*Author: Les Dolega*

*email: l.dolega@liverpool.ac.uk*

**Consumption spaces typology**

The concept of town centres and high streets classification, in particular based on their attributes, is not new. Over the years, there have been a number of studies that explored various classifications of retail agglomerations (Berry, 1963; Reynolds and Shiller, 1992; Guy, 1998 or Brown, 1991). Effectively, a strong argument has been made that ‘classification is essential as a means of understanding and analysing relationships in the world of retailing’ (Guy, 1998, p.255). The adopted approaches have predominantly related to a conventional role of shopping with the focus on comparison and convenience goods, and typically were based on the real estate. However, the emergence of online and multichannel shopping, coupled with rapidly changing consumer culture, have altered the relationships between customers and the consumption spaces in numerous ways. For instance, the exposure to increasing online sales has amplified the deficiencies of the traditional brick and mortar business models and urged many retailers to reassess their existing store portfolios to accommodate the change. As a result, adding online sales channel or click and collect facilities became the norm for many retailers, which in turn has led to closures of underperforming stores. Conversely, an emergence of convenience and value culture has paved the way for opening new physical outlets such as convenience and discount stores. Also, as the economy has advanced and shifted towards services, the function of many town centres has also evolved, in particular the increase in leisure services was evident (Wrigley and Dolega, 2011, LDC 2105). These are dynamic changes that require a better understanding including the extent to which the consumption spaces in the UK have transformed and what the emerging roles of such spaces may be.

The suggested research project will explore the dynamic nature of consumption spaces in Great Britain and develop a methodology that will provide a multidimensional classification of retail and service agglomerations. To address the above issues, we suggest to construct a multidimensional typology of consumption spaces that can be measured over time, will account for their evolving functions, reflect their economic health and importantly will be comparative across various spatial scales.

The suggested classification will be based around four domains: composition, diversity, function and economic health.

* Composition will classify shopping spaces by type of store and shopping trip purpose, measured by the proportion of various retail and service types
* Diversity will focus on the variety of sold goods and offered services and store ownership at both local and national scales.
* Size & Function will identify various roles shopping spaces have and how do they intersect with catchment demographics
* Economic health will provide a classification of town centre performance by looking at the most popular measures of retail centres performance and catchment profiles

As such, this forms a framework for the proposed classification of consumption spaces. Table 1 shows the suggested domains, sub-domains and variables to be used in k-means clustering.

*Pen portraits of each cluster will evolve around the following questions: What type of stores/goods, how unique (at both local & national scale), what is the current/emerging function and how well the centre is doing?*

Table 1:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Domain** | **Sub-domain** | **Variables** |
| Composition | Comparison hub | Proportions of Clothing and Footwear, DIY & Household goods, Electrical, Recreational (toys, books and sport), Other goods |
| Convenience hub | Food retailers (grocers, butchers, bakers), CTNs, Off licences, chemists |
| Hospitality services | Restaurants, Bars, and Pubs, Cafes and Fast Food, Entertainment, Fitness centres, Health & beauty services |
| Other consumer services | Consumer services (travel agents, banks, estate agents), Household services (laundrettes, household & home, locksmiths, car showrooms); Business services: recruitment agencies, wholesale, legal services |
| Diversity | National diversity | Proportion of small independent retailers, small multiples (max 10 stores), large multiples, national diversity index for retail (comparison + convenience), and services (leisure + services), department stores,  proportion of the most popular (most sought after) comparison, convenience and leisure chains |
| Clone towns |
| Local diversity | Same as above but for a local scale: 15 Km for comparison, 5 Km for convenience and services, 10 Km for leisure |
| Size and Function | Upmarket destinations | Size, centre morphology (shape of a centre & density/hot spots of particular retail categories), attractiveness score, catchment size, anchor stores, proportion of premium retailers (designers & top department stores), mass (big 20 + mid-range restaurant chains), charity shops, pawnbrokers retailers + betting, ethnic retail, kiosks, pop up shops |
| Mass/general shopping |
| Value destinations |
| Specialist destinations, (in the 2nd phase identifying night-time/leisure areas, ethnic retail) |
| Ancillary & emerging |
| Economic health  (Measure of cause and effect) | Robust performers | Effect: Vacancy rate, structural vacancy rate, change in vacancy rate, rateable value, tenant mix (change in the main retail/service class?),  Cause: crime rates, unemployment rates (nssec), exposure to online shopping, affluence (Acxiom income), day time/night-time population, visitors?, no of competing centres within 30 min drive/10-15km for comparison and 2-4km for convenience centres |
| Stable performers |
| Weak performers |
| Fluctuating performers  (these will be renamed) |

**Diversity - proportion of 100 largest chains:**

Convenience (20) (above 150): Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Morrison’s, The Co-operative Food, Lidl, Aldi, Iceland (supermarkets and c-stores; no filling stations), Greggs, Card Factory, Clintons, Lloydspharmacy, Thorntons, Spar, Marks & Spencer Simply Food, Farmfoods, Waitrose, Heron Foods, Hallmark, Savers Health & Beauty

Comparison(40) (above 200): Boots, Superdrug, Argos, Holland & Barrett, The Carphone Warehouse, WH Smith, Next, Wilko, EE, New Look, Vodafone, Poundland, Clarks, Shoe Zone, O2, H.Samuel, JD Sports, Sports Direct, Peacocks, Claire’s, Dorothy Perkins, 3 store, Game, Marks & Spencer, Poundstretcher, Home Bargains, Carpetright, BrightHouse, The Body Shop, Pets at Home, River Island, Ryman the Stationer, Bonmarche, TK Maxx, Poundworld, 99p Stores, H&M, M&Co, The Works, Waterstones

Leisure (Hospitality Services)(25)(above 100): Starbucks Coffee, Costa, Café Nero; McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Domino’s Pizza, PizzaExpress, Nando’s, Pizza Hut, Prezzo, Frankie & Benny's, Zizzi, Wagamama, ASK Italian, William Hill, Pret A Manger, Burger King, Papa John's, Eat.

Betting

Ladbrokes, Coral, Betfred, Paddy Power, Cashino Gaming, Pawnbrokers

Consumer/other services (15): Barclays, NatWest, Lloyds Bank, HSBC, Santander, Nationwide Building Society, Halifax, TSB Bank, Post Office, Specsavers Opticians, Thomas Cook, Thomson, Sue Ryder Care, Timpson, Halfords

**Anchor stores:**

Convenience, Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Morrison, Co-op

Comparison: John Lewis, Debenhams, M&S, Harvey Nichols, Ikea, H&M, Primark, Zara, Boots, Next, B&Q, Homebase

Leisure: Odeon Cinema, VueCinema and CineWorld

**Premium brands:** Waitrose,John Lewis, Harvey Nichols,Laura Ashley, Ted Baker, Tommy Hilfiger, Fat Face, Superdry, Seasalt, Jack Wills, White Stuff, Crew Clothing, Hugo Boss, Cath Kidston, Joules, Swarovski, Lacoste, Diesel, Apple Store, Bose

**Mass brands:** Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Asda, Greggs, Boots, Superdrug, Holland & Barrett, Argos, WH Smith, Next, H.Samuel, JD Sports, Claire’s, River Island, TK Maxx, H&M, Zara, Topshop, Game, The Perfume Shop, Starbucks Coffee, Costa, Café Nero; McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Domino’s Pizza, PizzaExpress, Currys PC World, The Fragrance Shop

**Value brands:** Aldi, Lidl, Iceland, Primark, Poundland, Farmfoods, 99p Stores, Poundworld, Poundstretcher, Home Bargains, Savers Health & Beauty, B&M Bargains/Home, Pound Bakery