmetics, the brand is able to improve its communication with consumers and increase transparency about corporate sustainability.

Figure 4. "Return.Recycle.Repeat" bin in The Body Shop store in Singapore.
(Source from GreenQueen, 2020, available at: https://www.greenqueen.com.hk/the-body-shop-singapore-opens-sustainability-focused-activistworkshop-store-orchard-shopping/)

Case 3: Lululemon flagship store in Chicago, US, 2019
Some projects have also focused on engaging consumers and their communities as a way to increase brand stickiness and community vibrancy. For example, Lululemon has dedicated an area in their Chicago flagship store to host community events, spotlighting local businesses and creating an area for rotating retailers. Film screenings and mini-concerts will be held regularly as the company aims to solidify its presence in the community.

Case 4: TIMBERLAND London, UK, 2019
The concept of collecting community in a retail store can also be expressed in other ways. For example, the TIMBERLAND store that opened in London in 2019 introduced a community table, which was placed in the center of the store to provide concrete and small actions that can have a significant impact on our communities and the planet. There is also a focus on sustainable storytelling in this project, with full-height digital screens highlighting the Nature Needs Heroes manifesto and the people who are really making a real difference.

Figure 5. "Central community table offers tangible and small actions that can make a big difference for our communities and planet."
(Source from Retail Design Institute, available at: https://retaildesigninstitute.org/2020/11/16/timberland-london-2019-design-award-winner/)

Case 5: CONVERSE RENEW POP-UP London, UK, 2019
In addition to the application of socially sustainable design in long-life cycle urban stores, some projects communicate sustainable retail design through the ephemeral form of expression that is the pop-up store. For example, CONVERSE's Renew pop-up store in London hosts events to engage and educate consumers on sustainability awareness through community building.

Figure 6. Community building, teaching consumers sustainable awareness.
(Source from Frame, 2019, available at: https://www.frameweb.com/project/converse-renew-pop-up-london)

Three principles were applied to make the pop-ups as sustainable as possible. Apart from the choice of materials and the design of the structure that can be varied and adapted to multiple scenarios, the project communicates with consumers through lectures and workshops in the store, and through these entertaining activities, sustainability education for consumers is accomplished.

Case 6: IKEA Greenwich, London, UK, 2019

Similar evidence of a commitment to improving the environment and surrounding community can also be found in IKEA Greenwich's store design project. The store hosts a series of classes, such as making bunting from the trimmings of fabrics, to help spread the message of making the most of it. And a dedicated space Learning Lab - which became an in-store creative hub, hosting upcycling workshops and demonstrations for anyone keen to gain upcycling skills. In addition, the project embraces digital sustainable storytelling tools, such as digital kiosks at the entrance welcome corner to introduce the store's sustainability approach.

Figure 7. IKEA's Learning Lab — an in-store creative hub where upcycling workshops and demonstrations take place for anyone keen to acquire upcycling skills abound.
(Source from Retail Gazette, 2019, available at: https://www.retailgazette.co.uk/blog/2019/02/ikea-officially-opens-new-greenwich-store/)

Case 7: Nike House of Innovation 002/Paris, France, 2020

Another project that can be traced back to the journey of design development is Nike's House of Innovation 002, which, as part of the brand's Move To Zero sustainability plan, evolved through two years of learning from the findings generated by the collections' first two flagship stores in New York and Shanghai, focusing on four key areas: providing the most innovative services for women, creating more opportunities for kids to lead active lives, designing a more seamless end-to-end consumer experience and finally connecting shoppers to a global community.

The store has a digitally driven motive to provide children with entertaining activities through Kids Pod; an in-store interactive game and trial station that encourages kids to get moving and stay active. The brand is creating experiential destinations for kids to get started with instore virtual play activities.
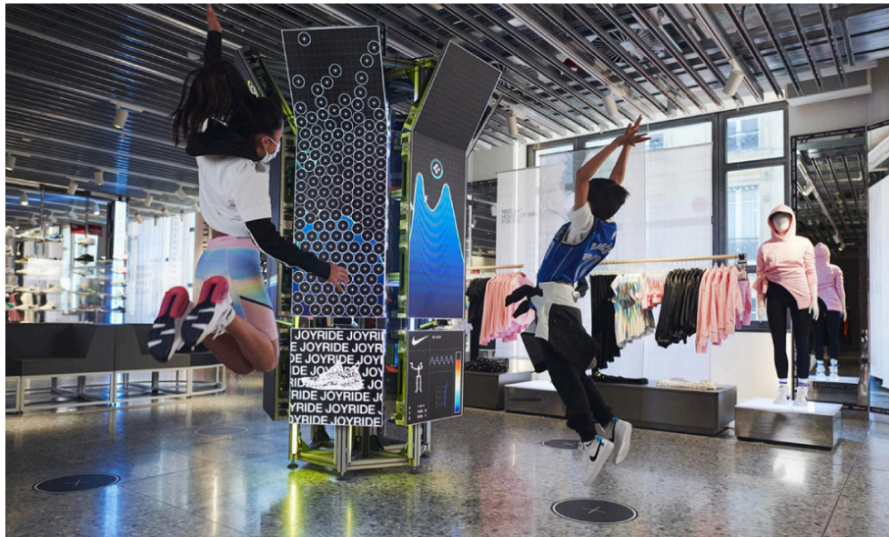
Figure 8. In-store experiential device for kids to get moving through virtual gaming activations.
(Source from Davidson Corporate, 2020, available at: https://davidsonbranding.com.au/nikes-house-of-innovation-002-transforming-the-future-of-retail/)

The store's second floor boasts the largest and most progressive women's collection to inspire female athletes. The brand continues to challenge the world's definition of an athlete and encourages women's participation in sports through inclusive design. To appeal to a wide range of female consumers, the store has introduced plus-size mannequins and apparel enhancements such as Victory Swim and Pro Hijab to help foster a more female-accessible sports culture. To improve the shopping experience for female shoppers, the brand introduced more inclusive designs through its Bra Fit app, including different mannequins, a hijab collection and an innovative bra fitting assistant.

Figure 9. Trash Labs in-store exhibition to activate sustainable awareness for consumers.
(Source from Nike, 2021, available at: https://visualist.com/NIKE-MOVE-TO-ZERO-TRASH-LABS)

Beyond the fixed areas, the project also hosts temporary interactive events in key locations on the ground floor. The exhibition program Trash Labs in 2021, for example, features immersive storytelling, including the use of mechanical devices and digital screens to demonstrate goals for a sustainable future and to inspire sustainable production processes. Encouraging consumers to have sustainable lifestyles.

Touchpoints Case	Sustainable storytelling	Refill station	Gamification devices	Recycle point	Temporary event space for community	Community table	Educational event space
Adidas Hamburg, Germany 2021	●	●	●		●		
The body shop, Singapore 2020	●	●		●			
Lululemon Chicago, US 2019					●		●
Timberland London, UK 2019	●				●	●	●
Converse RENEW Pop-up London, UK 2019	●				●	●	●
IKEA Greenwich, London, UK 2019	●				●		●
Nike House of Innovation 002, Paris, France, 2020	●		●		●		●

Figure 10. Summary of social sustainable design touch points in store, made by authors.

Retail design approaches for social sustainability

Through the qualitative research and analysis above, in summary, we discovered that the interaction between brands and consumers in social sustainability is always reflected in the touch points of retail space design, through both retailtainment and consumer education. We can trace the shreds of evidence on the application of social sustainability design methods in retail research and practices, but a systematic and theoretical approach has not yet been developed in the field of retail design, and through research on this topic we addressed the following approaches.

1. Sustainability storytelling

Retailers should encourage the promotion of data visualization through videos on interactive screens. For instance, the presence of a video screen related to sustainability education or showing of information/data linked to sustainability. This approach would help retailers improve the transparency of sustainability integrated into their operating process and articulate the right for consumers to have information about the environmental performance of products at the point of sale. Although digital screens will lead to higher electricity consumption, they will be a long-term investment to replace traditional printed display materials to reduce periodical waste.

2. Social responsibility areas

To encourage social responsibility among consumers through events in designated areas or touchpoints that are directed by the store's "green ambassadors." This approach entails creating spaces for initiatives that promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in-store (e.g., special initiatives for charity, or to promote giving, etc.). It's also driven by the extended digitalization that connects the store to external networks and activities.

3. Inclusive design

Inclusive practices to support activities encouraging inclusion inside designated areas of the store. Creating areas in the store for activities that educate consumers and store staff about diversity, inclusiveness, and cross-cultural communication.

4. Collecting communities

To designate areas in retail spaces for sustainable or green organizations or local NGOs, who can use the stores to promote books, hold workshops, or host meetings on sustainability-related topics. Application of sustainability-related activities in the store to enhance the sense of community, foster social interaction, and promote customer loyalty.

5. Educative engagement

Engaging users and consumers in sustainable activities (workshops, lectures, etc.) to be part of the brand's sustainable vision. Application of activities to involve users in changing behavior during shopping, learning sustainability aspects and lifestyles.

6. Sustainable mobility

To encourage consumers to embrace green transportation to reach the store which helps to shift consumer awareness and behaviors on sustainability, by using bicycles or other efficient transportation, increasing health and recreational physical activities and decreasing carbon emissions linked to automobile use. It can be applied by designing green transportation facilities and bicycle parking areas for staff and consumers.

However, this study explores social sustainability in retail design primarily in terms of the theory of social sustainability and its application through larger brands and the analysis of their stores. However, research on smaller, non-chain and localized retailers is lacking. At the brand level, it requires significant investment to develop and implement in retail stores to initiate consumer awareness of sustainability. This study focuses on general scenarios in modern cities in the process of digital transformation and does not consider localized and culturally diverse, as well as small retailers' specific scenarios.

Conclusion and discussion

Sustainable design has received considerable attention in the retail literature. However, no summative scholarly studies have been identified that demonstrate how a retailer's approach to retail design has put into practice a commitment to the environment through social sustainable (interior) design principles. This study intends to encourage educators and practitioners to incorporate principles from the discipline into the design approaches.

Retail culture cannot be reduced just to commodities, to shops, or to consumers, but must be understood in terms of relationality, as a recursive loop (Crewe, 2008). In retail design, the ultimate objective is to remove all types of borders between the brand and the customer in order to establish warm relationships between the two. In retail spaces, the border appears as a physical as well as a psychological element that needs to be dealt with throughout the design process (Ceylan, 2019).

Depending on the product, peer validation is always an influential factor in decision-making. Customers can crowdsource ideas from peer-review websites and share their experiences via social platforms. For retailers, this social interaction has a direct impact on customer loyalty and means gaining a competitive advantage.

The threat of virtuality may, in fact, be an enormous opportunity for retailers who can use interactivity, connectedness, new forms of media and mobility in order to deepen their brand message and appeal to emergent audiences, who are alert and responsive to developments in both the on-line and off-line worlds of retailing.

Commercial areas do not only have to respond to the functional demands of trading, but also need to be able to combine more complex environmental issues which positively respond to the reference context, which, thanks to the quality of retail spaces, are transformed from goods containers into opportunities for socializing and communicating. The new retail and consumer places are becoming centers for socializing and developing interpersonal relations of great importance, but if, on one hand, the central role of consumption in modern society is more and more evident, on the other hand, there is still a refusal to accept that shopping has become a fundamental moment in everyone.

With the reduction of basic needs, desire has become the leading criterion for purchase decisions. Consumers are looking for solutions as close as possible to an esthetic lifestyle. To fulfill a more superficial desire, Rem Koolhaas states, "shopping is arguably the last remaining form of public activity". The kind of purchasing growing more and more over the last years contains a strong, playful, evasive, experience approach. The typological hybridization of retail spaces should become an opportunity for the creation of a new functional identity that brings together, as it is more and more common today, entertainment, education, social relationships and commercial activities (Gerosa, 2008). The design of retail spaces combined with entertainment and educational experiences will also be an opportunity for retailers to create a socially sustainable bond with consumers.

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