

FUNDAÇÃO GETULIO VARGAS
ESCOLA DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO DE EMPRESAS DE SÃO PAULO

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**I “HEART” MY NEIGHBORHOOD: RETAILER’S SERVICESCAPE, RESIDENT’S
WELL-BEING PERCEPTIONS, AND LOCAL ATTRACTIVENESS**

SÃO PAULO

2024

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**Thesis presented to the Getulio Vargas Foundation's São
Paulo School of Business Administration as a requirement for
the degree of Doctor of Business Administration.**

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Delane Botelho.

SÃO PAULO

2024

Sarcinelli, Arthur França.

I “heart” my neighborhood: retailer’s servicescape, resident’s well-being perceptions, and local attractiveness / Arthur França Sarcinelli. - 2024.

145 f.

Orientador: Delane Botelho.

Tese (doutorado CDAE) – Fundação Getulio Vargas, Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo.

1. Comércio varejista. 2. Lojas - Localização. 3. Aglomeração. 4. Qualidade de vida. 5. Comportamento do consumidor. I. Botelho, Delane. II. Tese (doutorado CDAE) – Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo. III. Fundação Getulio Vargas. IV. Título.

CDU 658.87

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Date of approval: 27 / 02 / 2024

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates how residents' perceived well-being mediates the relationship between the servicescape experience of retail agglomerations and neighborhood attractiveness. Employing an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach, combining survey administration with semi-structured interviews of neighborhood retail residents and consumers, this research reveals that the impact of neighborhood retail agglomeration on attractiveness does not occur directly. Instead, it operates through two parallel mediated indirect pathways: consumer well-being via subjective well-being and consumer well-being in conjunction with agglomeration attractiveness. Additional results indicate that neighborhood daily life, social interactions, and community identity are important factors in the mediating role of residents' perception of well-being in the construction of an attractive neighborhood from neighborhood retail agglomerations. It contributes to a deeper comprehension of local attractiveness within the context of neighborhood retail in Brazil.

Keywords: Retail agglomeration. Resident's well-being perceptions. Neighborhood Attractiveness.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The sustainability of traditional retail formats has become a challenge to be addressed. The effects of macro environmental events in recent years (e.g., COVID-19, Brexit, War in Ukraine) have had strong impacts on supply chains, inclusion of new technologies and consumer behaviour (Ballantyne et al., 2022; Kirk & Rifkin, 2020; Sit et al., 2022), culminating in changes that benefit the growth of e-retailing and threaten the survival of brick-and-mortar retailers (Grewal et al., 2021; Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). In addition, the increasing number of physical shops being closed and declining footfall raises concerns about the resilience of retail agglomerations (PwC, 2022).

However, data from the International Omnichannel Retail Report indicates that the average global penetration of offline retail channels is slightly higher than e-commerce (86% vs. 81%), while this difference is even greater (78% vs. 57%) for essential products such as food, beverages, personal care and medicines (YouGov, 2021). Hence, the importance of traditional high street retail is not contained in just one product category or regional market. In addition, consumers are increasingly demanding about the quality of the shopping experience and its impact on the local community: 59% of UK consumers want to support their local high street retailers (RWRC, 2021); American consumers prefer to visit outdoor shopping destinations more often, given greater proximity to their homes, convenient access and variety of essential services (Deloitte, 2022); collective cooperation between shops and safety are strong predictors of the survivability of Brazilian retail conglomerates (Telles et al., 2022).

This data supports the notion that consumers in different countries are increasing their consideration for non-monetary and well-being factors when choosing their shopping destination. High street retail environment is seen not only as an option for consumption of products and services, but also as a revitalized and attractive environment to serve the community through leisure options, cultural events and a place to socialize (Rosenbaum et al., 2017a). In addition, these revitalization efforts can be extended from a single shop to the entire retail agglomeration and entailing an increase in attractiveness as an ideal destination to patronize (Blut et al., 2018). This strategy becomes even more beneficial when the urban space in which the shopkeepers are located is also seen as an attractive place, either through public or private action (Alexander et al., 2020).

Findings from the current literature indicate that consumer's interaction with the servicescape interfere with their cognitive and emotional evaluations (Baker et al., 2020), and

elements of a retailer's service mix directly impact on a shopping center's attractiveness and consumer well-being (El Hedhli et al., 2021). Individual satisfaction derived from interaction with the environment, employees, tenants, or other consumers within a consumption situation may also culminate in perceived improvement of individual's Subjective Well-Being (i.e., SWB; Diener et al., 2010) through achievement of relational goals (Zheng et al., 2021), personal growth (Ryff, 2018), sense of belonging (Jung et al., 2021), and purpose in life (Sharma et al., 2017). In addition, experiencing the daily life of a neighborhood through social, transactional, and leisure interactions in a retail environment contribute to the development of a sense of love for the neighborhood in which one resides (Kourtit et al., 2022a; Wilson & Hodges, 2022).

Conversely, public initiative also has an impact on improving the perceived attractiveness of an urban region (Aydoghmish and Rafieian, 2022), especially with regard to the development of public policies tailored to local needs (Rodríguez-pose, 2018), local governance (Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020), strategic planning (Lucarelli and Cassell, 2020), and fundraising (Boisen et al., 2018).

Achieving a high degree of local attractiveness becomes a constant goal for both the retail agglomeration and public agents (Bonakdar & Audirac, 2020) as a way to foster financial and human capital towards a specific locality and increasing its influence in a highly competitive and globalized environment (Hultman et al., 2016). Two research streams are considered important to understand local attractiveness phenomena: Agglomeration Studies (AS) and Transformative Service Research (TSR).

AS is a traditional perspective based on urban planning studies and geographical economics that elucidates the role of the public agent in regional socioeconomic development, in which the degree of attractiveness of an urban center is a function of its firm's spatial distribution patterns (Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2009). It is implied that an appropriate allocation of services, industries and commercial outlets results in a positive externalities optimization, generating higher levels of firm's density and productivity (Glaeser, 2011). Further, AS focuses on the assessment of key economic variables (e.g., GDP per capita, housing and labor costs, population density, commuting times and distance to essential facilities) as main predictors of urban and metropolitan agglomeration areas (Partridge et al., 2010; Rappaport, 2008; Winters, 2014) and quality of life perceptions as a proxy for agglomeration desirability (Dalmazzo and Blasio, 2011; Nijkamp and Kourtit, 2013; Yang et al., 2019).

TSR seeks to understand how the intricate relationship between service organizations and consumers in enhancing the overall wellbeing of both individuals and their communities (Anderson et al., 2013; Rosenbaum, 2015). Hence, individuals (e.g. consumers or

entrepreneurs) adopt a more proactive role in help shaping their communities overall Quality of Life (QoL) (Anderson and Ostrom, 2015) by implementing prosocial initiatives (i.e., either through implementing social entrepreneurship or conscious consumption) that do not inhibit social welfare at the expense of economic growth (Boenigk, Kreimer, et al., 2021) and thus collectively enabling wider access to services, more options to choose from the service ecosystem, mitigating suffering from failed service encounters, and improving citizen's happiness (Fisk et al., 2018; Nasr and Fisk, 2019).

Studies using the TSR lens have investigated the impact of services in various contexts, such as healthcare (Anderson et al., 2018; Mulcahy et al., 2021), public policy (Boenigk et al., 2021b), education (Hurley et al., 2018), electricity service (Russell–Bennett et al., 2020), and servicescape frontline employee (Nasr et al., 2014). Hence, it is possible to achieve economic growth and social impact at the same time by applying scalable systemic solutions for commercial and non-profit service providers (Alkire et al., 2020) and using quality of life and wellbeing measurements as success metrics (Russell-Bennett et al., 2019).

Interestingly, both research streams converged on the understanding that quality of life is an important outcome of local attractiveness. However, the logic by which the improvement of the quality of life within the urban place occurs follows different directions. AS literature indicates that proper urban planning is one of the factors of higher standard of living (Rappaport, 2008, 2009) and that better service delivery comes from better public policies (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018) while TSR focuses on well-designed prosocial services as a tool for driving social impact, meaning that a good service network is conducive to the development of better public policies (Alkire et al., 2020; Fisk et al., 2018; Mulcahy et al., 2021). We argue that this divergence is not mutually exclusive but actually positive and expected, since both development of retail agglomerations and city strategic management are important factors for improving local attractiveness (Alexander et al., 2020).

Given the relevance of the phenomenon of local attractiveness and its clear relationship with urban planning and retail management, there is a low number of studies investigating the role of retailers in strengthening the urban place brand. In addition, it is argued that residents' perception of quality of life plays an important role in shaping the perception that a location is objectively more attractive than its surroundings, going beyond the current notion of quality of life as a metric for evaluating the success of implementing services or public policies.

This dissertation seeks to broaden the understanding of the impact of neighborhood retail agglomeration on the development of local attractiveness in shopping districts. This primary objective arises from the following research problems: "How can the servicescape of

the retail agglomeration make its local neighborhood more attractive?" and "Is the perception of resident's well-being in fact a mechanism that best explains the impact of the retail agglomeration on the attractiveness of the local neighborhood?".

To answer the research questions described above, this dissertation aims to:

1. Emphasize the mediating effect of well-being dimensions (i.e., consumer well-being and subjective well-being) on the relationship between retail agglomeration servicescape experience and neighborhood attractiveness.

2. Underline the mediating effect of consumption consequences (i.e., consumer well-being and retail agglomeration attractiveness) on the relationship between retail agglomeration servicescape experience and neighborhood attractiveness.

3. Understand how well-being assessments derived from experiencing the local retail agglomeration translates into better evaluations of the neighborhood.

This research was carried out through two empirical studies with a sequential explanatory design. The first study focused on the two initial objectives through the application of a survey with residents of neighborhoods that have retail agglomerations, while the next two objectives were investigated through semi-structured interviews with residents, retailers and consumers of retail agglomerations.

This dissertation unfolds through two empirical investigations employing a sequential explanatory design. The initial study focuses on the first two objectives via a survey administered to residents of neighborhoods housing retail agglomerations. Subsequently, the latter objectives are explored through semi-structured interviews involving residents, retailers, and consumers of these retail hubs. The manuscript comprises six chapters, each serving a distinct purpose. Chapter 1 delineates the research lacunae to be addressed, articulates the research questions, and outlines the objectives. Chapter 2 delves into a comprehensive literature review on local attractiveness, constructs a theoretical framework, and formulates hypotheses for examination. Methodological nuances of Studies 1 and 2 are expounded upon in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents the findings delineated by study, while Chapter 5 synthesizes and discusses these results in tandem. Finally, Chapter 6 furnishes the thesis's conclusions, avenues for future research, managerial implications, and acknowledges any research limitations.

2.0 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first consists of a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on local attractiveness through a bibliometric survey, since the use of statistical tools helps to develop a picture of the accumulated knowledge on the subject by identifying theoretical bases and future research trends within a specific field of knowledge (Paul and Criado, 2020). In this way, we sought to integrate the analysis from the point of view of different research streams (e.g., service theory, regional studies, and economic geography). Thus, the scientific mapping of a sample of 328 representative papers enables both a description (e.g., main authors, journals, papers, keywords) and classification (i.e., main research themes, gaps, and research trends) of the state of the art of the literature on local attractiveness.

The second part refers to the refinement of the basic concepts used in this thesis and the construction of a theoretical framework. Based on the themes elucidated by the SLR, a series of theoretical concepts are listed that guide the discussion on the impact of the neighborhood retail agglomeration on local attractiveness (e.g., retail format, service strategy, quality of life, well-being, neighborhood attractiveness) and conceptualize them both in isolation and integrated within a tripartite classification (i.e., geographic influence at the micro, meso and macro-regional levels; Teller and Elms, 2012; Aydoghmish and Rafieian, 2022). In addition, a theoretical framework containing the antecedents of local attractiveness is constructed by arguing that a neighborhood retailer's service mix and residents' perceptions of living standards are important factors in developing a regional image that is objectively more attractive than its surroundings (Gilboa and Jeffe, 2021).

The third part relates to the hypothesis development derived directly from the theoretical framework. It is argued that the frequent interaction of the neighborhood resident with the servicescape provided by the local retail agglomeration has a positive impact on evaluations of the degree of attractiveness of the regional retail agglomeration (Teller and Reutterer, 2008), meaning that the immediate impact of the provision of services is focused on a low geographical influence (i.e., within the area of influence of the retail agglomeration; Teller, 2008) and on specific domains of well-being (i.e., consumer well-being; Sirgy, 2021). However, the influence of the retail service mix of both an individual store and the retail agglomeration as a whole on the perception of an attractive neighborhood only occurs through mediation of the residents' perception of well-being (i.e., bottom-up spillover effect between CWB and SWB; Zhao and Wei, 2019).

2.1 SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

A systematic literature review is understood as a meticulous process of locating, synthesizing and generating new knowledge from already published academic articles (Palmatier et al., 2018; Snyder, 2019). This approach differs from traditional literature reviews by defining a priori criteria for eligibility, selection and analysis of papers with a focus on reliability, transparency and replicability of its results (Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Moher et al., 2015).

The clear and protocolized definition of all the stages (i.e., outlining the research problem until the results are reported) characteristic of an SLR is useful for dealing with the exponential growth of scientific knowledge generated in this century (Hiebl, 2023), making it possible to deal with a large number of scientific articles without losing the rigor and quality necessary for the development of new theoretical, managerial or policy-oriented knowledge (Kunisch et al., 2023). Given its methodological relevance, an SLR is seen as an important tool for generating conceptual contributions through a descriptive mapping of the area of knowledge in question (e.g., marketing; MacInnis, 2011).

However, a systematic literature review can go beyond the barrier of an intermediate tool and reach the level of a publication that generates theoretical contribution in its own right by using scientometrics combined with inductive reasoning to assess the state of the art of the literature and indicate the next steps to fill the knowledge gaps (Kraus et al., 2022). As such, a considerable number of articles containing guidelines for conducting a high-impact SLR have been published in management journals (Paul et al., 2021).

Tranfield et al. (2003) indicate that a systematic approach (i.e., SLR or meta-analysis) makes it possible to work with a large volume of information while maintaining a high level of methodological rigor, quality of evidence and low risk of bias. Thus, it is necessary to precisely define the research problem to be used as the basis for mapping the discipline, topic, theory or journal (Paul and Criado, 2020), which search sources and keywords are used to acquire the initial pool of articles (Davis et al., 2014), criteria for excluding and including new articles (Hiebl, 2023), the category of analysis to be carried out (Radhakrishnan et al., 2017), how the results are presented and the theoretical discussion stemming from this data (Marrone and Linnenluecke, 2020).

The systematic approach considered most consistent with the questions posed by this research is bibliometrics, since bibliometric tools make it possible to analyze a large amount of bibliographic information statistically and systematically to map the state of the art in the field

of research being studied, as well as distinguishing between seminal publications and future research trends (Vogel and Guttel, 2013; Zupic and Cater, 2015).

It should be noted that the understanding of the concept of local attractiveness is studied in parallel between different streams of research (i.e., retailing, services, urban planning, and economic geography), making it necessary to scour the literature to understand the points of convergence and divergence between the areas and from this generate unified theoretical insights into how the phenomenon of local attractiveness can be better understood. The protocol called Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews (SPAR-4-SLR) developed by Paul et al. (2021) was adopted as a guide for surveying the state of the art of the literature and developing a future research agenda based on logical and transparent criteria.

A graphic summary of the SPAR-4-SLR definitions for this research is contained in Appendix I, while a detailed justification of what was done at each stage of the bibliometric survey is shown below.

2.1.1 Bibliometric survey: overview

By defining bibliometrics as the use of quantitative techniques to analyze bibliometric data (e.g., paper citations, authorship, year of publication; Broadus, 1987) and appropriate when this data is taken from a database too large for manual evaluation and assessed on the basis of a comprehensive scope (Wallin, 2005), it becomes necessary to outline the structure of this bibliometric survey based on four stages: defining the scope of analysis, choosing the bibliometric techniques to be used, collecting the bibliometric data and analyzing the results (Donthu et al., 2021).

The initial question begins with an inquiry into how the phenomenon of local attractiveness has been studied in specialized academic literature over the last century, specifically prompted by the following questions: "What do we know about the impact of local neighbourhood services on regional attractiveness?" and "Where should the investigation about the role of neighbourhood retailers be heading?".

The chosen bibliometric techniques are subdivided into two parts. The first consists of simpler techniques focused on describing the performance of the sample of papers obtained (e.g., number of citations, number of authors, number of journals, most prolific authors, among others). The second part consists of the three classic scientific mapping techniques (Zupic and Cater, 2015): Cocitation (COCIT), bibliographic coupling (BCOUP) and Cooccurrence (COOC). COCIT can be defined as the frequency with which two articles are cited simultaneously by a third document (Small, 1978), a very popular technique, but less complex

than BCOUPL (Macroberts and Macroberts, 2010) because it considers an overlap of bibliographies and measures the frequency with which two documents in a sample have at least one reference in common (Kessler, 1963; Boyack and Klavans, 2010). COOC is defined by networks that describe the interrelation of words within a specified unit of text (Radhakrishnan et al., 2017).

Bibliometric data was collected from the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus platforms over a twenty-year period (i.e., 2002 to 2022) and filtered using the following search criteria: Title, authorship, abstract, and keywords. In addition, the Chartered Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Guide 2021 (CABS AJG 2021) ranking was adopted as a criterion for the quality of research sources. All bibliometric data using the following research string: ("transformative service" or "quality of life" or "subjective well-being" or "consumer well-being" or consumer welfare) AND (place branding or agglomeration or "retail agglomeration*"). It is worth noting that the procedure of (Kaputo and Kargina, 2022) was followed as a way of combining the results between the two databases.

R software was used for data analysis (R core team, 2016), especially the bibliometrix package (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). The first stage of data analysis was called descriptive analysis and used performance analysis tools (e.g., most cited local and global articles, most prolific authors, most used keywords) to build an overview of the literature, while the second stage called science mapping consists of using more advanced techniques (e.g., COCIT, COOC and BCOUPL) to unravel the intellectual structure (Cuccurullo et al., 2016), thematic analysis (Cobo et al., 2011) and multidimensioning of the main themes through the co-occurrence of keywords (Dabic et al., 2020; Clavic et al., 2021).

2.1.2 Bibliometric survey: descriptive analysis

The main collection of extracted articles contains 328 articles from 849 distinct authors and published in 41 unique journals within a time span of 18 years (i.e., between 2005 and 2022 since no relevant papers were surveyed in the 2002-2004 triennium). There is an relatively high average citations per document (45.65), number of coauthors per document (3.16), quantity of cited references (i.e., approximately 19300), related keywords given by the authors (i.e., almost 1200 unique keywords), international co-authorship (i.e., 43.6% of documents derived from a transnational partnership), and a high annual growth rate (i.e., 19.61%). Conversely, there is a low number of single-authored published papers (24 papers, approximately 7.31%) and a low document average age (i.e., majority of citations come within 5.02 years of publication date).

This overall examination helps to identify a diagnostic of growing relevance of the topic in the last decades. Table 1 represents a graphical output of the main bibliometric data information.

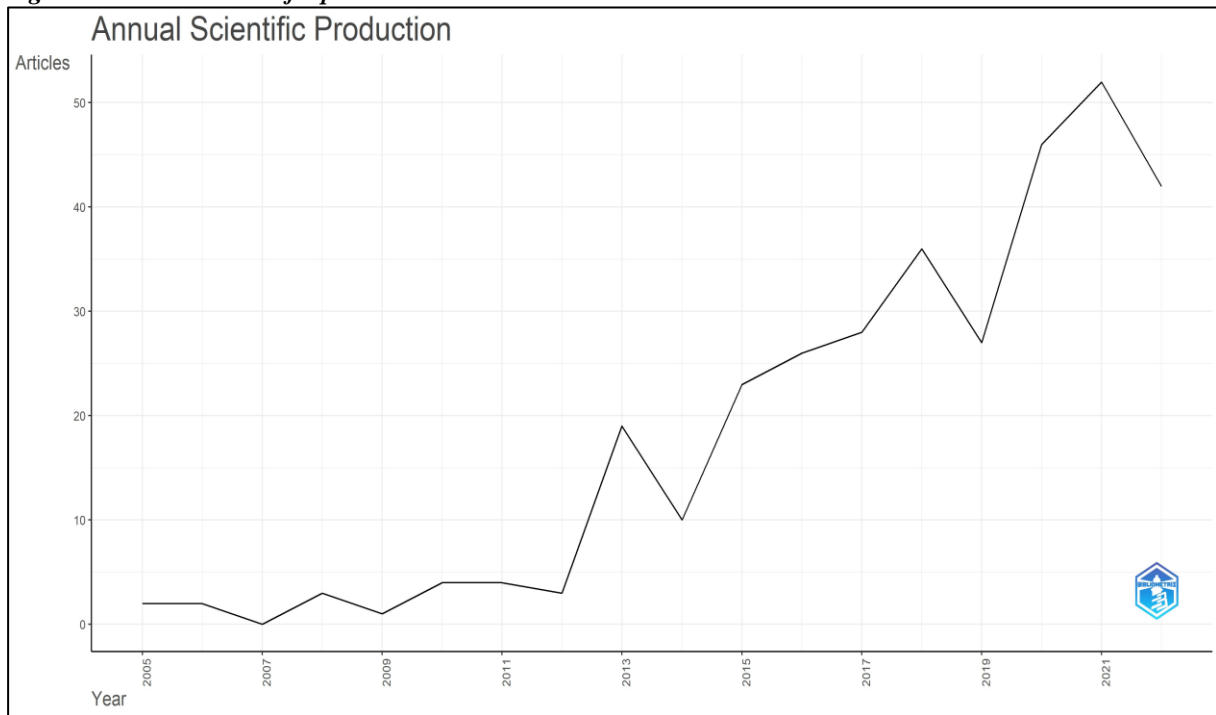
Table 1 - Main bibliometric data information

Parameter	Descriptive values
Timespan	2005-2022
N° sources	41
N° documents	328
Annual growth rate	19.61%
N° authors	849
N° Single-authored documents	24
N° co-authors per document	3.16
International co-authorship	43.60%
N° keywords	1215
N° references	19353
Document average age	5.02 years
Average citations per document	45.65

Source: The author (2024)

A cross-analysis between documents and year of publication makes it possible to assess the relevance of the topic within academia in a more granular way. Figure 1 shows that although interest has grown significantly over the last two decades, the frequency of articles published on this topic was relatively small during the 2000s. Positioning studies that emerged in the 2010s (Teller, 2008; Ostrom et al., 2010; Hanna and Rowley, 2011; Anderson et al., 2013) further boosted the growth of the topic's scientific development, meaning that efforts to conceptualize and propose a research agenda on transformative service (Rosenbaum, 2015) and place branding (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011; Kavartzis and Hatch, 2013) became highly relevant articles within this research stream. In addition, works interrelating street retail agglomeration and urban place branding (Teller and Elms, 2012) strengthen the theoretical development of the area and serve as base articles for the union of findings between the areas of management, geographic economics and urban studies.

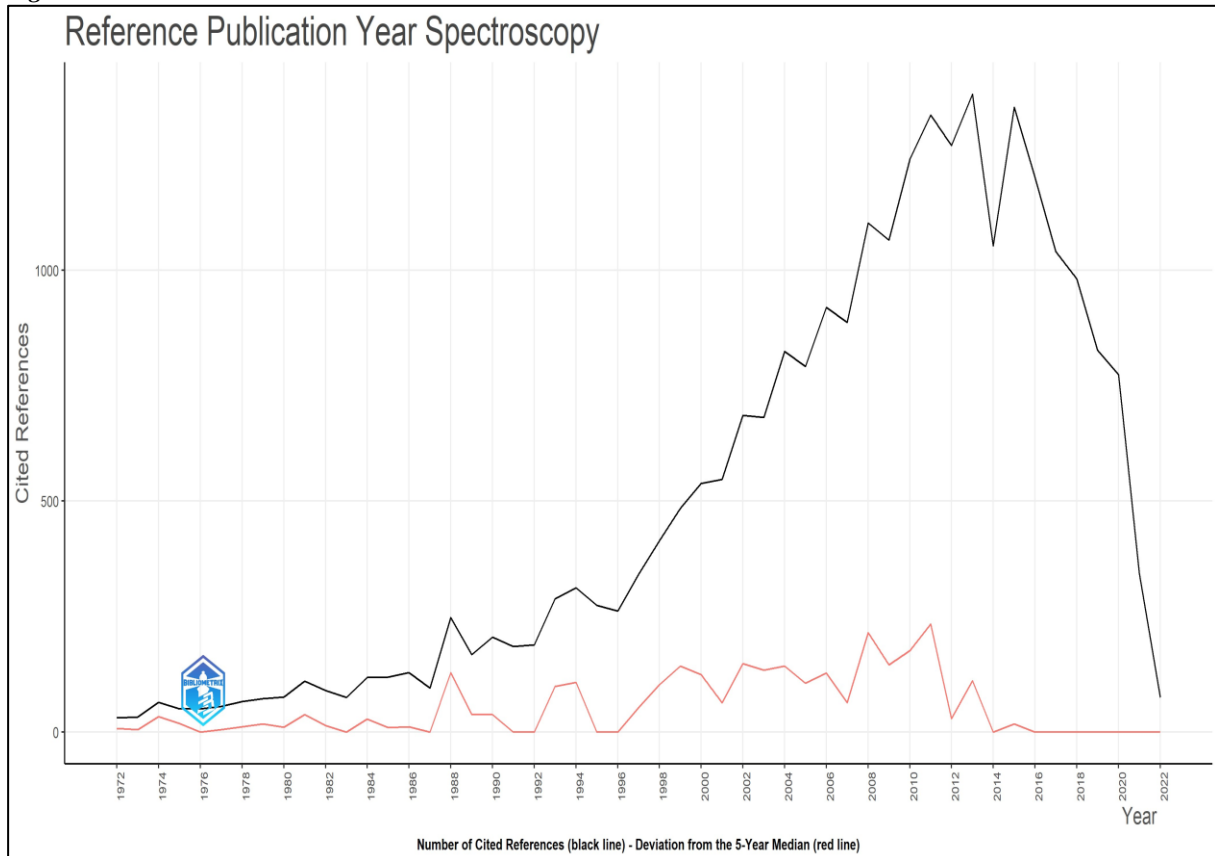
Figure 1 – Annual scientific production



Source: The author (2024)

Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy (RSYP) is a relatively recent bibliometric analysis technique that is useful for carrying out a more in-depth detection of seminal articles in a research area by investigating citations per year and comparing the variation with the median of the last 5 years (Marx et al., 2014). When analyzing the last fifty years (i.e., 1972-2022) of scientific production on the topic based on the references cited in the sample, it can be seen that there are two relevant moments in the construction of the topic: methodological advancements on structural equation modeling and surveys during the 1980s (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), the foundation of the analysis of the impact of services with the emergence of the discussion on service quality (Parasuraman et al, 1985), as well as comprehensive formulations on the subjective well-being of the individual (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1985); the theoretical foundation of local attractiveness was published in the six-year period 2008-2013, since research into retail agglomerations and how they are attractive to local consumers (Teller, 2008), the notion of geographical competitiveness between locality brands and how this generates marketing, political and social implications (Lucarelli and Berg, 2011), and the relationship between residents' perception of quality of life and well-being with economic and tourism development (Kim et al., 2013) were developed. A graphic representation can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - RSYP



Source: The author (2024)

Understanding who are the leading experts on a given subject is useful for benchmarking notorious studies and possible research partnerships. The top ten academics in the bibliometric sample are shown in Table 2. It is understood that the knowledge produced is dispersed among different academics, as the most prolific author has 12 articles, an average of 2.09 fractionalized articles (i.e. calculation of an author's individual contribution based on a uniform contribution among the authors; Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017), and the ten researchers with the highest volume of production contribute approximately 20% of the total number of publications in the sample. In addition, it can be inferred from the curriculum vitae of the individuals that three fronts of theoretical discussion are considered to be the most in-demand expertise within this sample: the influence of the high street retail agglomeration on the attractiveness of the region (Teller and Reutterer, 2008; Teller et al., 2016; Alexander et al., 2020); the potential of the services provided to generate change through the generation of well-being (Anderson and Ostrom, 2015; Fisk et al., 2018; Alkire et al., 2020); consumption situations as generators of well-being (Sirgy et al., 207; Sirgy, 2021).

Table 2 – Most prolific authors

Author	Articles	%	Articles fractionalized
Christoph Teller	12	3.66%	4.20
Janet McColl-Kennedy	8	2.44%	1.57
Mark Scott Rosenbaum	8	2.44%	2.34
Rebekah Russell-Bennett	7	2.13%	2.45
Amy Ostrom	6	1.83%	0.71
Sebastian Zenker	6	1.83%	2.08
Jörg Finsterwalder	5	1.52%	1.75
Martin Mende	5	1.52%	1.34
Joseph Sirgy	5	1.52%	2.92
Andrew Alexander	4	1.22%	1.50

Source: The author (2024)

Table 3 shows the ten most cited authors among the papers in the sample. All of them have transformative service research as one of their research interests, while approximately one third of the articles in the sample cited at least once one of the three highest ranked authors in terms of local citations.

Table 3 – Most cited local authors

Author	Local citations
Amy Ostrom	125
Mark Scott Rosenbaum	107
Martin Mende	100
Raymond Fisk	97
Andrew Gallan	96
Janet McColl-Kennedy	91
Steven Rayburn	85
Laurel Anderson	83
Canan Corus	78
Mario Giraldo	72

Source: The author (2024)

It is reiterated that the theoretical construction between service initiatives in improving the well-being of different actors in a service network is relevant and useful for the construction of the local attractiveness narrative as a research agenda. In addition, the relevance of each author can be measured via their productivity and the impact of their publications, in which the h-index (Hirsh, 2005) is a classic tool for gauging the impact of a researcher. In this way, the analysis of local relevance (i.e., the author's impact using only the papers in the sample as a statistical cut-off) shown in Table 4 corroborates the data in previous tables by pointing out that academics focused on the study of consumer welfare, transformative service research and retail agglomerations serve as a theoretical basis for understanding the phenomenon of local attractiveness.

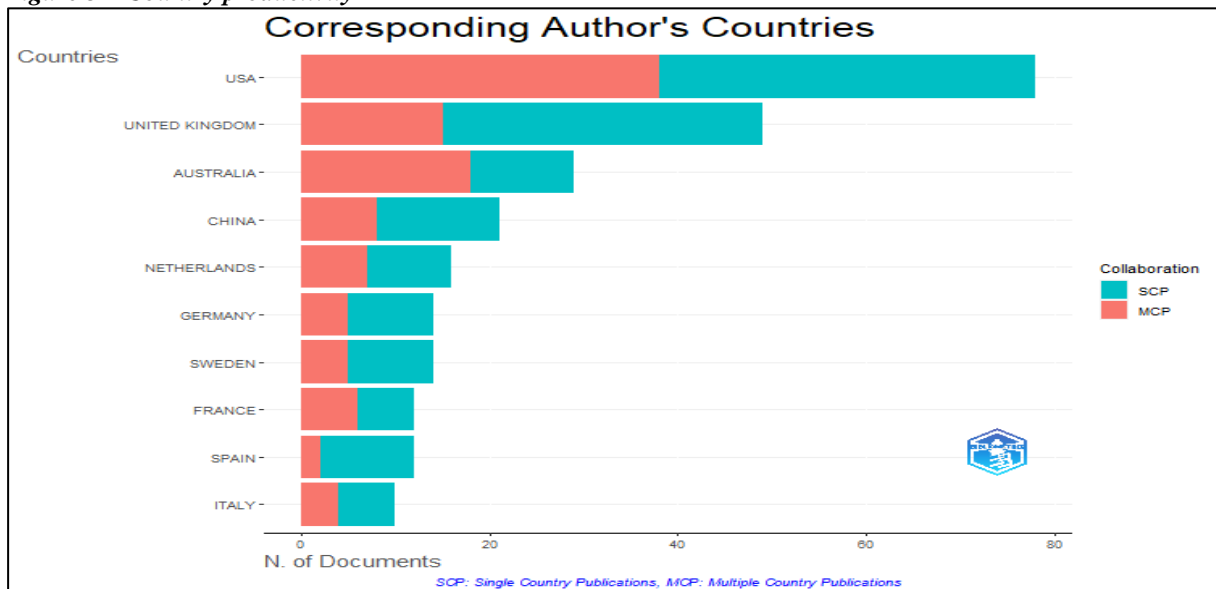
Table 4 - Author's local relevance

Author	H index	Total citations	Publications	Starting year
Christoph Teller	10	362	12	2012
Janet McColl-Kennedy	8	1228	8	2012
Mark Scott Rosenbaum	7	875	8	2013
Amy Ostrom	6	1668	6	2010
Sebastian Zenker	6	431	6	2013
Jörg Finsterwalder	5	280	5	2016
Rebekah Russell-Bennett	5	137	7	2019
Joseph Sirgy	5	1103	5	2008
Andrew Alexander	4	95	4	2014
Linda Alkire	4	260	4	2018

Source: The author (2024)

Figure 3 shows productivity by country (i.e., number of papers published based on the home country of the institution where the author is based) and the proportion of international partnerships. It shows that the majority of papers published originate from English-speaking developed countries (i.e., USA, UK, and AUS account for 47.5% of all articles) and that there are partnership networks between countries (i.e., 42.35% of the papers published in the top ten countries are the result of international research projects).

Figure 3 – Country productivity



Source: The author (2024)

The list of the most relevant journals is useful for detecting the main sources of studies on the desired topic, as well as helping to diagnose whether the current discussion of the phenomenon studied takes place in journals with high or low credibility. Table 5 shows the top ten journals by the number of articles published, accounting for approximately 68% of all

published articles and there is a mix of areas of knowledge as a source for better understanding the phenomenon of local attractiveness: Business, tourism, urban planning, retailing, marketing and services. This is an indication of the multidisciplinary nature of the state of the art in this literature.

Table 5 – Most prolific sources

Sources	Articles
Journal of Business Research	55
Tourism Management	35
Cities	25
Journal of Service Research	24
Journal of Services Marketing	19
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	16
European Planning Studies	14
Journal of Service Management	12
Urban Studies	12

Source: The author (2024)

A cross-analysis between journal and number of references cited can be found in Table 6. The ten best-ranked sources account for approximately a quarter of the total number of references cited, and are related to the following disciplines: marketing, services, business, retailing and tourism. It is worth noting that the urban planning journals well ranked in Table 5 (i.e., Urban Studies, Cities, and European Planning Studies) have a combined value of approximately 500 local citations.

Table 6 – Most local cited sources

Sources	Articles
Journal of Business Research	747
Journal of Service Research	629
Tourism Management	539
Journal of Marketing	521
Annals of Tourism Research	443
Journal of Consumer Research	440
Place Branding and Public Diplomacy	390
Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	380
Journal of Retailing	314
Journal of Services Marketing	295

Source: The author (2024)

Scientific journals can also be measured by impact and productivity metrics, and the data for the journals in the bibliometric section is shown in Table 7. Each of the five most impactful journals (i.e., high journal h-index) are from different disciplines (i.e., tourism, services, business, retailing, and urban studies) but related to the phenomenon of local attractiveness, an observation that corroborates the argument for the need for a multidisciplinary

approach and the data presented in Table 5. In addition, eight of the ten most impactful journals began publishing studies relevant to the topic in the 2010s, a finding that reiterates what is shown in Figure 1 and corroborates the argument that the knowledge generated in the last decade is one of the most relevant to the study of local attractiveness. The two exceptions to this trend are due to the importance of two specific publications: the investigation of the impact of tourist agglomeration on the community's perception of quality of life by Urtasun and Gutierrez (2006) and a case study on building the brand identity of an Italian city by Vanolo (2008).

Table 7 - Source's local relevance

Sources	H index	Total citations	Publications	Starting year
Tourism Management	28	3312	35	2006
Journal of Business Research	24	2493	55	2010
Journal of Service Research	16	2514	24	2010
Cities	14	1040	25	2008
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	12	431	16	2016
Journal of Services Marketing	11	427	19	2016
Service Industries Journal	11	431	11	2012
European Planning Studies	10	325	14	2011
Psychology & Marketing	10	231	11	2012
Journal of Service Management	9	481	12	2018

Source: The author (2024)

Focusing on document analysis makes it possible to gauge the content (i.e., central theoretical argument, variables studied, methods used, contexts, among others) inherent in the discussion of a research topic and possible future research paths. The ten most cited articles overall (i.e., total citations regardless of the bibliographic sample) are shown in Table 8, indicating that the theoretical basis for investigating the phenomenon of local attractiveness comes from studies in the area of services, quality of life, place brand theory and agglomeration economies.

Thus, the following themes are seen as baseline topics to comprehend the interaction between local retailers and service providers into regional attractiveness evaluations: The ubiquity of the services sector and the need for sustainable growth (Ostrom et al., 2010) through well-designed services that enables customers to cocreate value (Mccoll-Kennedy et al., 2012; Sweeney et al., 2015) aiming at improving well-being of target audiences (Anderson et al., 2013); Spill-over effect from context-specific well-being situations forming an general assessment of an individual's overall well-being evaluation (Kim et al., 2013; Uysal et al., 2016); Social aspects of living in a community as a catalyst for well-being perceptions that

leads to a better understanding and evaluation of a place (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017).

Table 8 - Most cited global documents

Paper (global cited documents)	Total Citations	TC per Year	Normalized TC
Ostrom et al. (2010). Moving forward and making a difference: research priorities for the science of service. Journal of service research, 13(1), 4-36.	925.00	66.07	3.63
McColl-Kennedy et al. (2012). Health care customer value cocreation practice styles. Journal of service research, 15(4), 370-389.	610.00	50.83	2.79
Anderson et al. (2013). Transformative service research: An agenda for the future. Journal of Business Research, 66(8), 1203-1210.	550.00	50.00	4.42
Kim et al. (2013). How does tourism in a community impact the quality of life of community residents?. Tourism management, 36, 527-540.	473.00	43.00	3.80
Uysal et al. (2016). Quality of life (QOL) and well-being research in tourism. Tourism Management, 53, 244-261.	444.00	55.50	6.57
Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. Marketing theory, 13(1), 69-86.	351.00	31.91	2.82
Brüggen et al. (2017). Financial well-being: A conceptualization and research agenda. Journal of business research, 79, 228-237.	265.00	37.86	4.22
Sweeney et al. (2015). Customer effort in value cocreation activities: Improving quality of life and behavioral intentions of health care customers. Journal of Service Research, 18(3), 318-335.	245.00	27.22	4.45
Rasoolimanesh et al. (2017). Urban vs. rural destinations: Residents' perceptions, community participation and support for tourism development. Tourism management, 60, 147-158.	234.00	33.43	3.72
Kim et al. (2015). Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists. Tourism management, 46, 465-476.	227.00	25.22	4.12

Source: The author (2024)

Table 9 displays the most locally cited papers (i.e., cocitation of articles contained within the bibliographic data frame) as well their relative contribution to the overall global citation metric (i.e., LC/GC ratio), meaning that these indicators help detect evolving or emerging research trends.

Table 9 - Most cited local documents

Document (local cited documents)	Year	Local Citations	Global Citations	LC/GC Ratio (%)
Anderson et al. (2013). Transformative service research: An agenda for the future. <i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 66(8), 1203-1210.	2013	72.00	550.00	13.09
Ostrom et al. (2010). Moving forward and making a difference: research priorities for the science of service. <i>Journal of service research</i> , 13(1), 4-36.	2010	35.00	925.00	3.78
McColl-Kennedy et al. (2012). Health care customer value cocreation practice styles. <i>Journal of service research</i> , 15(4), 370-389.	2012	30.00	610.00	4.92
Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. <i>Marketing theory</i> , 13(1), 69-86.	2013	25.00	351.00	7.12
Sweeney et al. (2015). Customer effort in value cocreation activities: Improving quality of life and behavioral intentions of health care customers. <i>Journal of Service Research</i> , 18(3), 318-335.	2015	25.00	245.00	10.20
Kuppelwieser and Finsterwalder (2016). Transformative service research and service dominant logic: Quo Vaditis?. <i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i> , 28, 91-98.	2016	23.00	86.00	26.74
Zenker et al. (2017). Branding the destination versus the place: The effects of brand complexity and identification for residents and visitors. <i>Tourism management</i> , 58, 15-27.	2017	18.00	156.00	11.54
Black and Gallan (2015). Transformative service networks: cocreated value as well-being. <i>The Service Industries Journal</i> , 35(15-16), 826-845.	2015	17.00	87.00	19.54
Mende and van Doorn (2015). Coproduction of transformative services as a pathway to improved consumer well-being: Findings from a longitudinal study on financial counseling. <i>Journal of Service Research</i> , 18(3), 351-368.	2015	17.00	97.00	17.53
Fisk et al. (2018). Design for service inclusion: creating inclusive service systems by 2050. <i>Journal of Service Management</i> , 29(5), 834-858.	2018	16.00	127.00	12.60

Source: The author (2024)

The use of keywords is important for quickly classifying and summarizing articles, whether by topic, theory, method or context (Chen and Xiao, 2016). The initial database consists of 1215 author keywords and 1048 keywords-plus, which have been condensed into a keyword cookbook (Dabic et al., 2020; Vlacic et al., 2021) to carry out advanced statistical analyses (e.g., Keywords cocurrence network, MCA) without duplicate keywords, irrelevant keywords or ungrouped synonyms. The initial step is to draw up a Burt matrix (i.e., a dichotomous variables matrix with cells corresponding to "1" meaning that said keyword is

present and "0" if it is absent; Cuccurullo et al., 2016) whose grouping of synonyms was carried out based on the assessment of 3 senior academics with expertise in the subject. This resizing process resulted in a total of 44 author keywords and 59 keywords-plus, the most frequent of which are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 – Most used keywords

Author's keywords	Frequency	Keywords-plus	Frequency
Place branding	83	Branding	88
Transformative service research	80	Service	82
Well-being	66	Well-being	74
Agglomeration	68	City	65
Retail	47	Consumer	65
Value co-creation	44	Agglomeration	57
Place	38	Retail	51
Subjective well-being	37	Service design	48
Consumer well-being	35	Transformative service research	48
Attractiveness	36	Quality of life	47

Source: The author (2024)

It can be seen that the main keywords assigned by the authors are related to place branding, perceptions of well-being and services, as well as those generated by the journals. In addition, the ten best-ranked keywords represent approximately 44% of the total keywords used within the bibliographic sample, while this figure rises to almost 60% when it comes to the keywords automatically generated by the journals.

The analysis of keyword frequency corroborates the data shown in Table 5, demonstrating that studies on the attractiveness of a region go beyond marketing-related topics. Furthermore, it can be inferred that the articles with a high LC/GC ratio (i.e., above 10% for this sample) shown in Table 9 are key to defining future discussions on the role of service and the role of retailers in promoting local attractiveness, as the top three keywords correlate with studies on the life-changing potential of services provided in a region (Rosenbaum, 2015), the perception of quality of life as an influencer of local economic development (Hu et al, 2022) and the notion that geographical spaces have their own identities that can be branded (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013).

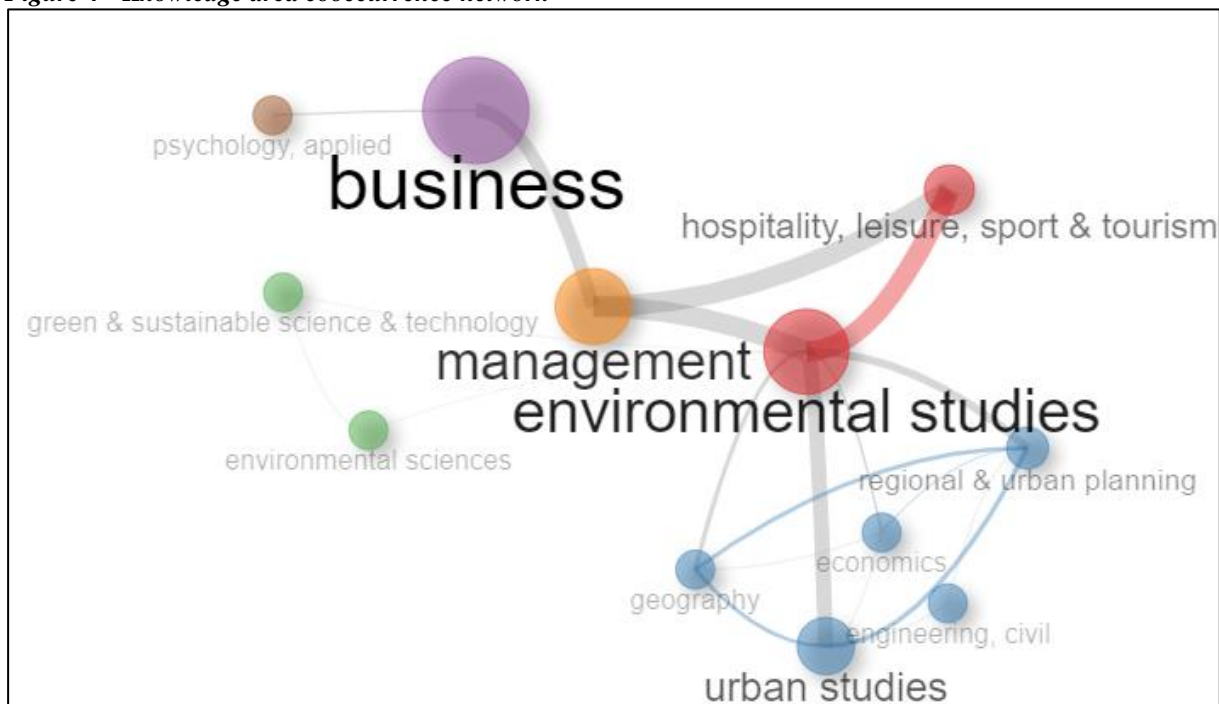
The descriptive survey is useful for gaining a general understanding of what the content of the bibliographic sample is about, but a more in-depth investigation into the conceptual and intellectual structure of the discussions held in the papers is based on more advanced statistical techniques presented below.

2.1.3 Bibliometric survey: science mapping

The main function of scientific mapping is to structure how a particular field of knowledge (e.g., a research topic or a specific discipline) is conceptually, intellectually and socially developed through graphic representations (Cobo et al., 2011). It is therefore necessary to understand how scientific discussions on the attractiveness of a location are carried out in the most different areas of knowledge, the findings that converge in the literature, the divergences and which research stream(s) go hand in hand. The following statistical analyses were carried out: knowledge area cooccurrence network; author's keywords cooccurrence network; bibliographic coupling of references; thematic map; co-citation network; and collaboration network.

The conceptual structure of an area of knowledge can be understood as the structuring of keywords with the aim of classifying knowledge into topics, identifying research gaps and future research trends (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). Figure 4 shows the different areas of knowledge and how they are interconnected within the bibliographic sample. It is worth noting that this classification was based on the web of science typology.

Figure 4 - Knowledge area cooccurrence network



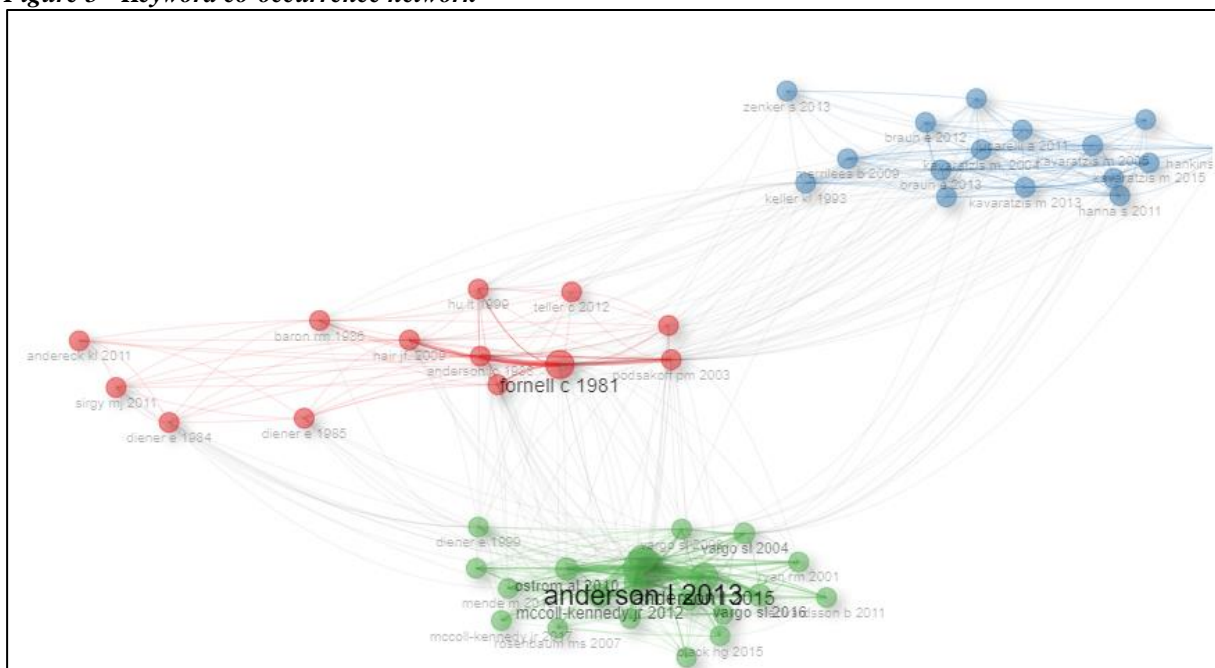
Source: The author (2024)

The high number of clusters compared to the number of disciplines (i.e., six clusters for twelve disciplines) is a strong indication of a multidisciplinary approach to investigating the phenomenon of local attractiveness. In addition, the influence of environmental studies and

tourism is noticeable as a link between studies developed in parallel areas of knowledge (i.e., business and management with urban studies, economics and geography).

Figure 5 shows a co-occurrence network based on the keywords designated by the authors of all the articles contained in the bibliographic sample, a common technique for graphically demonstrating how the main concept of a scientific topic is related (Eck and Waltman, 2009). Thus, three distinct clusters were calculated (i.e., blue, green and red cluster) based on centrality and ranking measures (i.e., betweenness centrality, closeness centrality, and pagerank algorithm) as a way of ascertaining the importance of a given keyword in the construction and speed of distribution of the information contained in the network (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017).

Figure 5 - Keyword co-occurrence network



Source: The author (2024)

The green cluster exerts a strong influence on the keyword network as a whole, as it has the two best keywords in terms of page rank algorithm, as well as well-positioned keywords in centrality measures (i.e., 2 in the top-5 for betweenness and 3 in the top five for closeness centrality). The statistical result corroborates a qualitative analysis of the content of each keyword, given that individuals' perceptions of well-being are closely linked to the design and provision of services (Anderson et al., 2018), meaning that key managerial outcomes such as customer value and satisfaction are direct results of Transformative Service Initiatives (i.e., TSI; Boenigk et al., 2021). The increase in people's well-being as a result of interaction with transformative services is one of the premises advocated by scholars involved in TSR (Rosenbaum et al., 2022), in which this logic of services as a transformative agent of local

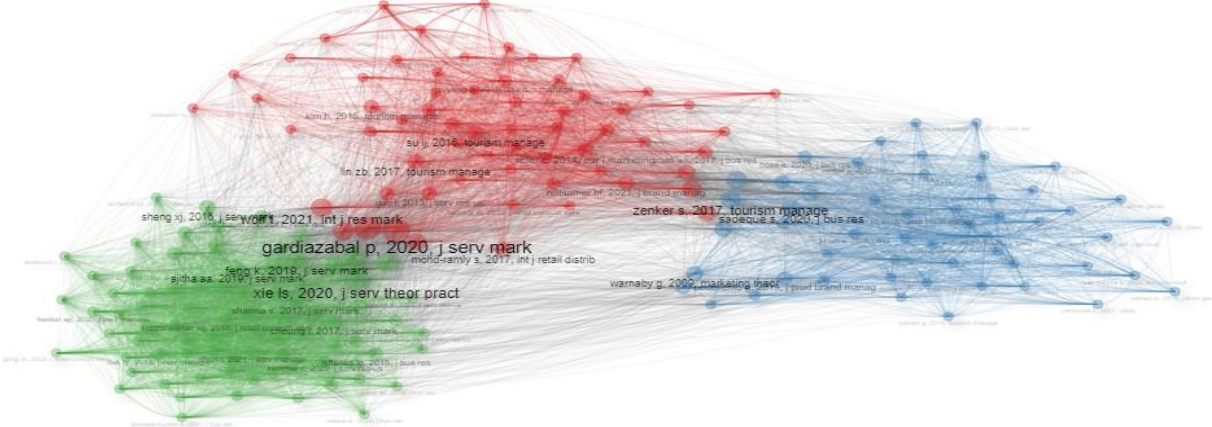
realities can generate positive evaluations of a given urban region (Kuppelwieser and Finsterwalder, 2016).

The blue cluster has a smaller influence than the green cluster, but its impact is largely dependent on just one basic keyword (i.e., place branding), as it is ranked in the top 5 in all the centrality and ranking measures used. Building a positive urban image is imperative for this place to be objectively well evaluated (Kavaratzis, 2005), demonstrating that the place is indeed attractive for living, working, investing or even as a source of leisure (Braun, 2012; Braun et al., 2013; Luccarelli and Cassell, 2020) when what happens in the daily life of the region (e.g., social interactions, commercial stabilishments, cultural activities) is properly communicated to people (Braun et al., 2014; Boisen et al., 2018).

The red cluster has a relevant influence among the three groupings of keywords (i.e., the best keyword in betweenness centrality and the two best positioned in the closeness centrality ranking), a mathematical fact that corroborates the intermediate position of this cluster in the previous graphical representation. In this way, the concepts of retail agglomeration and local attractiveness in their broadest definition are an important link to justify the impact of retailers and service providers in generating well-being in their customers in consumption situations or even in life evaluations (Gardiazabal et al., 2021; Jung et al., 2021) and how this can convert into positive evaluations of a space (e.g., shopping center, a neighborhood, or a city; Teller and Elms, 2012).

The use of a bibliographic coupling of references can be understood as an additional survey analysis of the conceptual structure of the area of knowledge studied. Figure 6 shows the network resulting from this coupling with all the references cited in the bibliographic dataset. Again, the statistical technique results in three major clusters: Place Branding, Transformative Service Research and Agglomeration.

Figure 6 - Bibliographic coupling



Source: The author (2024)

The premise of the first cluster refers to understanding how brands and locations shape each other (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008) to understand the agents, processes and discourses inherent in the development of branding for a specific location (Zenker and Braun, 2010).

This stream of research is often called interchangeably between place branding or city branding, an indication of the relatively short time of theoretical and empirical development on the phenomenon (Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020). Despite the confusion over the use of terminology and clear conceptualization among academics and professionals in the field, it is common sense that the concept of place branding is contained within the theoretical framework of place marketing (Zenker et al., 2017), meaning that PB is an integral part of the process of coordinated use of marketing tools focused on the customer and aimed at creating value for the stakeholders that make up an urban community (Braun, 2012). It is important to recognize what places mean to the people who live there and how promoting this recognition can support urban policies to develop benefits for residents, visitors and businesses (Boisen et al., 2018).

The work of Lucarelli and Berg (2011) demonstrates that practical and academic interest in how places combine and offer their attributes to diverse audiences is growing, where discussion starts as a simple promotional marketing strategy to a customizable and participatory project for developing sustainability and improving the local economy (Green et al., 2016). The process of building, developing and communicating places as brands is closely linked to the urban planning and socio-political environment of that place (Aydogmish and Rafieien, 2022; Lucarelli and Cassell, 2020).

The process of place branding is intrinsically complex because it involves a multiplicity of different stakeholders (e.g., residents, visitors, businesses) and, consequently, serves several audiences located in the same region (Zenker and Braun, 2017). As such, the identity of this place is constructed by the daily interaction between the narratives, discourses and experiences of its stakeholders with both the material and immaterial space (i.e., local infrastructure, place reputation, local institutions and norms, social relations, life experiences; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). This combination of complexity and particularity linked to a specific place shapes individuals' perceptions of their feelings towards the place (Martin and Capelli, 2018), attitudinal factors such as satisfaction, identification and attachment to the place (Zenker and Braun, 2017; Schade et al., 2018; Jain et al., 2022), and positive behaviors such as intention to visit or word-of-mouth (Braun et al., 2014). In this way, it is clear that the proactive stance of local stakeholders (e.g., business owners, residents, visitors, public officials) has an impact on the reputation and attractiveness of a region.

The second cluster refers to the research strand called TSR, a more holistic-oriented focus in which services are understood as drivers of improved individual and collective well-being (Anderson et al., 2013; Ostrom et al., 2010). As an emerging research stream situated at the intersection between Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) and service research (Nasr & Fisk, 2019), TSR is based on the ubiquity of services and their great transformative potential to generate impactful changes in the daily lives of all actors in the service network (e.g., consumers, employees, companies, communities, cities and nations) (Anderson et al., 2013; Ostrom et al., 2010). Thus, scholars focus on investigating performance outcomes from both for-profit and not-for-profit service initiatives across all levels of services systems (Johns, 2020), starting from the improvement of individual well-being throughout all nodes of the service network to enhanced quality of life and subjective well-being perceptions of service actors (Rosenbaum, 2015; Russell-Bennett, Fisk, Rosenbaum, & Zainuddin, 2019).

However, the interaction between individuals and services can sometimes yield experiences that are flawed, exclusionary, or inaccessible to certain populations. So, promoting the concept of service inclusion becomes imperative to enhance social well-being. This entails ensuring that service delivery enables individuals who were previously marginalized by the service network to access a range of choices, alleviates suffering stemming from inadequate service provision, and fosters happiness (Fisk et al., 2018). Moreover, the construct of well-being lacks a singular, clear-cut definition, instead presenting a hierarchical and complex conceptualization (Alkire et al., 2020). This conceptualization spans various dimensions, encompassing physical well-being (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2017), psychological well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), financial well-being (Brüggen, Högrove, Holmlund, Kabadayi, & Löfgren, 2017), and perceptions of quality of life (Russell-Bennett et al., 2019).

Understanding how each of the facets of well-being interact with each other makes it possible to better understand the power of services as a driver of social impact, since each aspect of well-being has an influence on an individual's decision to interact with a service (Anderson & Ostrom, 2015). Thus, it is entirely possible for individuals to make tradeoffs during service encounter (i.e., transformative service paradox), in which the temporal cue (i.e., short vs. long term) and the primary beneficiary of the decision (i.e., self vs. others) act as moderators of the final well-being decision (Russell-Bennett et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the interaction between various service actors can cause a chain reaction throughout the service network, causing transformative service initiatives to circulate through all service levels. Clarke & Hill (2012) denotes that the application of human resources practices (e.g., employee learning encouragement, leadership support, workplace health and

safety measures) enhance employee physical and psychological well-being, resulting in better evaluations by service users (e.g., higher service quality perception and satisfaction). Similarly, Nasr, Burton, Gruber, & Kitshoff (2014) highlights the positive impact of consumer positive feedback on successful service encounters, in which frontline employees who received compliments become happier and more motivated to do a good job, impacting in the improvement of the service provider overall experience and enhancing not only the firm's income but also the subjective well-being of the individuals who use the service.

Interestingly, not only how service actors interact amongst themselves is beneficial to foster social impact, but where this interaction occur. Rosenbaum et al. (2017a) highlight the importance of locality for building social well-being, changing the conceptualization of place from a physical or virtual space created to connect sellers to their potential consumers to place seen as both a location of utilitarian transactions and emotional attachment through social and restorative properties. In addition, Rosenbaum, Otolara, & Ramírez (2016) investigate these restorative properties of servicescapes within a retail setting, demonstrating that environmental stimuli interfere with consumer's individual and collective well-being perceptions, shopping satisfaction, patronage intention and willingness to recommend to others. Hence, service networks are important factors to consider when evaluating a place degree of attractiveness.

The third cluster is related to a multidisciplinary approach called agglomeration studies, in which its premise lies in understanding the impact of the spatial distribution of firms (e.g., industries, commerce, and services) and capital (e.g., financial, human, and social) on improving the attractiveness of a particular region (Glaeser, 2011; Teller, 2008).

Drawing from central place theory (Mulligan, 1984), spatial interaction theory (Reilly, 1931), and the principle of minimum differentiation (Hotelling, 1929), scholars elucidated the role of agglomeration effects (i.e., a large number of diverse firms within close proximity) as an important predictor for the growth of a region's productivity level, meaning that the improved standard of living brought about by agglomeration economies tends to increase the perception of quality of life in urban centers (Rappaport, 2009). Thus, the attractiveness of a city is directly related to the complex relationship between firm's spatial density and the desire of the individual to reside or work in that particular urban area (Glaeser, 2011), in which both the negative and positive spillover effects of urban growth can be mitigated or enhanced through amenities (i.e., region specific goods or services that affect regional attractiveness perceptions) (Zhang, Partridge, & Song, 2020).

The work of Rappaport (2008) elucidated the influence of consumption amenities on the relationship between economic opportunities and local quality of life, in which leisure

options and other related activities are considered strong predictors of urban agglomeration and real estate speculation in the United States. Partridge, Rickman, Ali, & Olfert (2009) demonstrate that the effect of distance from the center business district (CBD) is more onerous on average income and housing costs than the market potential bonus generated by agglomeration economies, whereas urban externalities accessibility and wage growth are more prevalent in metropolitan areas (Partridge et al., 2010), meaning that technology-intensive regions with a high concentration of industry and services enable more consumption amenities, increasing the perceived quality of life and attracting more individuals to work and live there (Rappaport, 2009).

Nonetheless, the New Zealand context studied by Morrison (2011) demonstrates that encouraging increased urban agglomeration can in fact decrease the subjective well-being of its residents. There is no surplus of quality of life with the increase in urban density alone, since although several contexts show that local economic development is stimulated by the increase in the number of firms (Engelen, Froud, Johal, Salento, & Williams, 2017; Granger & Blomquist, 1999; Wong, 2001), the negative effects arising from this phenomenon (i.e., traffic, air pollution, criminality, and urban construction) contribute to a lower happiness and perceived satisfaction with life of individuals (Liang, Wang, & Li, 2019; Morrison, 2011).

However, the formation and growth of agglomerations peripheral to the CBD (i.e., employment sub-centers) can be beneficial to some business because of the development of specific production externalities that generate more advantages to their specific sectors, making local consumption amenities more prevalent in the choice of where to live than commuting costs (Yang et al., 2019). Thus, the relationship between local economic development and education becomes even more desirable, since individuals with more education constitute a more qualified labor force, who seek a better quality of life by living near their workplace and demand greater access to local amenities (Dalmazzo & Blasio, 2011; Song, Zhang, & Wang, 2016; Winters, 2014).

In addition, Engelen et al. (2017) elucidates the need to rethink urban planning not as focused on competitiveness but rather on the development of public policies aimed at shared social welfare, considering the individual's sense of belonging to the region and socioeconomic particularities (Morris, 2019), culminating in higher quality public policies based on the real needs of local residents (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018). Hence, good public services derived from proper public policies are major drivers of improving the liveability of cities (Storper & Scott, 2009).

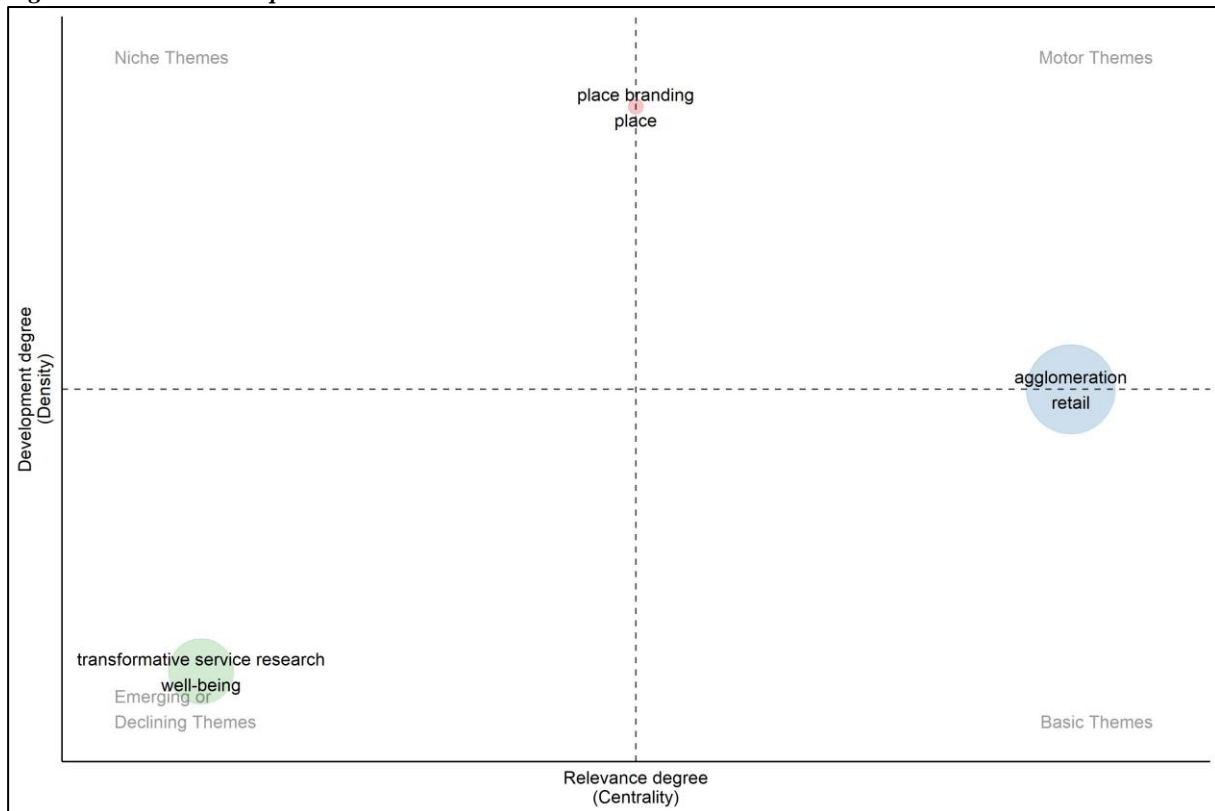
Once the conceptual structure has been mapped both via keywords and references, a third form of analysis to understand the research area is carried out via a thematic map, constructed using a two-dimensional diagram based on the degree of density and centrality of the themes (i.e., the level of development of the theme and its relative importance to the research area; Callon et al., 1991). This is a tool known for providing a simple visual representation of the main concepts on a given subject, in particular the distinction between basic, emerging or declining themes (Massimo and Cuccurullo, 2017).

The analysis of this graph requires the related keywords to be grouped into thematic networks (i.e., the circles present within the map) and the values of the horizontal axis (i.e., Callon's centrality) and vertical axis (i.e., Callon's density) to be divided into four quadrants: niche themes, driving themes, basic themes and emerging or declining themes (Cobo et al., 2011).

According to the typology of Cobo et al. (2011), topics with a high degree of centrality and density are positioned in the top right-hand corner of the map and are called driving topics, meaning that the theoretical discussion generated within this quadrant is conceptually close to the others to the point of exerting influence. Niche themes are located in the top left-hand corner because they have a low level of centrality combined with a high density, indicating that the internal discussion of the theme is close to each other, but there is no spillover to the other themes contained in the specific area of knowledge. Placing a thematic network in the bottom left corner (i.e., low density and centrality) denotes that these discussions are marginal to the theoretical basis of the discipline and can be considered declining topics because they are out of step with the evolution of the main discussion or an emerging topic that has recently become attractive. The fourth and final quadrant is called basic topics because it has a high degree of centrality and a low level of density, indicating that it is made up of initial concepts that are necessary for understanding the research area, but are not discussed or elaborated in depth.

Figure 7 shows the thematic map of the bibliographic dataset containing all 328 papers and their thematic networks grouped based on the authors' keywords, resulting in three clusters: Place branding, Transformative Service Research, and Agglomeration.

Figure 7 – Thematic map



Source: The author (2024)

The blue cluster is called an agglomeration and has the largest thematic network within the research area (i.e., circle with the largest diameter), as well as having a high level of centrality associated with a medium level of density. The thematic network in question lies at the intersection between basic themes and drivers, corroborating the inferences made from the blue cluster in Figure 6. Understanding the reasons that make a place attractive to various stakeholders is not a research interest exclusive to just one discipline (e.g., marketing or urban geography), meaning that there is theoretical development focusing on the location and distribution pattern of firms within an urban area, as well as understanding why a group of retailers are located in close proximity and how this can be managed in a way that is beneficial to the multiplicity of stakeholders involved (de Cosmo et al., 2022).

This cluster is considered a driver of the general discussion on the attractiveness of a region because economic discussions stemming from agglomeration economies reinforce the macro role of urban planning and public policies (Bonakdar and Audirac, 2020) in the general positive evaluation by individuals, while investigating the impact of retail agglomerations elucidates how the integration of individual stores improves performance and generates consequences for the urban location in which they are inserted (e.g., the surroundings of the

shopping center, a neighborhood or even the city itself; Alexander et al., 2016). The two research fronts are complementary because there is a two-way influence between the performance of the retail agglomeration and the economic and financial performance of a city (Alexander et al., 2020), meaning that both a top-down (i.e., city to minor agglomeration) and bottom-up (i.e., agglomeration to city) approach are interesting for the area of knowledge.

The green cluster is called transformative service research and has the second largest thematic network (i.e., circle with a medium diameter), as well as low density and centrality values. The configuration of this thematic network places it in the lower left quadrant and it can be classified as an emerging or declining theme. The classification as an emerging theme is justified on the basis of two factors: time of existence and relevance of the theme.

The work of Anderson et al. (2013) is considered to be the initial proponent of TSR as an area of research, advancing the propositions of Ostrom et al. (2010) on the ubiquity of services and their impact on everyday life by pointing out that these are not necessarily fair and accessible to all, pushing forward a research agenda focused on service provision aimed at improving the well-being of individuals. Ten years have passed since the seminal publication on the subject, and new updates on the field's research priorities remain in vogue (Rosenbaum et al., 2022). However, some discussions remain seen as important within the thematic network: the use of the dominant logic of services as a theoretical basis (Vargo and Lusch, 2004); the recognition of the existence of vulnerable individuals who should be the target of transformative services (Rosenbaum et al., 2017b); service design as a tactic for building good service provision (Teixeira et al., 2019); value co-creation as an imperative in generating good services (Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser, 2020); the well-being of all the actors involved in the service as the main objective of SRT (Anderson et al., 2013).

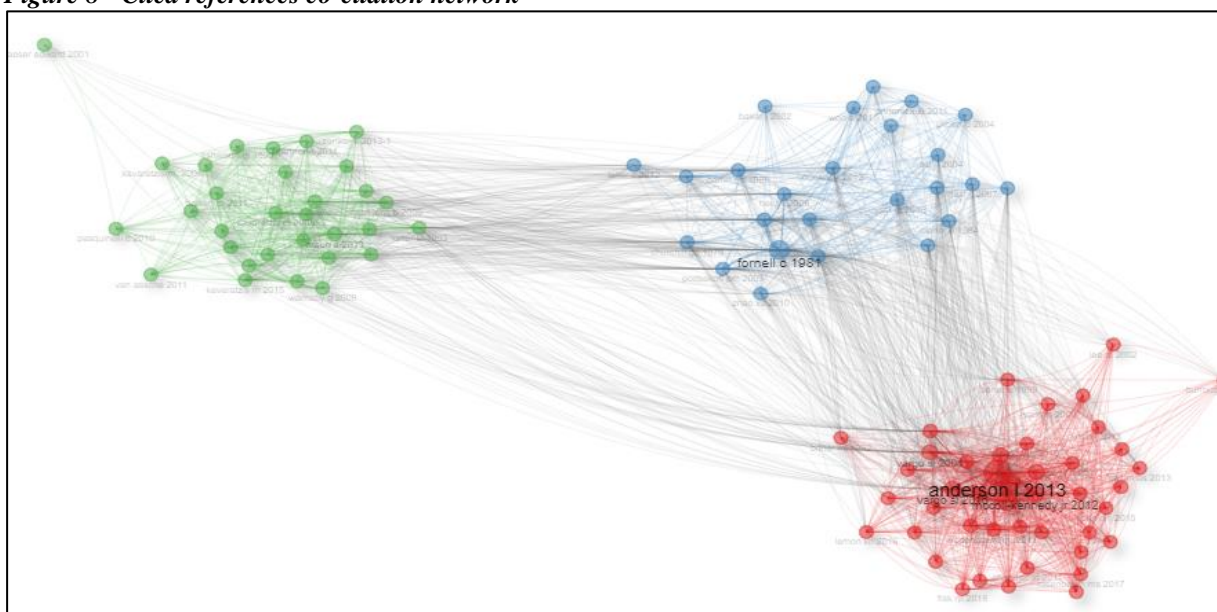
In this way, it is possible to detect the importance of this thematic network within the phenomenon of local attractiveness from a bottom-up perspective of influence on the city's image. A service strategy based on a value constellation leads to good service encounters from the customer's point of view (Patrício et al., 2011), meaning that the provision of services has a direct impact on the evaluation of a company or professional service provider, a shopkeeper or retail cluster, a tourist destination and even a region as a whole (Alexander et al., 2020). The frequency and intensity of interaction with the service provided is a factor that influences the degree of attractiveness of a physical commercial space (e.g., single store, shopping center, shopping mall) and that affects the evaluation of the image of the geographical region (e.g., neighborhood, city, country) in which the services were provided.

The red cluster is called place branding and has the smallest thematic network within the research area (i.e., circle with the smallest diameter), as well as having a high level of density associated with a medium level of centrality. The thematic network in question lies at the intersection between motor and niche themes, a finding in line with the co-occurrence of keywords shown in Figure 6. The understanding that different geographical regions compete for scarce resources drives agents (e.g., policymakers, marketing professionals, government employees) to use marketing tools to build a competitive edge for their locality (Ashworth and Karavatzis, 2009), since the construction and management of a city's image as a consequence of geographical competition (Zenker, 2011) is seen as the basic discussion of this thematic network.

The discussions contained in this thematic network are focused on a few distinct concepts (i.e., focus on a few keywords, as also seen in Figure 6), which explains its high density. However, its medium centrality value is due to its conceptual interaction with the other clusters, as the performance of high street retail agglomerations has a direct impact on a city's image (Alexander et al., 2020) and this commercial performance is closely linked to the quality of the services provided (Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser, 2020).

The second stage of scientific mapping consists of mapping the intellectual structure of the research area, or identifying the most influential authors, documents or research sources (Khare and Jain, 2022). Figure 8 shows the co-citation network using all the references cited in the bibliographic sample. In line with the thematic map, the same three clusters were identified: Place branding, Transformative Service Research and Agglomeration.

Figure 8 - Cited references co-citation network



Source: The author (2024)

The green cluster is on the left of the map and its main internal discussions focus on place branding. Thus, notable works within this subject aim to develop processes for building a region's sustainable competitive advantage (i.e., usually at the city or country level; Braun et al., 2018), understanding the constraints that mitigate or enhance the impact of the promotional tool in achieving the brand's ideals (Zenker and Braun, 2017), and the influence of local discourses and narratives on the region's degree of attractiveness (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013).

The basic theoretical argument derives from the concept of brand knowledge (Keller, 1993) to demonstrate the multidimensionality of places as brands and associate place branding as a constituent of the place marketing "toolkit" (Hanna et al., 2021). However, the degree of complexity of the phenomenon entails conceptual association with various other disciplines (e.g., urban studies, psychology, geography; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011), such as: cultural geography (Agnew, 1987); environmental psychology (Altman and Low, 1992); organizational identity (Hatch and Schultz, 2002); social identity theory (Hogg, 2016). In addition, there is a diversity of methodologies employed, as conceptualization efforts continue to generate literature reviews (Green et al., 2016; Aydogmish and Rafieian, 2022), while there are also empirical investigations of a qualitative (Lucarelli and Cassell, 2020), correlational (Zenker et al., 2017) and experimental (Bauer et al., 2018) nature.

The blue cluster is located in the central region of the map and its main internal discussions focus on understanding agglomeration economies, especially commercial agglomerations (i.e., high street retail centers or shopping malls; Teller, 2008).

One aspect of this cluster is that cities are composed of patterns of allocation and concentration of firms to improve economic productivity (Glaeser et al., 2001), directly influencing patterns of movement of skilled labor (Dalmazzo and Blasio, 2011; Winters, 2014), transport networks (Carlino and Saiz, 2019; Cortés and Iturra, 2019), wages and real estate speculation (Partridge et al., 2009, 2010). Perceived quality of life is a direct result of agglomeration effects (Rappaport, 2009) and can be measured via secondary data such as: GDP per capita; housing and labor costs; population density; commuting times; and distance to essential facilities (Glaeser and Gottlieb, 2009).

A second strand of this cluster argues that physical retail is still relevant because its concentration in commercial hubs brings benefits to shopkeepers, consumers and the region in which they are located (Teller and Reutterer, 2008). In this way, the spatial configuration of the retail agglomeration and its consequent catchment area are decisive for the survival and economic performance of tenants and service providers (Dolega et al., 2016), as well as influencing consumers' subjective evaluations (Gardiazabal et al., 2021). Many of these

investigations are based on primary data (e.g., consumer surveys) and analyzed using structural equation modeling (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, location models from the discipline of urban geography (i.e., central place theory, spatial interaction theory, and the principle of minimum differentiation) are classic theories used in studies of this cluster (see Reigadinha et al. (2017) for a comparative discussion between the three theories), while the stimulus-organism-response paradigm (i.e., S-O-R) is also used as a theoretical basis for understanding the impact of retail cluster stimuli on consumer behavior (Teller and Thomson, 2012; Blut et al., 2018).

The red cluster is located to the right of the map and its main internal discussions focus on the construction of a service journey and the transformative power of services. Recognizing the massive presence of services in our daily lives, it becomes possible to infer that they have an impact on our perception of well-being (Anderson and Ostrom, 2015) from the individual level to macro levels such as a community or neighborhood (Previte and Robertson, 2019).

The planning of the service offer is crucial for an offer that is consistent with the company's value proposition, to the point that the customer wants to participate in this process in an interactive way (Anderson et al., 2018), meaning that the transformative potential of the services provided derives from the intention to go beyond economic performance and enhance the well-being of the people involved with the service via enabling opportunity, offering choice, relieving suffering and fostering happiness (Fisk et al., 2018). The dominant logic of service (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) acts as an important theoretical basis in the development of studies within this cluster, while there is a multiplicity of methods employed, ranging from qualitative (Nasr et al., 2014), correlational (Mulcahy et al., 2018) and experimental (Russell-Bennett et al., 2020) approaches.

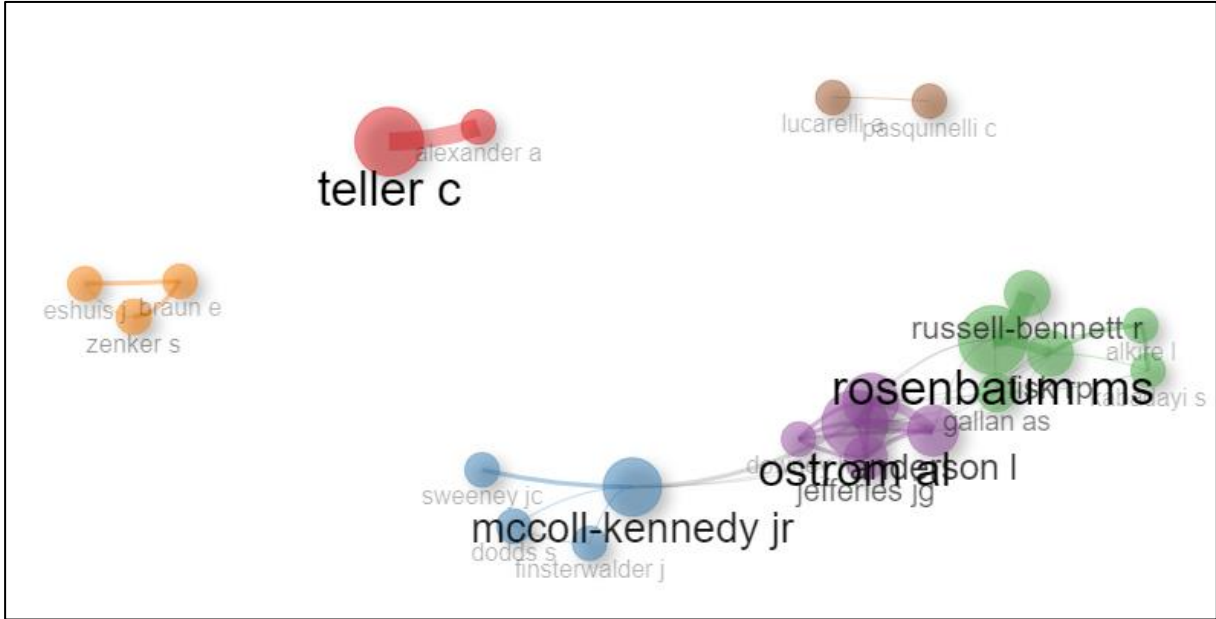
Cluster isolation, wherein a cluster lacks connections to any other, is absent in this analysis, with each cluster linked to the others. This suggests a shared conceptual framework among the three research streams, potentially leading to converging discussions despite their typically parallel nature. For instance, while one cluster emphasizes the pivotal role of service provision in enhancing the well-being of target consumers (Troebbs, 2018; Fisk et al., 2018), another delves into the design and implementation of public policies to elevate individuals' standard of living (Glaeser, 2011; Rodriguez-pose, 2018). Nevertheless, it's recognized that bolstering a place's brand image is a bidirectional and concurrent process (Alexander et al., 2020). Thus, both avenues for improving quality of life—through targeted service initiatives or locally tailored public policies—contribute to fostering a sense of belonging (Morris, 2019) and subsequently enhancing the place's image positively (Boisen et al., 2018).

In addition, the individual's interaction with local commerce has a significant contribution to build a place brand (Teller and Elms, 2012), especially in tourist destinations (Uysal et al., 2016). A service strategy that aims to deliver consistent value (Zomerdijk and Voss, 2010) boosts the economic performance and image not only of a single shopkeeper, but also of those who indirectly benefit from the union of retailers and service providers in the same geographical space (Wei et al., 2021). Nevertheless, commercial regions that are objectively more attractive than their surroundings influence the entire distribution of capital (e.g., social, financial and human; Glaeser, 2011), while also impacting on political relations between cities (Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020).

In this way, concepts from service theory are important for understanding phenomena related to geographical competition (e.g., agglomeration economies, local attractiveness, and place branding), while theory-building related to location factors and the clustering of firms, the construction of regional brand identities, and public policies are interesting for conditioning or contextualizing service situations.

Mapping the literature based on data on authorship, co-authorship, educational institutions and host country is called social structure and serves to examine the main existing scientific collaboration networks (Massimo and Cuccurullo, 2017). Figure 9 shows the relationship between the authors contained in the bibliographic dataset.

Figure 9 - Author's collaboration network



Source: The author (2024)

The data indicates that networking between academics takes place in parallel groups. Despite the multidisciplinary nature of the topic in question, multi-author papers are only developed between experts with the same research interests (e.g., agglomeration, TSR and place branding). In addition, many of the strongest links between academics are with professionals from native English-speaking institutions (US, UK, and Australia).

The most cohesive group in terms of quantity and variety of publications is that of researchers with an interest in transformative service research. There is a prevalence of editorials or position papers with a high number of participants (Anderson et al, 2013; Fisk et al, 2018; Russell-Bennett et al, 2019; Rosenbaum et al, 2022), the use of the medical services context as a background for service theorizing (Mccoll-Kennedy et al., 2012; Sweeney et al., 2015; Mccoll-Kennedy et al., 2017; Anderson et al., 2018), and the interaction between services and technology (Rosenbaum and Russell-Bennett, 2021; Parkinson et al., 2022). A high average number of co-authors per publication within this theme corroborates the performance metrics demonstrated in the previous section (i.e., high LC/GC ratio, high local citations and h index).

A second collaborative network of authors is focused on the study of retail agglomerations, with Professor Cristoph Teller at the center of this collaborative network. Studies on the determining attributes of retail agglomerations (Teller and Thomson, 2012; Blut et al., 2018; Murray et al., 2019), the role of the retail agglomeration manager (Teller and Alexander, 2014; Alexander et al., 2016), retail agglomeration performance as a function of the interaction between its tenants (Teller et al., 2016b) are relevant topics for the theme led by these authors.

The third collaborative network focuses on place branding studies, with researchers Sebastian Zenker, Erik Braun, Massimo Giovanardi and Andrea Lucarelli as exponents of the subject. Thus, topics such as the interaction between residents and place brand (Zenker et al., 2017), place brand communication effectiveness (Braun et al., 2014), city branding repositioning (Giovanardi et al., 2013; Belabas, 2020), and the relationship between public policy and place branding (Lucarelli, 2018; Lucarelli and Cassel, 2020) are seen as prominent discussions within this theme.

The descriptive analysis and scientific mapping allowed for a detailed diagnosis of how the phenomenon of local attractiveness has been studied over the last twenty years, with a special focus on detecting the commonalities and divergent points between the different disciplines contained in the bibliographic sample. The next step consists of explaining the basic concepts and how they interrelate within the general discussion, meaning that moving towards

an alignment of the perspective of services, retail agglomerations and place branding into a single theoretical framework.

2.2 CONCEPT REFINEMENT AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

SLR has proved necessary to elucidate the importance of local attractiveness as an interesting object of research within a wide range of disciplines (i.e., service theory, spatial economic models, marketing). However, it is necessary to understand a series of concepts from these areas of research. The list of concepts, their definition and notorious papers is shown in Table 11.

Table 11 – Main concepts

Concept	Definition	Aliases	Related papers
Store attributes	Stimuli present inside or outside the store that constitute the retailer's general offers	Store stimuli	Baker et al. (2002) Bloch et al. (2018) Li et al. (2023)
Servicescape	Service encounter physical surroundings that enable customer-employee interactions	Service environment Service setting	Bitner (1992) Turley and Milliman (2000) Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011)
Servicescape experience	Consumer's evaluations derived from long-term interaction with the stimuli and stakeholders present in the servicescape of a store or retail agglomeration	Servicescape knowledge	Pareigis et al. (2012)
Service design	A human-centered, creative, and iterative approach to service innovation	Service blueprinting Service systems	Zomerdijk and Voss (2010) Patricio et al. (2011) Teixeira et al. (2019)
Service strategies	Design, planning and management of customized service processes	Service management	Wieland et al. (2017)
Retail agglomeration	A group of retailers concentrated in the same geographical area	Retail format	Teller (2008) Teller et al. (2016) Alexander et al. (2020)
Consumer well-being	Consumer satisfaction with varied marketplace experiences	Consumer life satisfaction	Sirgy et al. (2007) Sirgy (2021) Eshaghi et al. (2023)
Subjective well-being	Individual's evaluations about their position in life	Overall life satisfaction	Diener (1984) Diener et al. (2010)
Quality of life	Subjective weighted evaluation about several life domains and cultural significant indicators	Overall well-being	Cummins (1997) Constanza (2007)
Agglomeration	Perception of how much a retail agglomeration is seen as an ideal shopping destination	General attractiveness Situational attractiveness Sustainable attractiveness	Teller and Reuterrer (2008) Alexander et al. (2020)

Table 11 – Main concepts (End)

Concept	Definition	Aliases	Related papers
Neighborhood attractiveness	Perception of how much a residential location is seen as an ideal place to live	Neighborhood love	Lewicka et al. (2011) Kourtit et al. (2022)
Place promotion	Communication of place-related images to gather attention of target audiences	Place marketing communications	Goi (2009) Boisen et al (2018)
Place branding	a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioral expression of a place and its' stakeholders	City branding	Zenker and Braun (2017) Boisen et al (2018)
Place marketing	Usage of marketing tools supported by a shared customer-oriented philosophy to develop and deliver valued urban offerings to individuals and the community at large	Destination marketing	Braun (2008) Boisen et al (2018)
Place identity	Ideas about a place created through local reputation's mental representations	Place-based identity	Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013)
Place attachment	Emotional bond between person and place	Place-based attachment	Altman and Low (1992) Brocato et al. (2015)

Source: The author (2024)

The connection between the perspective of services, retail and branding can be tied together conceptually by including the flow of research into well-being and quality of life as a mechanism that better explains the relationship between the role of local retailers and the attractiveness of the region.

The logic of the stimulus-organism-response paradigm was chosen as the basis for structuring the following concepts, as its postulates derived from environmental psychology indicate that the individual's interaction with the stimuli presented in the environment (i.e., the stimuli component - S) results in approach or avoidance behaviors (i.e., the response outcome - R) after internal processing of this information (i.e., the organism mediator - O; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

This tripartite relationship is considered robust by current literature when explaining consumer behavior in single-store shopping situations (Roschk et al., 2017), retail agglomerations (Teller and Thomson, 2012; Blut et al., 2018), and place branding (Teller and Elms, 2012; Aydogmish and Rafieien, 2022). Thus, it is argued that the stimuli arising from the interaction with the provision of services and neighborhood retail (e.g., visual, social) make up the first stage of the theoretical model, followed by the perception of well-being caused by this interaction as an organismic mediator of the impact on the final responses of residents via evaluations of the attractiveness of the place at ascending levels of geographic occupation (e.g., starting in the vicinities of the shopping center and extrapolating to larger areas such as the neighborhood or city in which they reside).

2.2.1 Neighborhood retail sensory stimuli

The composition of a retailer's or service provider's offer is considered to be a decision of high strategic value, since the company's performance is closely linked to the convincing power of the constituents of this offer (e.g., product, price, store layout, signage) in eliciting positive attitudes and behaviors in customers (Baker et al., 2002). Thus, it is argued that the store attribute is the basic unit of analysis of the retailer's role as an influencer of consumer behavior, since individuals use mental models with multiple weighted attributes (Oliver, 1980) to evaluate whether the experience in this commercial establishment was a success or not (Mittal et al., 1998).

It should be noted that not only the optimization of these attributes arouses managerial interest, but also the place and form in which they are exposed to the public (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982). Components of the store atmosphere (e.g., visuals, sounds, smells, other consumers, employees) are simultaneously present in the physical space of the commercial establishment and act as cognitive-emotional evaluative cues in the customer's purchasing decision-making process (Vieira, 2013). Thus, the stimuli contained within the store exert an influence on various potential customer reactions, such as: satisfaction, word-of-mouth, purchase intention, patronage intention, frequency of purchase, and store choice (Pan and Zinkhan, 2006; Roschk et al., 2017; Blut et al., 2018).

In addition, the components of the store's exterior also contribute to persuading passers-by to frequent the store, since the stimuli present outside the shopping environment (e.g., store façade, building architecture, congruence with street landscaping) are also evaluated by people as indicative of the store's attractiveness and image (Bloch and Kamran-Disfani, 2018). This

means that, from the retailer's point of view, store attributes are useful tools for conveying favorable messages to their consumers and potential customers (Li et al., 2023).

Reducing the shopping environment into a mere aggregation of individual store attributes proves inadequate due to the intricate interactions at play and the personalized evaluation process conducted by each consumer (Yokoyama et al., 2022). Retail environments garner favorability among consumers when their integrated services receive positive assessments (Bonfrer et al., 2021). Understanding the entirety of the service offer construction process is imperative, encompassing not only tangible attributes but also the symbolic and social dimensions inherent within the store environment (Bitner, 1992). Thus, store attributes constitute integral elements of the servicescape, shaping the environment within which services are conceived, delivered, and appraised (Turley and Milliman, 2000). This conceptualization of service environments as adaptable consumption spaces necessitates a strategic perspective across all stages of service provision, from conceptualization and planning to execution (Li et al., 2023). Consequently, retailers aspiring to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage must invest in developing a comprehensive service strategy, one that crafts appealing services tailored to their target consumers, with a primary focus on enhancing the customer experience (Ailawadi et al., 2009).

Initial efforts to understand the sub-processes inherent in services and their orderly sequencing began with service chain mapping techniques (Shostack, 1982), while current analyses use the concept of service design (i.e., combining design tools and service methodologies to improve the quality-of-service provision; Teixeira et al., 2019) to co-create service systems with a high value proposition for their customers (Patricio et al., 2018).

This point of view is consistent with the reformulations of the concept of servicescape advocated by Bitner (1992), since a reconciliation between different stakeholders is the basis for the emergence of various positive social evaluations stemming from the servicescape, such as: interaction between employee-customer and customer-customer as a strengthener of social ties (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003; Parish et al., 2008); emotions derived from contact with the consumer environment (Mari and Poggesi, 2013; Elliot et al., 2013); attachment to the place through social stimuli (Sun et al., 2021); cultural manifestations (Figueiredo et al., 2021); self-image associations (Breazeale and Ponder, 2013; Lunardo et al., 2016); and social interactions derived from symbolic-natural stimuli (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011).

It is worth noting that the investigation of all this complexity between store attributes and their corresponding human interactions is not limited to a specific type of store but can also be extrapolated to retail formats (Alexander et al., 2016). The concentration of several

companies in a specific geographical location is conceptualized as agglomeration, the aim of which is to generate greater productivity and economic growth by generating cost savings from this geographical concentration (Teller, 2008).

From a traditional retail perspective, the location of the point of sale is a critical decision conditioned by the area of influence of the business (Dolega et al., 2016). There is a tendency for retailers to strengthen the resilience of their business by establishing themselves in close proximity to each other as a way of having a more attractive single offer (i.e., the retail agglomeration; Teller and Reutterer, 2008).

This spatial constitution can bring economic and image benefits for the associated tenants (Wei et al., 2021), but it also adds new complexities by making it necessary to consider the layout of stores (de Cosmo et al., 2022), logistics chain configurations (Teller et al., 2012), cooperation and competition relationships (Teller et al., 2016a), and interactions between stakeholders inside and outside the retail format (Alexander et al., 2020).

In this way, the retail agglomeration's servicescape is made up of the union of the interior and exterior attributes of each of the existing stores plus their interaction with the urban environment (Rosenbaum et al., 2020). Consequently, evaluating a geographically larger consumer space, both in terms of area and in terms of encompassing units of analysis (i.e., the focus is no longer on a single store but on a retail agglomeration) constitutes a higher level of cognitive effort on the part of the consumer.

The sensory component of neighborhood retail is presented to individuals via the servicescape experience, which includes objective (e.g., satisfaction, patronage intention) and subjective (e.g., pleasure, sociability) evaluations of store attributes related to the retail marketing-mix at two levels: positioning of stimuli (i.e., interior or exterior) and unit of analysis (i.e., single store or retail agglomeration). In addition, the maintenance of this servicescape occurs not only organically via interaction between the individuals present in the environment, but also through the implementation of service strategies and design.

2.2.2 Resident's well-being perceptions as an organism

The SOR model postulates that the impact of environmental stimuli generates specific responses when they are processed internally by the individual (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). In this way, the emotional states elicited by the interpretation of the environmental stimulus are the mechanisms used (consciously or not) to derive experiential and psychological responses (Mehrabian, 1996). From this perspective, stimuli present in the servicescape of a store or retail

agglomeration result in affective, cognitive or conative responses when filtered by the consumer's temperament (Bakker et al., 2014; Das and Varshneya, 2017).

It is argued that the emotional link that relates the store attributes of a neighborhood retailer to responses derived from interaction with the servicescape of the local retail agglomeration is the assessment of the quality of life perceived by the individual.

The growing interest in investigating aspects of quality of life in academia is due to both its theoretical and practical importance and its interdisciplinary nature (Rapley, 2003). However, the high degree of complexity of the concept creates challenges for an integrated definition and measurement across disciplines (Maturo et al., 2019). Assessed in the light of the social sciences, three pillars are necessary for a clear conceptualization of QoL: universality, multidimensionality, and comprehensiveness (Boelhouver and Bijl, 2017). The first pillar refers to the imperative of invariance between groups or individuals, meaning that the components that make up perceived quality of life are the same for everyone. The second denotes that it is necessary to consider both individual and collective aspects of life, while the third emphasizes the long-term nature of this concept (Sirgy et al., 2006a).

Thus, the term quality of life can be understood as an umbrella term that encompasses a combinatorial assessment of various aspects of life (Cummins, 2005), modeled on the basis of an individual's well-being function composed of objective factors (i.e., culturally relevant indicators of standard of living) and subjective factors (i.e., individual's weighted needs satisfaction; Cummins, 1997). Alternative conceptualizations indicate that QoL is an assessment of general well-being based on dimensions of well-being (e.g., physical, mental, emotional, social) conditioned by the individual's set of values (Felce and Perry, 1995), or the degree to which human needs are met based on individual or collective perceptions of subjective well-being (Costanza et al., 2007).

The historical construction of the concept of quality of life is useful in demonstrating that complex concepts often lack context and stratification for a more in-depth understanding of the subject. The organismic function of the perception of quality of life contained in an SOR model aimed at assessing the attractiveness of local urban regions lies in understanding the different types of well-being elicited in this region. Thus, it is important to investigate how the interaction between types of well-being contributes to the formation of an overall positive evaluation of well-being for the people who live there.

This evaluation is closely related to the concept of subjective well-being, known as an internal and intrinsic evaluation of the individual comparing their current life condition with their ideal life (Diener, 1984), carried out through a mental model based on cognitive and

emotional weightings (i.e., satisfaction with life, negative emotions and positive emotions; Diener, 1985). Thus, people who claim to have a good life have had good experiences throughout their life cycle (Diener et al., 1999), in which the recognition of this well-being comes from a weighting of the satisfaction obtained from these life experiences (Diener et al., 2010).

This logic of the satisfaction hierarchy is in line with the precepts of the Bottom-Up Spillover Theory (i.e., BUST) in inferring that an individual's life satisfaction is the result of satisfaction in specific spheres of a person's life (e.g., personal, professional, family life; Lance et al., 1989), meaning that meeting the needs of a specific daily situation linked to a specific life domain has the potential to extrapolate to an overall assessment of life satisfaction (Headey et al., 1991). Further studies using BUST as a theoretical lens demonstrate that an increase in satisfaction in different spheres of life further increases their satisfaction with life (Pavot and Diener, 2008), specific life domains are mediators in the relationship between life experiences and satisfaction with life (Kjell et al., 2016), and this mediating effect is conditioned by individuals' attitudes and life stage (Kjell and Diener, 2021).

From this perspective, it should be noted that our daily lives are permeated by experiences of consumption (Ostrom et al., 2010), in which the impact of consumption on the lives of residents of a retail agglomeration is considered important in weighing up the subjective well-being of the individual. Living in a location characterized by commercial activity brings particularities when compared to a strictly residential area, such as: the need for a specific spatial configuration (Colombo and Hou, 2021); urban infrastructure (de Cosmo et al., 2022); job offer (Haltiwanger et al., 2010); housing (Zhang et al., 2023) and leisure options (Charton-Vachet and Lombart, 2018).

However, the greater flow of capital enhances the existence of consumer relationships as life experiences that can be extrapolated by the individual, indicating that consumer life is a relevant facet of life for building overall life satisfaction. Thus, consumer well-being is imperative for understanding customer behavior within the servicescape (Sirgy, 2021).

Like the concepts of QoL and SWB, conceptualizing CWB in a concise way is an arduous task due to its plurality and confusion with other similar concepts (Eshaghi et al., 2023). A common point in the current literature is that this concept refers directly to consumer experiences and their results, meaning that consumer satisfaction is derived from interactions with brands, products and the marketplace (Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2010, 2012). In addition, there is a directly proportional relationship between consumer well-being and consumer quality of life (Sirgy et al., 2007), whose potential for extrapolation ranges from

specific consumption situations to levels of collective abstraction such as community and societal well-being (Sirgy, 2021).

It is possible to establish a hierarchy of satisfaction by arguing that consumption experiences represent life situations that can fulfill needs aimed at a specific life domain (i.e., CWB as a consumer life domain), in which there is the potential to extrapolate to general evaluations of a good life (i.e., SWB as a general life domain) when evaluated by individuals who consider consumption to be an important aspect of their lives.

In a neighborhood retail situation, the servicescape of the local retail agglomeration becomes a background for the realization of consumption experiences (i.e., social, commercial and emotional interactions in a shopping environment), influencing in the long run not only how people evaluate the well-being derived from that shopping center, but also how good it is to live in that place. The integration between neighborhood retail agglomeration stimuli and responses about local attractiveness is mediated by the mechanism of perceived quality of life, which is subdivided into two components: objective well-being factors (e.g., housing, income, local infrastructure); and subjective well-being factors (i.e., CWB as a concrete life domain that extrapolates to the more abstract level of life satisfaction - SWB).

2.2.3 Local attractiveness assessments as responses

The final stage of Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) tripartite model denotes that the internal processing of stimuli present in the environment leads to behaviors of approaching or avoiding the area. Interaction with store attributes contained in a retail environment is an important input for the development of favorable evaluations about the place of consumption (e.g., visiting the place more often, staying longer, and recommending it to friends and family), especially when the individual's hierarchy of needs is met (Zenker et al., 2017).

In a neighborhood retail context, it is argued that the main environmental responses are directly related to the assessment of the attractiveness of the geographic region (Kourtit et al., 2022a), stratified into two main levels: attractiveness of the retail agglomeration as a more concrete level, and attractiveness of the neighborhood as a higher level of complexity and geographic scope.

A place is perceived as attractive when the resources present in this space are desired by a specific group (Kourtit et al., 2022b). The composition of these resources is diverse (e.g., infrastructure, work, housing, leisure options, landscape), and they can be combined into a unique offer of services for a particular target audience, such as: residents (Zenker et al., 2017; Gilboa and Jaffe, 2021); tourists (Levy and Hassay, 2005; Kim et al., 2013; Rasoolimanesh et

al., 2017); consumers (Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin, 2021); and businesses (Singh et al., 2022). Thus, a location with a high degree of attractiveness is able to attract greater amounts of foreign capital investment (Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020), a constant flow of tourists (Uysal et al., 2016), real estate appreciation (Zhang et al., 2023), skilled labor (Winters, 2014), and high customer traffic (Alexander et al., 2020).

In a context of retail spatial competition, traditional high street retailers are concentrating geographically on the same area as a strategy for maintaining economic performance and building a unified offer of stores and service providers. Teller's (2008) classical typology distinguishes between evolved and created retail formats (i.e., synonym of retail agglomeration). The former is conceptualized as brick-and-mortar shops converging into a single central point of the city, whereas ownership is divided among several members and cooperation between individual retailers is optional. Conversely, a created retail format is defined as an union of outlets intentionally planned and built in a single location and managed in a centralized manner. In addition, Teller & Reutterer (2008) conceptualise agglomeration attractiveness as a multidimensional construct composed of general, situational, and sustainable attractiveness. The first refers to an overall assessment of the customer experience and is considered synonymous with satisfaction. The second is related to the time spent shopping and the likelihood that the customer will continue to circulate in the cluster after arrival, while the third sub dimension refers to the consumer's intention to frequent the same place again in the future.

This commercial hub represents a component of the urban fabric of the location, with a primary function of providing consumer experiences (El Hedhli et al., 2021). However, the degree of complexity of the relationship between stakeholders present in the retail cluster (e.g., customer-customer, customer-employee, employee-retailer, and retailer-retailer interactions) denotes the importance of social and contextual factors in strengthening the commercial region as attractive to firms and consumers (Falter and Hadwich, 2020).

This view is analogous to the BUST hierarchy since it assesses both commercial and social interactions that occurs within a neighborhood retail agglomeration, whereas these contribute to the extrapolation of local attractiveness at higher geographical levels. Assuming that the next level of geographical division within urban space is the neighborhood in which the retail agglomeration is contained, this can be understood as a combination of people and spaces linked physically and symbolically to an urban region (Kallus and Law-Yone, 2000).

An attractive neighborhood is objectively better evaluated than its surroundings, as its characteristics are seen as desirable and interesting to a population (Chhetri et al., 2006). This

attractiveness derives from the combination of the "body" (i.e., physical and functional variables such as transportation, climate, services) and the "soul" (i.e., social and emotional variables such as safety, culture and sense of community) of the urban area, directly influencing the flow of residents and the likelihood of a resident being an ambassador for the place (Kourtiti et al., 2022a). Thus, individual's interaction with the local service offer is a prerequisite for the formation of mental representations of the place based on cognitive evaluations derived from this environment (Dellaert et al., 2008). These mental representations are determinants of attitudinal and behavioral responses to a location, as well as useful tools for understanding people's psycho-emotional and symbolic involvement with a place (Dellaert et al., 2014).

By highlighting the existence of a scenario of inter-urban competition for capital (i.e. financial, intellectual or social) in today's large urban centers, it becomes necessary to cohesively map the relationship between experiences lived in the place and the responses of individuals to maintain a favorable image of the region. Thus, local authorities recognize that a place should be treated as a brand, leading to the adoption of marketing and brand management tools to build a spatial service offer with a competitive edge (Ashworth and Karavatzis, 2010).

This approach is made up of three levels of action: Place Promotion (PP), Place Marketing (PM), and Place Branding (Boisen et al., 2018). The first refers to communication strategies aimed at promoting the place's brand image to a specific target audience, while the second is an integrated customer-oriented marketing strategy focused on managing and communicating the place's service offerings. The third level can be conceptualized as an associative network of experiences and meanings linked to a specific place, a link between experiences, identity and image of a place (Braun et al., 2014; Zenker and Braun, 2017; Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020).

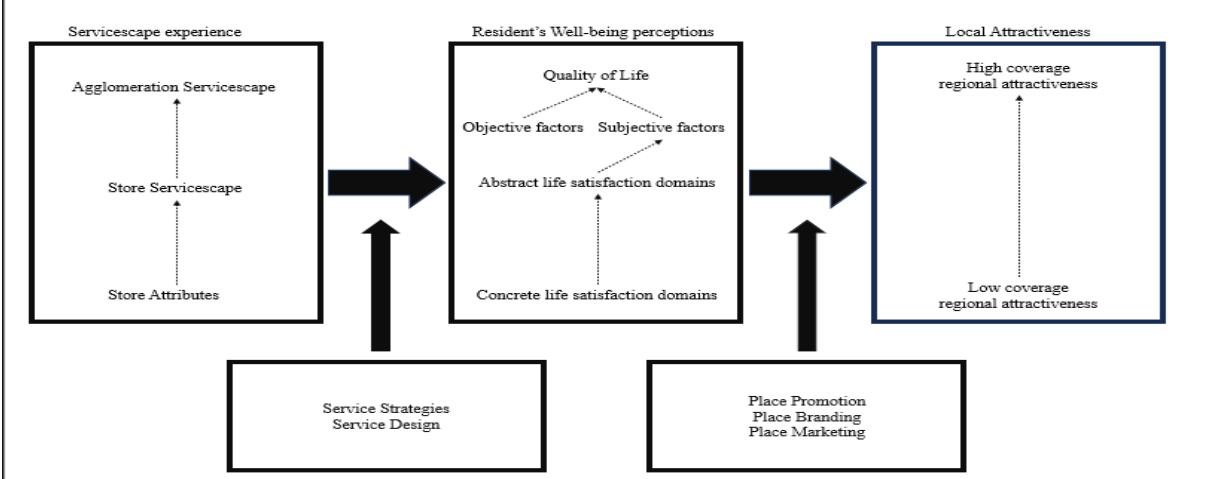
According to Boisen et al. (2018), the basic premise of communicating places as brands lies in supporting urban policies that aim to improve the place for the benefit of its stakeholders (e.g., residents, visitors and businesses). PP has a short-term focus on generating awareness of the place, meaning that there is an emphasis on promotional communication and creating attention about the place (Zimmerbauer, 2011). However, place marketing strategies are aimed at the medium and long term and require market segmentation and the development of a product (i.e., place services offers) focused on meeting the needs of those who "consume" the place (e.g., tourists, residents; Gertner, 2011). The main objectives of PB are related to managing the reputation of the place and understanding the purpose and meaning of mental representations about the place, in which these are closely related to the identity and perceived image of the place (Braun et al., 2018).

PP is an integral part of PM as it makes up the promotional aspect of marketing strategies aimed at generating and positioning the region as an attractive place (Pasquinelli and Vuignier, 2020), while the latter is influenced by PB (Boisen et al., 2018). In addition, PB is an integral part of regional and urban development strategies due to its association with public policies and spatial planning (Lucarelli and Cassell, 2020), especially with regard to the process of strengthening local identity stemming from a region's social aspects and local narratives (Aydoghmish and Rafieian, 2022).

Stimuli present in the servicescape of a single store or neighborhood retail cluster culminate in assessments of the attractiveness of the urban location in which the retail format is located. This cognitive evaluation is the result of experiences lived in the place (i.e., whether social or consumer experiences; Martin and Capelli, 2018) and results in mental representations that are the target of marketing strategies aimed at strengthening the local brand image (i.e., PP, PB and PM are conditional managerial variables in the relationship between resident well-being and local attractiveness). In addition, consumers and residents of a commercial area consider it attractive when there is a high level of satisfaction with the experience provided by the retail agglomeration, willingness to stay in that location for longer, loyalty and recommending it to others (Teller et al., 2016a). Consequently, positive evaluations of the retail agglomeration's attractiveness influence general evaluations of the neighborhood's attractiveness.

The theoretical framework guiding the development of the hypotheses tested in this thesis is shown graphically in Figure 10.

Figure 10 – Theoretical framework



Source: The author (2024)

The next section is based on the development of two hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework.

2.3 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The main premise of this dissertation is to assess the impact of servicescape provided by neighbourhood retail agglomerations on neighborhood attractiveness from the perspective of the residents.

The development of the three hypotheses contemplates the understanding that customers' interaction with the retail cluster's servicescape contributes to make both the commercial (i.e., evolved retail agglomeration) and residential locality (e.g., a neighborhood) objectively more attractive as a tourist, commercial or residential destination if compared to adjacent regions. In addition, it is argued that frequent interaction with retailers, staff and other consumers in the retail cluster impacts on the resident's sense of belonging and community identity with the site, enhancing their perception of well-being and thereby also influencing the attractiveness of the site.

The delimitation of the physical point of purchase and consequently its area of influence is a crucial managerial decision for the success of an enterprise and a topic of investigation by retail scholars (Dolega et al., 2016). The complexity of physical store location decisions can influence the union of several companies in a shared geographical area (Teller, 2008). This spatial concentration trend becomes positive when retailers act together to market agglomeration as a unique attraction (Teller & Elms, 2012; Teller & Reutterer, 2008; Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012), optimise shared logistics resources (Teller et al., 2012), manage risk and organisational learning (Teller et al., 2016b), and adopt a cooperative stance (Teller et al., 2016a). Understanding the role of each stakeholder involved (e.g., employee, consumer, and agglomeration manager) is important to assess the attractiveness potential of the retail format as a whole (Alexander et al., 2016, 2020).

The perceptions that customers create about a particular retail format (i.e., single store or retail agglomeration) is determined by a series of variables that are under discussion in the current literature, however there is consensus that the consumer's retrieval of this information is related to the experience gained from previous shopping trips to the same establishment or to the competitors (Yokoyama et al., 2022). The success of an agglomeration is closely related to the management of its servicescape (Bitner, 1992; Turley and Miliman, 2000), meaning that the recognition of shop environment impacting consumer response through atmospheric stimuli can lead to competitive differentiation (Teller et al., 2016b) and highlights the strategic relevance of potential consumer's evaluations at the point of sale for retail performance (Baker et al., 2020).

Initial research on consumers' interaction with the service environment indicates that location, shop size and tenant mix (retail and non-retail attractions) contribute to a more pleasant and attractive shopping environment (Arentze et al., 2005). In addition, market-related factors such as convenience, service quality, and store atmosphere are strong predictors of consumer's store choice (Pan & Zinkhan, 2006). The combination of elements that make up the service environment of the retail format becomes important to influence the consumers' purchasing behaviour. Each consumer's intentions and behaviors (e.g., patronage intention, purchase intention, actual purchase, and recommendation) are greatly influenced by their interaction with the retailer's servicescape, meaning that a good consumption experience at the point of purchase positively impacts the current customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) and contributes to building an experience with the retailer's servicescape (i.e., the retail service mix attributes make up the stimuli present in the consumer's servicescape experience).

Consumer's perceptions of retail agglomeration characteristics differ between evolved versus created retail formats (Teller, 2008), with tenant mix and atmosphere being the most relevant ones across studies (Blut et al., 2018; Teller et al., 2016b; Teller & Elms, 2012; Teller & Reutterer, 2008). Complementarily, factors such as store location, parking, and accessibility are seen as the most influential in agglomeration's economic success by created retail format tenants (Teller & Schnedlitz, 2012). Hence, there is a difference in impact weight between components of the service environment for each stakeholder or type of agglomeration.

The work of Blut et al. (2018) indicates that the service component of retailers' marketing mix is composed of six factors: customer service, maneuverability, orientation, parking, tenant mix, and shopping infrastructure. These factors have significant influence on shopping outcomes such as satisfaction, recommendation, and patronage behaviors. Another important finding of this study is that the impact of customer service is enhanced in agglomerations.

We infer that residents' perceptions of the servicescape in a neighborhood retail agglomeration are the base stimuli to form future evaluations about that place. This evaluation is conditioned to prior and subsequent experiences, subdivided into eight dimensions: the friendliness of sales personnel, convenience and promptness of the service provided in the shops (Customer service; Kursunluoglu, 2014); number of parking spaces, ease of access and degree of security (Parking); street signs and internal corridors of the shops (Orientation); customer flow and layout both inside and outside shops (Maneuverability); variety of shops (Tenant mix); shopping infrastructure (Blut et al., 2018); internal and external ambience of shops, as well as the atmosphere of the shopping region (Atmosphere; Teller, 2008); and overall sense of security (Telles et al., 2022; Zanini et al., 2019).

This experience with the retail agglomeration's servicescape is likely to generate feelings of well-being, since service quality, service design and the servicescape are important antecedents of the consumer's perception of well-being (Rahman, 2021), in which individual consumer beliefs contribute to a hedonic perception of consumer satisfaction, especially in a comparative analysis across shop types (Bonfrer et al., 2022).

Retailers contribute to CWB development when their marketing mix efforts are conducted to generate long-term relationships with the customer, communicate the company's goodwill, social, and environmental responsibility (Sirgy & Lee, 2008). Hence, consumer's repeated interactions with the retailer's servicescape contribute to develop more accurate affective and cognitive evaluations of the shopping trip and how this experience can enhance life satisfaction assessments via four main pathways: provision of needed goods or services; a locality for social gathering; an entertainment venue; and a space to people experience a sense of community (El Hedhli et al., 2013).

Higher levels of CWB indicates that the satisfaction derived from the experience of buying, consuming, and discarding a particular good or service is positive (Lee et al., 2002), lower levels of consumer complaint (Sirgy et al., 2007), good service to fulfill basic and complex consumer needs (Sirgy et al., 2006), high level of community satisfaction with local commercial establishments (Sirgy & Cornwell, 2001), and product or services with high perceived value (Grzeskowiak et al., 2016).

This propensity for SE to strengthen the perception of well-being in consumption via social aspects derives from the personal and humanized interactions between employees and consumers during the provision of a service (Falter and Hadwich, 2020) or the relationship between consumers within a service environment (Abboud 2023). So, the retail and service environment goes beyond a transactional relationship to become a conduit for social and commercial interactions that enhance people's well-being, as well as fostering the development of stronger ties between people and locations (Rosenbaum, 2006; Rosenbaum et al., 2017a).

A retail environment that improves satisfaction with people's consumption lives ends up improving evaluations of the local attractiveness of that region, since consumer well-being has a positive influence on consumer attitudes and behaviors, such as: desire to continue frequenting a shopping region (Elmashhara and Soares, 2022); loyalty to the shopping center (Troebis, 2018); patronage intention (Blut et al., 2018); more time and money spent shopping (Vilnai-Yavetz et al., 2021).

A retail agglomeration can become more attractive by improving the servicescape with a focus on generating well-being derived from consumption experiences. An attractive

commercial region achieves a better economic performance than its competitors, and this performance can extrapolate beyond the space delimited by the geographical concentration of high street stores (i.e., the neighborhood or city in which it is located; Alexander et al., 2020). People who live in a neighborhood with attractive retail clusters have a greater tendency to shop locally and support their neighborhood retail (Wilson and Hodges, 2022; Grimer, 2021), behaviors that over time contribute to developing a sense of community and belonging to that place (Horakova et al., 2022). It is from this accumulation of positive consumption experiences (i.e., whether transactional or social) that a higher level of attractiveness of the local street retail cluster exerts its influence on the general evaluation of the neighborhood in which it is located, since interaction with economic activities in an urban network interferes with people's evaluations of liveability, pride, belonging, and commitment to the place (Kourtiti et al., 2022a).

Therefore, it is expected that the experience with the servicescape of the local retail agglomeration will only have an indirect impact on the general evaluation of the attractiveness of the neighborhood in which it is located, meaning that a positive evaluation of the servicescape of the retail agglomeration will lead to positive evaluations of the attractiveness of that neighborhood when these local retailers manage to make the shopping center more attractive by strengthening perceptions of consumer well-being. The first hypothesis is thus formulated:

H1: The relationship between consumer's well-being perceptions and retail agglomeration attractiveness is the mechanism that better explain the positive impact of servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness.

It is worth noting that just like the impact of the local retail agglomeration's servicescape, consumer well-being is not expected to have a direct influence on the attractiveness of the neighborhood. Positive consumer experiences are part of the mechanism that explains the relationship between SE and NA by strengthening the attractiveness of the commercial area from the point of view of consumers and residents (i.e., hypothesis H1). Therefore, street retail can bring benefits to the neighborhood by focusing on developing customer experience and reducing consumer friction (Gauri et al., 2021).

This function of the neighborhood retail agglomeration is expected because it deals with concrete everyday situations (i.e., a shopping trip as an influence on consumption satisfaction and, consequently, on how attractive the shopping place is) that in the long run form evaluations about the neighborhood in which the retail is located (Gilboa and Jeffe, 2021). However, it is expected that there is an additional indirect influence of the retail environment on the attractiveness of the neighborhood for a population in which neighborhood retail is an integral

part of their daily lives. In line with the postulates of BUST (Sirgy and Lee, 2006), consumer well-being has the potential to extrapolate to individuals' general evaluations of well-being and thus make them evaluate their neighborhood more positively as a good place to live.

Well-being evaluations derived from the consumption setting are related to the consumer's buying orientation (i.e., utilitarian or hedonic values), whereas hedonic motivation is the main predictor of the relationship between purchase experience and well-being evaluations, but this impact is weaker if its utilitarian motivation is not attended (El Hedhli et al., 2016). Moreover, environmental and marketing stimuli present in the retail format interfere in the construction of CWB through utilitarian evaluations of the service mix or hedonic evaluations coming from the atmosphere and sense of community (Krey et al., 2022).

Maggioni et al. (2019) indicates that both hedonic and utilitarian aspects of the shopping experience in a created retail format positively influence well-being and are conditioned to consumers' levels of price awareness, time pressure, and recreational consciousness. In addition, leisure and browsing activities impact on consumer's patronage behaviours are stronger in agglomeration settings (Blut et al., 2018), and satisfaction relies more on emotional assessments derived from shopping experiences (Petruzzellis et al., 2021). Ekici et al (2018) highlights that well-being derived from shopping activities has a positive and direct relationship with life satisfaction and perceived quality of life, while Gardiazabal et al. (2020) discover that consumption-derived well-being is a significant mechanism explaining the relationship between consumer's satisfaction and loyalty.

From this perspective, it is possible to understand that interaction with the retail environment does in fact contribute to a positive perception of overall consumer life satisfaction via transactional or social experiences, meaning that both consumers with a task focus and those with an experiential focus derive well-being from contact with the retail agglomeration. It is argued that this social aspect enhances the extrapolation of satisfaction to concrete and specific life domains (i.e., consumer life domain), interfering in a more positive assessment of the individual's subjective well-being.

Investigations of the current literature on the antecedents and consequences of SWB indicate that individual's personal growth and community affiliation assessments positively impacts their own subjective well-being evaluations (Pera & Viglia, 2015), findings supported by the notion of relational goals positively impacts SWB (Zheng et al., 2021). Consumers must perceive that they can derive greater SWB to engage in value co-creation behaviors within service encounters (Hughes & Vafeas, 2021) and that improves their well-being by enhancing individual's sense of achievement and purpose in life (Sharma et al., 2017). Furthermore,

individual's SWB can predict brand avoidance behavior (Kuanr et al., 2022) and also revisit frequency and expenditure in evolved retail formats when combined with greater sense of place attachment (Jung et al., 2021).

High levels of SWB indicate that the individual has a high degree of psychosocial prosperity (Jebb et al., 2020) stemming from a series of internal assessments, such as: satisfaction with how their life is going (Diener, 1985); optimism, self-esteem and purpose in life (Diener et al., 2010); standard of living and human potential (Silva and Caetano, 2013); quality of relationships, social acceptance, belonging to a group (Keyes, 2002); and social life as a whole (Mesurado et al., 2021).

Individual's evaluations of their progress towards achieving excellence and an ideal stage of their life depend in part on successive positive consumption experiences. When talking about traditional retail, consumption occurs mostly in a physical space that can be analysed in a purely geographical way (hereafter called "space") or by adopting a sociological lens that takes human agency into account, thus being called "place" (Chatzidakis et al., 2014).

On the one hand, a geographically delimited region may be seen as merely a place where people go to make their purchases or be the object of consumption itself, given that people develop feelings and build a lifestyle connected to a place (Pettigrew, 2007). This consumption is not dependent on a financial transaction, but rather on sociocultural meanings tied to the place (Visconti et al., 2010). On the other hand, an urban region can also be "packaged" as a holistic product and be subject to value co-creation actions with its consumers (Warnaby, 2009), whereas there is a tangible component of added services combined with a set of narratives whose focus is to persuade a group to perform certain behaviour (e.g., visit, live, buy, work) in this place (Warnaby & Medway, 2013). Therefore, 'place' is an integral part of 'space' that is not static and transforms based on the socio-cultural meanings imbued to it by its frequenters, while serving as a canvas for marketers to build stimulating and persuasive environments (Giovanardi & Lucarelli, 2018).

Thus, the interaction between the various stakeholders of this retail agglomeration fosters the strengthening of a sense of place on the part of individuals (Kavaratsis and Hatch, 2013), which culminates in a greater identity and attachment to the place because the urban space comes to mean something to people (Green et al., 2016). The sustained social environment within this retail agglomeration is important for strengthening well-being and identity with the place (Aydogmish and Rafieian, 2022), meaning that relational aspects such as social life (Schade et al., 2018), narratives, life experiences and sharing stories are crucial for maintaining a people-place relationship (Jain et al., 2022). It is worth noting that this social

influence is even stronger from the perspective of residents (Zenker et al., 2017) and implies improvements at the urban planning level (Lucarelli and Cassell, 2020).

Similarly to BUST, it is postulated that a high degree of attractiveness of a commercial region can exert a positive influence at higher geographical levels, meaning that there is the potential for satisfaction with the retail agglomeration to extrapolate to better satisfaction with the neighborhood. This line of reasoning stems from the fact that the commercial performance of the retail agglomeration influences the performance of the city (Alexander et al., 2020) and the social element within this commercial center constitutes an important part of what a neighborhood is in the view of its residents, as well as being very influential in shaping attitudes towards the image and reputation of the neighborhood (Kourtit et al., 2022a).

From this perspective, the potential to extrapolate CWB to more abstract levels of well-being such as SWB comes from living within a retail agglomeration that enables the development of social ties and local narratives within its urban space, culminating in the construction of an identity and attachment to the place that strengthens its residents' evaluations of an attractive neighborhood.

It is expected that the servicescape experience of the local retail agglomeration will not have a direct impact on the attractiveness evaluations of the neighborhood in which it is located, but rather through the residents' well-being evaluations. In line with BUST, this well-being follows a hierarchical logic based on degree of abstraction (i.e., consumer well-being as the most concrete area of life that extrapolates to the more abstract domain of general satisfaction with life called subjective well-being; Zhao and Wei, 2019) and all stages of this process denote a direct and positive influence with the next one (i.e., SE with CWB, CWB with SWB, and SWB with NA). Thus, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: The relationship between consumer's well-being perceptions and resident's subjective well-being is the mechanism that better explain the positive impact of servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness.

However, it is understood that the two paths of constructing an individual's assessment of the attractiveness of the neighborhood are not mutually exclusive. When considering consumption contexts, it is clear that the consumer life domain has an influence on the construction of more abstract levels of well-being (Sirgy, 2021), but it should not be overlooked that it is an integral part of a series of domains in a person's life (e.g. work, family, health; Eshaghi et al., 2023). In addition, it is possible to have a positive evaluation of the neighborhood in which you live following a less abstract line of reasoning (i.e., CWB leading to AA and

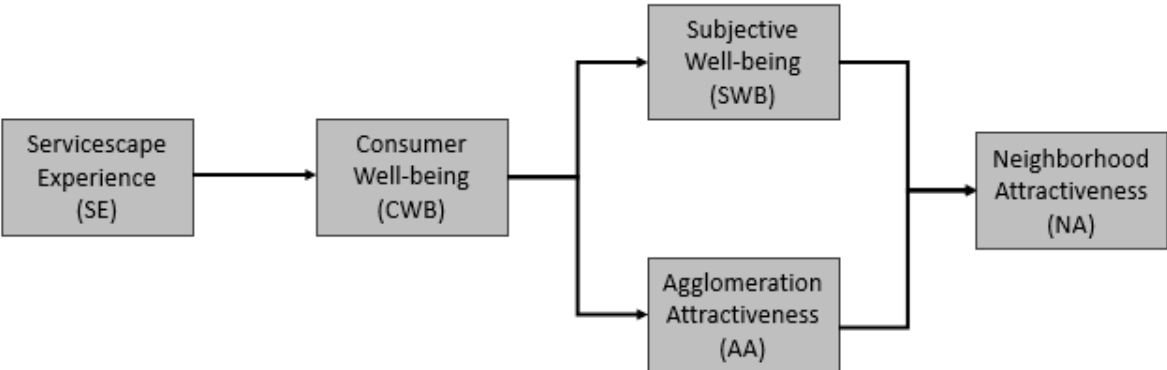
culminating in higher values of NA), especially when there is not yet sufficient frequency for the degree of satisfaction with the shopping environment to extrapolate to more abstract levels of well-being evaluation (Mesurado et al., 2021).

In this way, it is understood that both paths are important for understanding the indirect impact of the servicescape of the street retail agglomeration on the degree of attractiveness of the neighborhood in which it is located. The third hypothesis is therefore formulated as follows:

H3: The positive impact of retail agglomeration’s servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness is better understood through a parallel mediation of consumer’s well-being, subjective well-being and agglomeration attractiveness.

A graphical summary of the tested hypotheses can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11 – hypothesis summary



Source: The author (2024)

Highlighting that there is a two-way relationship between the performance of an urban commercial region and the performance of its city (Alexander et al., 2020), it is necessary to generate a disambiguation between residents' perception of quality of life and the general evaluation of a neighborhood from the perspective of the role played by local retailers. In other words, the aim is to understand what functions and roles the high street retail agglomeration plays in improving the standard of living of its regional consumers, culminating in an improvement in the neighborhood's image.

Thus, it is argued that resident well-being enhances the image of a good place through social aspects derived from consumption and interaction with retailers and service providers. This argument is based on the well-being-generating potential of consumer spaces (Rosenbaum et al., 2017a) by enabling social interactions and developing a sense of community (El Hedli et al., 2013), a situation that can interfere with an individual's overall sense of well-being through integrity, acceptance and social contribution (Mesurado et al., 2021). The commercial area is seen as a meeting point within the neighborhood with the function of channeling the daily lives of individuals into shared social experiences, affective memory and cultural meanings for its

residents (Giovanardi and Luccarelli, 2018) which culminates in an increase in the appreciation of individuals for the neighborhood experience (Gilboa and Jeffe, 2021; Kourtit et al., 2022a). This leads to the first research proposition:

P1: Social aspects derived from interaction with the local retail agglomeration generate positive spillover effects for neighborhood attractiveness by strengthening residents' perception of well-being.

The next chapter explains the methodological details for testing the two hypotheses and the proposition discussed in this chapter.

3.0 METHOD

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part consists of a general presentation of the method, which focuses on demonstrating the umbrella methodology of this work and justifying why the mixed method was chosen as an appropriate option. In this way, the definition of the mixed method and its importance for scientific inquiry is presented, emphasizing both the quantitative and qualitative aspects. In addition, we comment on the main types of mixed methods to elucidate which methods will be adopted for each component study of this thesis (i.e., survey and semi-structured interviews) and how they interrelate theoretically and temporally.

The second part highlights the construction of the quantitative component of the study and its specifications. It then explains the definition of each of the sub-components of a survey research both for the pilot and for the main data collection: definition of the respondent profile; minimum sample size to obtain the expected effect size; scales used; control variables to be included in the questionnaire and in the theoretical model to be tested; structure and order of display of the questionnaire; data collection protocol (i.e. both online and on-site); filter and sample characterization questions; data analysis method.

The third part refers to the planning of the qualitative component of the study and its ramifications. The focus of this part is to explain all the stages before, during and after the in-depth interviews with residents of business districts, such as: choosing the profile of the interviewee; the minimum number of interviewees required; the procedure for approaching the interviewee; the protocol for conducting the interviews (i.e. online or on site); the interview script; the procedure for transcribing and coding the interviews; and the method for analyzing and interpreting the data.

3.1 MIXED METHODS: AN OVERVIEW

Mixed methods research can be defined as a research strategy that combines quantitative or qualitative methodologies to obtain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007), meaning that it is an alternative research strategy to traditional single-method options (i.e., qualitative or quantitative) that uses a combination of qualitative or quantitative research designs (e.g., surveys, interviews, participatory observation, experiments) to answer the research problem (Creswell, 2014).

This approach, if well applied, can enhance the theoretical contribution of the study in a number of ways, such as: generating more robust and convincing evidence; one type of data can compensate for the limitation of analysis based on another type of data (e.g. interviews being corroborated by experimental data); it can facilitate interdisciplinary investigations and answer a research problem more satisfactorily than a single-method approach (Creswell and Clark, 2011). In addition, studies using mixed methods have a higher average impact and theoretical contribution value compared to single-method research (Molina-Azorín, 2011), a possible explanation for the growth in publications of this type in recent decades in management journals (Hanson and Grimmer, 2007; Harrison and Reilly, 2011; Harrison et al., 2020).

However, the choice of this "method centric" approach (Hesse-Biber, 2010) must be very well considered by researchers, as there is a myriad of barriers to its effective implementation (Bryman, 2007) and these can render the study quality if they are not remedied correctly (Guest, 2013).

The formulation of the research problem takes center stage since it is important that this guides the nature of the tool and data to be collected (Creswell, 2014). The use of statistics combined with qualitative data alone does not characterize the study as mixed method, but rather when the numerical data complements the progress of the qualitative stage (e.g. statistics corroborates the theoretical argument stemming from participant observation; Maxwell and Mittapalli, 2010), while an accurate combination of a qualitative and quantitative approach allows us to go beyond the micro-macro dichotomy and theorize from lived experiences and varied social realities (Mason, 2006). Thus, it is necessary to have a clear justification for the combination of the chosen methodologies, as well as how they will be sequenced in time (i.e., concurrently or sequentially) and how the data will be analyzed (i.e., separately or together; Guest and Flemming, 2015).

From this perspective, a series of typologies have been developed to help future studies using mixed methods. Morgan's (1998) work presents one of the first efforts to classify this methodology, subdividing the types of mixed methods into points on a quadrant, naming the horizontal axis the primary method (i.e., qualitative or quantitative) and the vertical axis the type of complementation of the secondary method (i.e., preliminary or continuity). In a complementary way, Morse and Niehaus (2009) update the previous typology by adding the dimension of theoretical inference (i.e., deductive or inductive approach) and simultaneity as a temporal option in the form of complementation of the second method, totaling eight possible classifications of mixed methods.

With the proliferation of these typologies, which generated various sub-classifications, some academics decided to create "families" of mixed methods (see Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009) to facilitate the understanding and explanation of methodological procedures in the most diverse areas of knowledge: Parallel, Sequential, Conversion, Multilevel and fully integrated. Finally, the updating of the typology into six major groups by Creswell and Clark (2011) was based on the criteria of temporality of the convergence of data and its analysis (i.e., sequential or concomitant), weighting of importance between methods (i.e., more quantitative, qualitative or equality between methods) and purpose (e.g., generating data for the second phase, explaining the results of the first phase or triangulation). This version has become popular and recurrent in handbooks on the subject due to its ability to summarize the mixed method variants together with an easy-to-understand notation (Guest and Flemming, 2015), as can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12 – Mixed method terminology

Notation	Description
Quan	Quantitative research
Qual	Qualitative research
UPPER CASE	Dominant research method
lower case	Less dominant research method
,	Equality in method dominance
+	Concurrent method application
→	Sequential method application
↔	Recursive method application
()	Embedded method application
[]	Inserted method application
=	Integrated method application

Source: The author (2024)

Based on the evolution of the mixed methods typology presented above, this study is classified as a sequential explanatory mixed method. Specifically, the research is subdivided into two stages: the first quantitative stage aims to test hypotheses H1-H2 by applying a

questionnaire with residents and consumers of neighborhood retail agglomerations and analyzing the data via Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), while the second stage is qualitative and focuses on complementing the hypothesis of serial mediation derived from BUST (i.e., P1) through in-depth interviews with residents and consumers of both retail agglomerations located in high- and low-income neighborhoods.

The theoretical model proposed in Figure 11 is analyzed comprehensively in the first stage, while in the subsequent phase the focus of the qualitative analysis is on analyzing a specific part of the model. The study in general has a mostly quantitative weighting, a sequential temporality (i.e., the second stage was carried out after completing the first) and an explanatory purpose (i.e., the second stage has the main purpose of corroborating the findings of the first stage through an integration of qualitative data). It should be noted that despite the temporal separation between the two stages during the application and analysis of the data, the discussion of the findings is integrated, as recommended by Ivankova et al. (2006). A detailed explanation of the components of the quantitative and qualitative stages is described below.

3.2 MIXED METHODS: QUANTITATIVE PHASE

The primary aim of this stage is to test the H₁-H₃ hypotheses by applying a correlational and cross-sectional survey, meaning that an investigation into the impact of the servicescape experience of neighborhood retail agglomerations on the evaluation of their neighborhood attractiveness through the well-being perceptions of its residents. A survey was carried out over the course of a semester (i.e., July to December 2023). The application consisted of a study carried out via a self-administered online questionnaire with residents from Brazilian neighborhoods that have street retail agglomerations across seven major metropolitan areas (i.e., Vitória, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Recife, e Salvador). Details of the application can be found below.

3.2.1 Cross-sectional survey

This stage is divided into two parts: pilot study and main study. The former was assessed using a reduced sample from a specific metropolitan area (i.e., Vitória), while the latter was assessed using the full sample across all seven metropolitan areas.

The need to carry out a pilot study is justified by the complexity of the theoretical model (i.e., a high number of second-order variables for the total number of hypothesized relationships). It was carry out an application with a reduced sample to check the statistical robustness (i.e., reliability and validity) and translation of the theoretical scales, response

patterns of respondents who fit the chosen profile and the general structure of the questionnaire (e.g., size, wording, order of blocks and questions, among others).

A self-administered online questionnaire was administered to individuals living in the vicinity of neighborhood retail agglomerations. These individuals were invited to take part in the pilot study via e-mail, from which their electronic addresses were obtained via a specific database. This database is linked to a panel made up of students, employees, professors, alumni and former employees of a Brazilian university. In addition, the respondents to the main study were called through a consumer panel from a global company specializing in market research.

The use of these panels is justified as the respondents' profile is consistent with individuals who frequent brick-and-mortar agglomerations. Thus, the response pattern of people who frequent these locations (e.g., consumers, workers and residents of the neighborhood or street where the agglomeration is located) is useful for understanding the impact of services on local attractiveness from both an economic and a social perspective.

The following criteria was used to select valid respondents: Must be a client of local brick-and-mortar retail agglomeration and reside in this neighborhood for at least 12 months (not necessarily in the same house, but in the same neighborhood). This choice is justified by the need for a minimum visiting time and frequency in the retail format so that people can have contact with the range of services and service providers to be able to formulate inferences about the servicescape of the place, as well as a conviviality to have consolidated perceptions about the well-being derived from living in the neighbourhood. In addition, a filter question on the last purchase made in this high street retail agglomeration (i.e., maximum of two weeks) was added to exclude infrequent respondents or residents who do not support local commerce.

Portuguese translations of reliable and validated scales in the retail context were chosen to measure all latent variables. Those scales who did not have a complete Brazilian Portuguese version or were originally developed for single-store measurement underwent a translation and reverse translation stage (Behling and Law, 2000). Scales were submitted to the scrutiny of four fluent Portuguese speakers with experience in marketing research to check item consistency. The questionnaire explicitly stated for respondents to answer regarding their last agglomeration experience. The instrument was comprised of five major constructs: Servicescape Experience (SE) as a higher-order construct composed of Customer Service (CS), Parking (PK), Orientation (OR), Maneuverability (MNV), Retail and Service Tenant Mix (TMIX), Shopping Infrastructure (INF), Atmosphere (ATM), and Security (SEC); Consumer Well-Being (CWB); Subjective Well-Being (SWB); Agglomeration Attractiveness (AA); and Neighbourhood Attractiveness (NA).

The two-step approach advocated by Sarstedt et al. (2019) is used to evaluate, estimate and validate the second-order constructs. The nine sub-dimensions of SE were measured using the following scales: three items from the customer service scale (Kursunluoglu, 2014) to measure CS; three items to measure perceived safety taken from Zanini et al. (2019); nineteen items to measure retail cluster attributes based on Teller and Reutterer (2008) and translated into Portuguese by Parente et al. (2012), in which three items refer to PK, two to measure OR, three to measure MNV, five related to TMIX, three to measure INF and three items focused on measuring ATM. In addition, the consumer well-being construct was measured using the five sub-dimensions of the customer service well-being scale (i.e., Relationship, Positive Emotions, Engagement, absence of positive emotions, and meaning and accomplishment) developed by Falter and Hadwich (2020), totaling sixteen items. Additionally, AA was measured using nine items derived from Teller and Elms (2012), in which three items were used for each of the dimensions of this latent variable: Satisfaction (SAT), Patronage Intention (PI), and retention propensity (RP). Finally, SWB was measured using the Portuguese version of the five-item life satisfaction scale developed by Zanon et al. (2014), while NA was measured using seven items derived from the neighborhood love scale (Kourtiti et al., 2022a). A more detailed information is shown in Appendix II.

After the invitation email was sent and opened, respondents were shown the Informed Consent Form and promptly informed of the number of blocks of questions and the average time expected to complete the questionnaire (i.e., 10 blocks of questions which take an average of 15 minutes to complete). After confirming their willingness to take part in the questionnaire (Block 1), the next nine blocks were presented in a static and identical sequence to all respondents. The second block of questions focused on explaining the concept of retail agglomeration in layman's terms and elucidating that the next questions would be related to this concept, while the third block focused on the filter questions (i.e., the individual had to choose yes to both options, otherwise the questionnaire was automatically closed and the person went through the debriefing stage). The fourth block was about specifying the retail agglomeration and the respondent's neighborhood, and the fifth block focused on the 25 items measuring the independent variable. The sixth block consisted of the sixteen items measuring CWB, the seventh block the nine items measuring AA, the eighth block the seven items measuring NA, the ninth block the scale measuring SWB and the tenth and final block focused on the respondents' sociodemographic information (e.g., gender, age, income).

It is worth noting that the G*Power 3.1.9.7 software was used to calculate the minimum number of respondents based on values determined a priori (i.e., an ability to detect an average

effect size of 5%, alpha error probability of 5% and statistical power of 95%), resulting in a value of 218 valid responses. Furthermore, within-block item randomization and attention check questions were added as a way to improve response quality.

A series of questions were added to be used as control variables in the data analysis stage, such as: perceived distance from your home to the retail agglomeration; time spent on your last visit; money spent on your last visit; size of the neighborhood agglomeration in number of stores; perceived variety of retailers or service providers; perceived quantity of retailers or service providers; degree of importance given to the neighborhood retail agglomeration and importance of the neighborhood in your own life. In addition, the questionnaires in which the respondents give up before the end, detected undesired answer patterns (i.e., inaccurate, or incorrect answers), or finish the questionnaire in an undesired time (i.e., over or under the average completion time ± 2 SD threshold) were eliminated. Details of each stage of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix III.

Data analysis procedures are evaluated via PLS-SEM using SmartPLS4 software. This technique was elected as a suitable statistical tool since the PLS approach performs well against parameter estimation biases (Sarstedt, Hair, Ringle, Thiele, & Gudergan, 2016) and the measurement of the competing alternative (i.e., CB-SEM) does not have greater statistical significance in judging the existence of latent variables (Rigdon, 2016).

Thus, the higher-order reflexive-formative theoretical model as seen in Figure 12 is evaluated following the guidelines recommended by the current literature (e.g., Schmueli et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2021; Hayes, 2017; Becker et al., 2023). The data obtained through the pilot questionnaire is useful for characterizing the sample, checking the reliability and validity of the first and second order variables, checking common method bias (CMB) via the Harman single factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) and multicollinearity test (Coch, 2015), testing the direct and indirect relationships between the latent variables via the bootstrapping procedure, as well as the explanatory power of the model inside and outside the sample using the PLSpredict tool. Table 13 show the baseline metrics and thresholds.

Table 13 - PLS-SEM baseline metrics and thresholds

Stage	Criterion	Baseline Metric	Threshold
Common method bias assessment	Harman's one factor test	Variance explained	Lower than 50%
	Coch's colinearity test	Inner construct VIF values	Lower than 3
Reflexive measurement model assessment	Reliability	Composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha (α)	Greater than .60
	Outer loading relevance	Reflective outer loadings (λ_L)	Greater than .70 is recommended, but above .40 can be acceptable
	Convergent validity	Average Variance Explained (AVE)	Greater than .50
	Divergent validity	Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT), Fornell-Larcker criterion (FL), and cross loadings ($X\lambda$)	HTMT lower than .85 while values greater for estimated variable or indicator for FL and $X\lambda$, respectively
Formative measurement model assessment	Redundancy analysis	Correlation with global assessment reflexive indicator	Greater than 0.70
	Colinearity	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	Lower than 5
	Outer weight relevance and significance	Formative outer weights (λ_W)	Greater than .50 and statistically significant at 95% CI
Structural model assessment	Within sample predictive relevance	Q^2	Greater than 0
	Out-of-sample predictive relevance	Root Mean Square Error (RMSE) via PLSpredict algorithm	RMSE values lower for the SEM model in comparison with a generic linear regression alternative model
	Coefficient of determination	Adjusted R^2 of the dependent variables	Greater than 50%
	relative contribution to effect size	Construct's f^2	Greater than 0
	Path relevance	Path coefficients (β) via bootstrapping algorithm with 5000 subsamples	significant at 95% CI

Source: the author (2024)

Once the measurement model and the model's predictive capacity are adequate, the last stage of the quantitative analysis of the pilot data is to test the mediation hypotheses. It is expected that there will be an indirect interaction between SE and NA, meaning that the servicescape experience will not be able to have a positive impact on the attractiveness of the neighborhood on its own, but rather via a hierarchy of satisfaction needs (i.e., bottom-up spillover effect between CWB and SWB that culminates in an increase in NA as stated in H2). In addition, it is understood that the attributes that make up the servicescape experience of street retailers have an indirect impact on the degree of attractiveness of the neighborhood, in which this impact can be explained by an increase in the perception of consumer well-being and, consequently, an increase in the attractiveness of the retail agglomeration (i.e., as stated in H1).

3.3 MIXED METHODS: QUALITATIVE PHASE

The primary aim of this stage is to carry out a more detailed investigation of the mechanism of perceived well-being in the relationship between the services provided by the neighborhood retail agglomeration and the local attractiveness of this region, adding to the findings of the first stage on the hierarchical impact of different domains of resident well-being influencing the overall assessment of their neighborhood as a good place to live (i.e., as proposed in P1).

The investigation of P1 was carried out using a single-method and multi-case study design (Yin, 2011). The choice of this method is justified because it allows the understanding of a contemporary phenomenon without extracting it from its natural context (Yin, 2012), meaning that it allows inferences to be made about the direction of influence between resident well-being and local attractiveness based on the testimony of those who experience them on a daily basis in different locations, conditions and points of view (i.e., different neighborhoods, income conditions and neighborhood experience).

Semi-structured interviews with residents of the neighborhoods where the on-site survey was used as the main research tool. Thus, the design of all the interview stages (i.e., interviewee profile, number of interviewees, interview script, interview protocol, data transcription and coding methodology, qualitative data analysis) was carried out in accordance with the guidelines recommended by current literature (e.g., Creswell and Creswell, 2017; Cassell et al., 2017; Lanka et al., 2020) and accompanied by a brainstorming stage with three senior retailing researchers.

The participants in the interview stage were also respondents to the survey application of the quantitative stage, meaning that were invited via the email obtained at the end of the

questionnaire. In this way, a total of 22 interviewees were theoretically sampled (Robinson, 2014) to generate a variation of extremes within themes considered relevant (Barnhart et al., 2023) for the investigation of the role of the retail agglomeration as a source of attractiveness for the neighborhood, such as: income level, age, time living in the neighborhood, frequency of visits to the retail agglomeration, multiplicity of stakeholders (e.g., interviewee being a resident, consumer and employee of the retail agglomeration), degree of importance for their own life, size of the neighborhood and/or size of the retail agglomeration, among others.

It is worth noting that the final version of the interview script was refined through a pilot application with four interviewees through personal or professional contacts to check that the statements and questions were clear to the audience and that they did in fact capture the concepts to be analyzed. In addition, the final sample of twenty interviewees was sufficient to achieve theoretical saturation, explaining the theoretical themes listed by the researcher in sufficient depth to highlight the patterns found in the coded data (Charmaz, 2014; Nelson, 2017).

The organization of the interview script consisted mostly of open-ended questions and statements to stimulate answers and explanations from the interviewees. The questions were developed based on studies on well-being in the retail environment (Rosenbaum et al., 2020), neighborhood retail and local attractiveness (Wilson and Hodges, 2022), and quality of life (Kim et al., 2013).

The final version of the script was divided into four parts: an initial stage involving a brief introduction to the interviewer and the purpose of the research, as well as an announcement of the estimated interview time and the disclosure of initial information (e.g., guarantee of anonymity and no obligation to participate), the second stage refers to the block of questions and statements about the construction of perceptions of well-being arising from situations experienced within the neighborhood's retail agglomeration; the third stage is focused on questions and statements aimed at understanding the relationship between perceived well-being and how it impacts the degree of attractiveness of the neighborhood; the fourth and final stage consisted of final considerations (e.g., explaining what will be done with the data collected and thanking people for participating). A detailed version of the script used can be found in Appendix IV.

The interviews took place according to the availability of the location, date and time of the interviewees. The initial contact and scheduling of the interview took place via e-mail and telephone conversations, while the interviews themselves took place both on site and online. A total of 11 interviews were conducted in a digital environment using videoconferencing tools (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams), based on the good practices listed by Deakin and Wakefield

(2014). The full interview was recorded in both audio and video and saved in an online repository along with the interviewer's notes taken concurrently in a text tool (e.g. Microsoft word or notepad). In addition, a total of 11 face-to-face interviews were conducted in accordance with the guidelines of Fink (2003). The interviewees were approached in an environment in the neighborhood that was suitable for carrying out the conversation without too many interruptions (e.g., home, coffee shop, community association). The interviews were audio-recorded using a recording device and accompanied by notes taken by the interviewer (e.g., body language, emotions shown) on paper.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and added rubrics based on the interviewer's notes. The coding of the textual data was stratified into three stages: Directionality of the relationship between well-being and local attractiveness as the primary level used for general responses from the interviewees; focus variable as the secondary level used for both excerpts and general responses; motive as the tertiary level used to code excerpts from specific responses and help interpret why P1 is relevant or not. A breakdown of the hierarchy of codes can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14 - Qualitative coding scheme

Coding Level	Code name	Code
Primary	Directionality between Resident's Well-being (RWB) and Local Attractiveness (LA)	RWB ↔ LA
		RWB → LA
		RWB ← LA
		RWB ≠ LA
Secondary	Latent variable	NA
		AA
		SWB
		CWB
Tertiary	Social aspects - Social Well-being	Social integrity
		Social acceptance
		Social contribution
		Social coherence
		Social actualization
	Social aspects - relationship between customer and employee	customer rapport
		emotional support
		empathy
		friendship
		guidance
	Functions of the agglomeration space	Social gathering
		Entertainment
		sense of community
		Support of local economy
	Agglomeration Managerial aspects	satisfaction
		loyalty
		word of mouth
		patronage intention
	Neighbourhood aspects	retention proneness
		liveability
pride		
image		
place brand		
	attachment	

Source: the author (2024)

The entire interview process resulted in a total of 72 single-spaced A4 pages of transcribed and coded information, in which this material was investigated using content analysis (Weber, 1990) and based initially on the research script and coding structure to elucidate which nuances of social interaction between consumers, residents, shopkeepers, employees and service providers in a neighborhood retail agglomeration interfere in the construction of a good neighborhood identity and image through a stratified hierarchy of well-being. In addition, MAXQDA software was used to help navigate, categorize and analyze the textual data (Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2019).

The next chapter refers to the results obtained from the survey and semi-structured interviews.

4.0 RESULTS

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part consists of the presentation of the data from the first study: characterization of the sample acquired via a virtual self-administered questionnaire and subsequent analysis of the data using the structural equation modeling technique. The second part refers to the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted with residents and consumers of neighborhood retail agglomerations (i.e. study two).

4.1 STUDY ONE – SURVEY OVERVIEW

This section is divided into three parts: sample descriptive analysis, measurement model assessment, and structural model analysis.

A parallel but important analysis consists of checking for common method bias (CMB), a spurious variance attributed exclusively to the collection method used that can affect the validity and reliability of the results (Kock et al., 2021). Two tests were used to ascertain the existence of this bias: Harman's single factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003); and the lateral collinearity test proposed by Koch and Lynn (2012). The exploratory factor analysis with only one factor was carried out in the SPSS software and generated an explained variance of 34.12%, while the multicollinearity analysis from a multiple regression analysis (i.e. all the latent variables from the theoretical model were used as independent variables in a multiple regression model using a dependent variable with randomly generated values) resulted in VIF values between 1.19 and 1.89. The results obtained are below the threshold for detecting CMB recommended in the literature (i.e. 50% and 3.33, respectively).

4.1.1 Study one – sample description

Data collection began and ended during the second half of 2023 (i.e. between the months of November and December), generating a total of 603 complete responses. However, 98 were eliminated because there was a failure in one of the following stages of the questionnaire: filter questions (i.e., refusal to participate in the survey, no retail agglomeration in their neighborhood, less than one year living in that neighborhood, or their last visit was a long time ago, N = 45); attention check (N = 20); erratic response pattern (e.g., respondent always chose the same option in all questions or typed unrealistic age, N = 17); and unrealistic completion time (i.e., over two standard deviations from the average completion time, N = 16). This resulted in 505 valid answers.

Sample profile is shown in Table 15. The majority of respondents are FEMALE ($N_{\text{male}}=200$; 39.60%), aged between 18 and 76 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.32$; $SD_{\text{age}} = 13.32$), most of whom have a higher education degree ($N_{\text{college degree}} = 318$; 62.97%).

Table 15 – Sample descriptives

Scalar metrics	Mean	SD	Median
Agglomeration importance	5.68	1.40	6.00
Neighborhood importance	5.9	1.33	6
Perceived distance	2.72	1.47	3
Perceived time	2.57	1.35	2
Money spent in last visit (BRL)	205.97	172.15	100
Time spent in last visit (minutes)	76.08	55.27	40
Time living in neighborhood (years)	16.8	13.14	13
Age (years)	37.32	13.32	36
Household monthly income (BRL)	6863.74	6307.27	3660
Residents per household	3.03	1.28	3
Household monthly income per capita (BRL)	2827.26	2374.89	1420
Agglomeration Index	5.08	1.41	5
Categorical metrics	Type	Frequency	%
Gender	Female	305	60.40%
	Male	200	39.60%
Purchase frequency	Less than once a month	54	10.69%
	Once a month	72	14.26%
	Once every 15 days	90	17.82%
	Once a week	139	27.52%
	More than once a week	150	29.70%
Agglomeration size	Less than 5 units	34	6.73%
	Between 6 and 10 units	113	22.38%
	Between 11 and 25 units	140	27.72%
	Between 26 and 50 units	103	20.40%
	More than 50 units	115	22.77%
Educational level	High school degree	285	56.44%
	Bachelor's degree	305	60.40%
	Masters/ PhD degree	13	2.57%
Social class strata	A	13	2.57%
	B	113	22.38%
	C	148	29.31%
	D/E	231	45.74%
Monthly income per capita vs national average	Above national average	172	34.06%
	Below national average	333	65.94%

Source: the author (2024)

When analyzing the financial aspect of the sample, there is an average monthly household income of approximately R\$ 6800.00 ($M_{\text{household income}} = 6863.74$ BRL; $SD_{\text{household income}} = 6307.27$ BRL; $\text{Median}_{\text{household income}} = 3660.00$ BRL) and around 3 inhabitants per household ($M_{\text{household inhabitants}} = 3.03$; $SD_{\text{household inhabitants}} = 1.28$; $\text{Median}_{\text{household inhabitants}} = 3$), data which allows us to infer an average monthly income per capita of approximately 2800 BRL ($M_{\text{income per capita}} = 2827.26$ BRL; $SD_{\text{income per capita}} = 2374.86$ BRL; $\text{Median}_{\text{income per capita}} = 1420.00$ BRL). On a comparative level, data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) indicates that the sample results are aligned with the national wage distribution measures, as the average monthly household income of Brazilians is approximately 2900 BRL, in addition to an average of 2.79 inhabitants per household. In addition, the Brazilian income distribution indicates that the median income in the country is R\$ 2100.00 for the calculation of average monthly household income (IBGE, 2024). An a posteriori stratification of the sample indicates that 34.06% of respondents have an income below the national average ($N = 172$), while 65.94% have a monthly household income above the Brazilian average ($N = 333$).

Regarding their last trip to the neighborhood retail agglomeration, respondents indicated that they spent a considerable amount of time there ($M_{\text{agglomeration time}} = 76.08$ minutes; $SD_{\text{agglomeration time}} = 55.27$ minutes; $\text{Median} = 40.00$ minutes) and spent a considerable amount of money at this place ($M_{\text{agglomeration money}} = 205.97$ BRL; $SD_{\text{agglomeration money}} = 172.15$ BRL; $\text{Median} = 100.00$ BRL). The respondents considered to be close and quick to get to the retail agglomeration (i.e., perceived distance measured by a seven-point scale; $M_{\text{distance}} = 2.72$; $SD_{\text{distance}} = 1.43$; $\text{Median}_{\text{distance}} = 3.00$; $M_{\text{time}} = 2.57$; $SD_{\text{time}} = 1.35$; $\text{Median}_{\text{time}} = 2.00$). In addition, residents are frequent shoppers in this retail agglomeration ($N_{\text{at least once a week}} = 289$; 57.22%), consider that there is an adequate mix of quantity and variety of shopkeepers (i.e., measured via a seven-point scale; $M_{\text{mix}} = 5.08$; $SD_{\text{mix}} = 1.41$) and that the neighborhood retail agglomeration is seen as important to the individual's life ($M_{\text{agglomeration importance}} = 5.68$; $SD_{\text{agglomeration importance}} = 1.40$). It is worth noting that the respondents perceive their neighborhood retail agglomeration as small ($N_{\text{up to 25 store units}} = 287$; 56.83%).

Regarding the neighborhood they live in, the respondents are long-time residents of the neighborhood ($N_{\text{dwelling time}} = 16.80$ years; $SD_{\text{dwelling time}} = 13.14$ years; $\text{Median}_{\text{dwelling time}} = 13.00$ years), consider it an integral part of their life ($M_{\text{neighborhood importance}} = 5.90$; $SD_{\text{neighborhood importance}} = 1.33$). The sample is therefore suitable for analyzing the relationship between residents of neighborhoods in Brazilian metropolitan regions and the local retail agglomeration.

4.1.2 Study one – measurement model assessment

The construction of the theoretical model shown in Figure 11 indicates that there are three second-order latent variables (i.e. SE, CWB and AA), so the appropriate assessment of the measurement model should be done following the two-stage approach, in which the first stage consists of analyzing the reliability and validity of the indicators of the first-order constructs, while the second stage evaluates the same parameters only for the three second-order constructs (Becker et al., 2023).

According to guidelines recommended by experts in partial least squares structural equation modeling (Sarstedt et al., 2022), robust reflective measurement models (i.e. the latent variable is the cause of the covariation of the indicators) have a high degree of reliability and validity at the indicator and construct levels. To carry out this assessment, the following steps are necessary: reliability of the indicators, internal consistency of the latent variables, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

According to Hair et al. (2021), An indicator is considered reliable when the majority of the explained variance of the indicator is explained through a bivariate correlation called outer loading. This calculation generates individual values ranging from -1 to 1, in which values above $|0.708|$ are recommended and values below $|0.40|$ suggest removing the indicator in question. In addition, intermediate values (i.e., outer loading between 0.40 and 0.70) should only be removed when the non-inclusion of this indicator leads to an improvement in the internal consistency or convergent validity values.

Out of a total of 62 first-order reflective indicators, 60 have an outer loading value (λ) above 0.70 and 2 above 0.40. There was no need to remove any item because theoretical consistency is not threatened and the fact that their permanence does not reduce the values of the other robustness metrics of the outer model (i.e. removing the indicators does not cause the α , CR and AVE values to exceed the lower limit established by the literature). Therefore, a total of 62 indicators were retained.

The assessment of the internal consistency of the latent variables refers to the degree of association between indicators that theoretically measure the same construct, in which two traditional measures of this stage are Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (i.e., α and CR, respectively) whose acceptable values are above 0.70 for confirmatory studies (Hair et al., 2021). The answers obtained via the questionnaire have internal consistency, since the α and CR values are in the range between 0.605 and 0.943 for all the first-order constructs. This data can be seen in Table 16.

Table 16 – Reliability and convergent validity

LV	α	CR	AVE
Meaning & Accomplishment (M&A)	0.808	0.887	0.724
Absence of Negative Emotions (ANE)	0.788	0.876	0.702
Atmosphere (ATM)	0.857	0.913	0.777
Customer Service (CS)	0.845	0.907	0.764
Engagement (ENG)	0.605	0.786	0.557
Infrastructure (INF)	0.738	0.852	0.657
Maneuverability (MNV)	0.809	0.886	0.722
Neighborhood Attractiveness (NA)	0.91	0.929	0.653
Orientation (OR)	0.673	0.859	0.754
Positive Emotions (PE)	0.909	0.943	0.846
Patronage Intention (PI)	0.816	0.888	0.725
Parking (PK)	0.649	0.81	0.587
Relationships (REL)	0.813	0.877	0.641
Retention Proneness (RP)	0.866	0.918	0.79
Tenant Mix (TMIX)	0.9	0.937	0.833
Satisfaction (SAT)	0.836	0.899	0.75
Security (SEC)	0.892	0.921	0.701
Subjective Well-Being (SWB)	0.873	0.908	0.663

Source: the author (2024)

The concept of convergent validity is understood as the extent to which the construct converges its explanation in the explained variance of its indicators. This metric is commonly measured via the Average Variance Explained (AVE) and is defined as the average of the squares of the outer loadings of all the indicators associated with a specific latent variable (i.e. the communality of a construct whose acceptable values are above 0.50; Sarstedt et al., 2022). As shown in Table 16, all the constructs have acceptable AVE values above the threshold recommended by current literature (i.e. values ranging from 0.557 to 0.846).

The fourth and final stage in the evaluation of the reflective measurement model refers to the analysis of discriminant validity, meaning that if the designated constructs are empirically distinct from each other (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As explained in Table 13 of the method section, three metrics were used to check for the existence of discriminant validity: HTMT, FL, and $X\lambda$.

HTMT discriminates validity between constructs via a ratio between the average of the indicator correlations for all constructs (i.e., HT) and the average value of the geometric mean of the indicator-construct correlation of a specific latent variable (i.e., MT; Hair et al., 2021). The result of this test indicates that the vast majority of constructs are indeed valid as they remained below the threshold of 0.85. Two relationships have an HTMT value value higher

than expected: meaning & accomplishment and engagement; positive emotions and engagement. however it was decided to keep the construct as the following two additional tests did not indicate a problem with discriminant validity.

FL is a traditional way of checking the discriminant validity of a structural equation model, in which constructs are considered valid when the $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ value of each construct is greater than the correlation with the other variables present in the structural model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Results indicates that the constructs are valid, since in all cases the $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ of a specific construct is greater than the correlation with the other 17 latent variables.

$X\lambda$ is an alternative test of discriminant validity based on comparing the loadings of each indicator with all the constructs, in which the outer loadings of the indicators theoretically related to a specific latent variable are expected to be greater than the correlation with the other existing ones (Hair et al., 2021). The results of the third robustness test corroborate the argument that the constructs are valid because all the cross-loadings are better related to their own construct compared to the others.

This study posits a reflective-formative theoretical model, so the tests and metrics for measuring the reliability and validity of the three second-order constructs differ from those carried out in the first stage. In this case, Sarstedt et al. (2019) suggests the following procedures: redundancy analysis, collinearity test and significance and relevance of external weights.

Convergent validity is attested when formative indicators have a high correlation with an alternative reflective measure on the same concept (Chin, 1998). All three latent variables (correlation between SE and global measure = 0.70, $t = 30.186$, $p < 0.01$; AA and global measure = 0.702, $t = 33.423$, $p < 0.01$; CWB and global measure = 0.702, $t = 28.934$, $p < 0.01$) were acceptable. In addition, the collinearity tests indicate that no VIF value exceeds the upper limit of 5 (i.e., values ranging from 1.21 to 2.14).

The bootstrapping procedure was used to assess the statistical significance of each of the 16 formative indicators constructed from the first-order latent variable scores. As can be seen in Table 17, nine indicators have statistically significant external weights at a 95% confidence level. However, the other non-significant indicators should be kept in the model as the relevance analysis indicates that their external loadings are statistically significant and higher than the lower threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 17 – significance and relevancy analysis

path	Outer Weight (OW)	SD	t	p	λ	SD	t	p
ATM →SE	0.489	0.074	6.636	0.000	0.922	0.022	42.137	0.000
CS→SE	0.264	0.071	3.738	0.000	0.824	0.033	24.930	0.000
INF→SE	0.036	0.067	0.536	0.592	0.682	0.043	15.738	0.000
MNV→SE	0.116	0.054	2.143	0.032	0.500	0.057	8.760	0.000
PK →SE	0.124	0.060	2.070	0.039	0.589	0.051	11.561	0.000
TMIX→SE	0.080	0.081	0.988	0.323	0.714	0.046	15.567	0.000
SEC→SE	0.098	0.065	1.520	0.128	0.701	0.041	16.978	0.000
OR→SE	0.070	0.070	0.996	0.319	0.709	0.043	16.484	0.000
REL→CWB	0.352	0.060	5.916	0.000	0.833	0.030	27.509	0.000
PE →CWB	0.522	0.063	8.266	0.000	0.930	0.017	53.266	0.000
ENG→CWB	0.202	0.058	3.469	0.001	0.810	0.031	26.382	0.000
ANE →CWB	0.072	0.041	1.771	0.077	0.322	0.066	4.888	0.000
M&A→CWB	0.046	0.062	0.742	0.458	0.759	0.037	20.644	0.000
RP→AA	0.285	0.044	6.486	0.000	0.699	0.036	19.273	0.000
SAT→ AA	0.257	0.052	4.975	0.000	0.712	0.037	19.114	0.000
PI → AA	0.082	0.042	1.945	0.052	0.598	0.044	13.442	0.000

Source: the author (2024)

It is possible to confirm that the external model is robust and capable of testing the hypotheses proposed in the next step.

4.1.3 Study one – structural model analysis

This stage is subdivided into four steps: collinearity analysis of the structural model; significance and relevance of the proposed structural paths; explanatory power of the model; and predictive power of the model.

Problems related to collinearity can also generate biases in the results of the structural model, so the existence of this problem is ascertained in a similar way to that used in the analysis of formative indicators (i.e. VIF). The results indicate that the VIF values for the constructs present in the structural model vary between 0.00 and 0.00, meaning that no collinearity problems were detected.

The next step consists of detecting the statistical existence and strength of the relationship between each of the latent variables, using two tools for this analysis: the PLS-SEM algorithm and the bootstrapping procedure (Hair et al., 2021). The relationship between two latent variables is represented by structural paths (i.e. circles and arrows in a diagram generated by the PLS-SEM algorithm) and mathematical values that vary between -1 and +1, called path coefficients (β) and responsible for quantifying the strength of the relationship between two constructs (i.e. a β of 0.10 indicates that when there is an increase of one SD in the value of the independent variable, the dependent variable increases by 0.10 times SD). Table

18 shows the values of the path coefficients and their respective metrics of statistical significance (i.e., β , SD, p-value, t-value, and confidence intervals) for all six direct relationships contained in the structural model and the two hypothesized specific indirect effects.

Table 18 – path effects

Direct Path	β	SD	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SE → CWB	0.7441	0.0230	32.3247	0.0000	0.70226	0.79205
SE → NA	-0.05400	0.04709	1.14665	0.25158	-0.13243	0.05142
CWB → SWB	0.48679	0.03632	13.40228	0.0000	0.41862	0.56084
CWB → AA	0.69774	0.02890	24.14320	0.0000	0.64123	0.75427
SWB → NA	0.13118	0.03481	3.76883	0.0001	0.06249	0.19923
AA → NA	0.78151	0.04210	18.56229	0.0000	0.68773	0.85397
Specific Indirect Path	β	SD	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SE→CWB→SWB→NA	0.04752	0.01333	3.56468	0.00037	0.02270	0.07487
SE→CWB→AA→NA	0.40579	0.03472	11.68767	0.0000	0.34163	0.47569
Total Indirect Path	β	SD	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SE → NA	0.4533	0.035	12.60	0.0000	0.386	0.525
Total effect path	β	SD	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
SE → NA	0.399	0.041	9.59	0.0000	0.329	0.491

Source: the author (2024)

The results of the bootstrapping procedure with 10000 subsamples indicate that the experience with the servicescape of the neighborhood retail agglomeration has a positive and significant impact on the consumer well-being of the residents of that region ($\beta = 0.744$; SD = 0.023; $p < 0.001$; $t = 32.324$; 95% CI [0.702;0.792]), indicating that the stimuli present within the service encounter of both a specific store and the entire neighborhood retail agglomeration make up an interesting and influential offer in improving the individual's consumer life domain. However, the retail agglomeration's servicescape experience was not statistically significant in terms of the attractiveness of the neighborhood ($\beta = -0.054$; SD = 0.047; $p = 0.251$; $t = 1.14$; 95% CI [-0.132;0.051]), meaning that everyday interactions within a consumer environment do not directly affect more abstract assessments of individuals' regional evaluations.

Consumer well-being has a positive and significant impact on both subjective well-being ($\beta = 0.486$; SD = 0.036; $p < 0.000$; $t = 13.402$; 95% CI [0.418;0.560]) and the attractiveness of the high street retail agglomeration ($\beta = 0.697$; SD = 0.028; $p < 0.000$; $t = 24.14$; 95% CI [0.641;0.754]), results that corroborate what is speculated by bottom-up spillover theory when it postulates that specific domains of an individual's life influence general

evaluations of their well-being, as well as indicating a strong relationship between well-being derived from consumption and its impact on the attractiveness of a shopping area.

Analysis of the path coefficients of the direct antecedents of neighborhood attractiveness indicate that subjective well-being ($\beta = 0.131$; $SD = 0.034$; $p < 0.001$; $t = 3.77$; 95% CI [0.062;0.199]) and the attractiveness of the local retail agglomeration ($\beta = 0.781$; $SD = 0.042$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 18.56$; 95% CI [0.687;0.853]) have a positive and significant impact on the evaluation of how much a neighborhood is seen as a good place to live, work, visit or consume. The analysis of the direct paths suggests that the direct impact of the retail agglomeration's offer focuses on a more concrete level of association between commercial interaction and residents' subjective evaluations (i.e., well-being domains directly linked to the consumption experience) to the detriment of more abstract associations (i.e., subjective levels of well-being and general evaluation of larger geographical locations), line with was hypothesized in H3.

The impact of the retail agglomeration's servicescape on the attractiveness of the neighborhood through the well-being dimensions is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.047$; $SD = 0.013$; $p < 0.001$; $t = 3.56$; 95% CI [0.022;0.074]), in line with the logic of extrapolating well-being dimensions within subjective quality of life factors as an intermediary recommended by H1. In addition, the indirect impact of the cluster's servicescape on attractiveness evaluations via concrete evaluation levels is also positive and statistically significant (i.e., mediation between consumer well-being and agglomeration attractiveness; $\beta = 0.405$; $SD = 0.034$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 11.68$; 95% CI [0.341;0.475]), corroborating what was described in hypothesis H2. In addition, the total indirect effect of experience with the neighborhood retail agglomeration on the attractiveness of the neighborhood is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.4533$; $SD = 0.035$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 12.60$; 95% CI [0.386;0.525]) and represents the larger portion of the total effect between SE and NA ($\beta = 0.399$; $SD = 0.041$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 9.59$; 95% CI [0.329;0.491]).

The explanatory power of the model is traditionally measured via the coefficient of determination (R^2), which represents the degree of variance explained by the endogenous variables by their exogenous variables (Hair et al., 2021). It is mathematically represented by a value between 0 and 1, in which the current literature recommends that values of 0.75, 0.50 and 0.25 are generally considered to be strong, average and weak, respectively (Sarstedt et al, 2019). However, acceptable R^2 values should be based on the study history of each subject in question (Sarstedt et al., 2022). In addition, it is possible to measure the relative contribution of each exogenous variable to the total R^2 value using the f^2 effect size test (Cohen, 1988).

The adjusted R^2 values vary between 0.235 (SWB) and 0.663 (NA) and are considered satisfactory given the size and complexity of the theoretical model. In addition, the f^2 values range from 0.005 to 0.512 and serve to indicate that the main motor latent variables in the model are SE with CWB and AA.

The predictive power of the model was also measured using the PLS_Predict algorithm. This tool assesses out-of-sample predictive power via Stone-Geisser's test (i.e., Q^2 ; Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1974) and a comparative Root Mean Square-Error (RMSE) analysis between the PLS-SEM model and an alternative model based on simple linear regression (LM). Current literature recommends that positive values of Q^2 and negative values of the difference between $RMSE_{PLS-SEM}$ and $RMSE_{LM}$ are required for most indicators (Shmueli et al., 2019). The result of the PLS_Predict algorithm is shown in Table 19.

Table 19 - PLSpredict

Manifest Variable	Q^2	PLS-SEM	LM
NA1	0.146	1.444	1.454
NA2	0.156	1.208	1.22
NA3	0.181	1.400	1.426
NA4	0.081	1.857	1.863
NA5	0.215	1.497	1.493
NA6	0.206	1.358	1.39
NA7	0.21	1.373	1.403

Source: the author (2024)

Q^2 values vary between 0.081 and 0.215. In addition, the comparative analysis of the difference in RMSE per indicator is favorable for six out of seven dependent variable indicators (i.e., $RMSE_{PLS-SEM} \text{ minus } RMSE_{LM} < 1.00$). Therefore, out-of-sample predictive power is confirmed.

An alternative way of assessing the model's predictive power is via the Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (i.e. CVPAT; Sharma et al., 2022). This test uses the prediction error of the PLS-SEM model and compares them with the average of the indicators (AI) and a simple linear regression model, in which negative and statistically significant values of the difference between PLS-SEM with AI and PLS-SEM with LM are satisfactory. The results of the CVPAT test are shown in Table 20.

Table 20 - CVPAT

Latent Variable	Average Loss Difference (ALD)	t	p
Overall (vs IA)	-0.4610	10.3140	0.0000
Overall (vs LM)	-0.0420	2.8440	0.0050

Source: the author (2024)

The predictive power of the theoretical model is confirmed by demonstrating that proposed model performs better than a naive or conservative model (i.e. PLS-SEM versus IA and PLS-SEM versus LM, respectively), meaning that the average prediction error of the PLS-SEM model is lower than alternative explanatory models.

After investigating the theoretical model via PLS-SEM, the next study aims to further corroborate the H1-H3 hypothesis test by gaining a deeper understanding of what was proposed in P1.

4.2 STUDY TWO – SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The interviews were carried out over a two-month period (i.e. November and December 2023), in which 30 people were invited to take part in the interviews via self-declared email at the end of study one, ending with a total of 22 completed interviews. Of the total interviews, half were conducted online (8 via the Zoom platform and 3 via Microsoft Teams) and the other half in person at the interviewee's preferred location (i.e. 7 took place in the retail agglomeration itself, 3 at the interviewee's place of work and 1 in a public square in the city). The detailed profile of the interviewees can be seen in Table 21.

Table 21 – Interviewee’s profile

Name	Age	TLIN	RAPF	Occupation	Neighborhood Type
Jack	24	2	High	Marketing professional	High-Income
Marcus	58	20	High	Civil Servant	High-Income
Lily	34	8	Low	School Teacher	High-Income
Arthur	36	36	High	Local Pet shop owner	High-Income
Anna	47	13	High	Civil Servant	High-Income
Jamie	38	38	High	Sales consultant and Community Leader	Low-Income
John	56	38	High	Local Stationery Owner	Low-Income
Eddie	50	40	Low	Lab Technician	Low-Income
Andrew	63	60	High	Doorman	Low-Income
Janice	22	1	Low	HR assistant	Low-Income
Nick	50	45	High	Priest	Low-Income
Patricia	21	2	High	Real estate broker	Low-Income
Mary	56	56	High	Civil Servant	Low-Income
Poppy	24	24	High	Social Worker	Low-Income
Elizabeth	63	33	Low	Cleaning Woman	Low-Income
Lucy	26	23	Low	Dietician	Low-Income

Table 21 – Interviewee’s profile (end)

Name	Age	TLIN	RAPF	Occupation	Neighborhood Type
Vincent	21	3	Low	Finance assistant	Low-Income
Ruby	22	3	High	Law assistant	High-Income
Matthew	52	52	Low	Local Bar owner	High-Income
Bruno	42	42	High	Local Bakery and Pizzeria owner	High-Income
Diana	38	18	High	Local Restaurant owner	High-Income
Britney	44	6	Low	Tattoo artist	High-Income

Source: the author (2024)

Note: TLIN = Time Living in the Neighborhood; RAPF = Retail Agglomeration Purchase Frequency

Most of the interviewees indicated that they visited the retail agglomeration in their neighborhood very often ($N = 14$; 63.63%), had a high average age ($M_{age} = 40.31$ years; $SD_{age} = 14.54$ years) and had lived in the neighborhood for a long time ($M_{dwelling\ time} = 25.59$ years; $SD_{dwelling\ time} = 19.29$ years). It is worth noting that the average duration of these interviews was 21 minutes ($M_{duration} = 20.90$ minutes; $SD_{duration} = 5.95$ minutes). The next five sections deal with specific and recurring themes from the interviews.

4.2.1 Study two – everyday life in a retail agglomeration

The existence of a neighborhood retail agglomeration permeates the daily lives of most of the interviewees, but it is possible to notice how different functions are attributed to the agglomeration depending on the purchase frequency of the individual. The next four interview clippings converge on the notion of utilitarian behavior associated with low shopping frequency.

Lily is a business academic who has taught at several colleges in her city. She is 34 years old and has lived in a high-income per capita neighborhood for 8 years, moving from living with her parents to living on her own since she got her first job. When asked about her daily shopping in the neighborhood, she said the following:

“Today I went to pick up a dress from the dry cleaner. Usually, when I'm shopping for something small, I go to the supermarket nearby or to the neighborhood pharmacy. But it's rare that I buy clothes in my neighborhood, for example. I go to more basic services like the pharmacy and the grocery store. Because it's more utilitarian, you know?”

Elizabeth is a 63-year-old woman who has worked as a cleaning lady for most of her life. She currently works in three different homes in the same neighborhood as Lily, but lives

in a low-income neighborhood on the other side of town. This is her opinion on her daily shopping in the neighborhood:

“Generally, I don't shop there in my neighborhood, I go out on the street, go to the grocery store nearby, buy a soft drink or somethin'... there's no bakery there. You have to go down [the hill] to another neighborhood to buy bread at the bakery, right? [pause] And there are only small grocery stores, it's not a supermarket. And the grocery stores there are very expensive, the products are very expensive, right? So I usually buy near where I'm cleaning, but I don't buy much right where I live”.

Eddie is a middle-aged man who works in the dispensary of the local university hospital in the center of the city's metropolitan area. He lives in the suburbs of a neighboring city and spends between 2 and 4 hours a day on public transport commuting to and from work. He spoke briefly and succinctly about his daily shopping routine in the neighborhood:

“Just the basics. It's just the basics there, next to my house. The bakery, the market, just... Another thing that's missing at home, nothing much.”

Vincent is a young adult who has come from the countryside to work and study at the same university where Eddie works, and who has decided to live in a low-income neighborhood close to his school. When asked about a daily trip to his neighborhood retail agglomeration, he said the following words:

“Look, here in my neighborhood I tend to be task-oriented, more in the sense of food purchases, right? But retail-wise, I tend to go a lot to... DIY stores, when we need to fix something, need some supplies, right? Then both Leroy Merlin and a store around the corner have these materials, so I usually go there regularly. I usually go to the supermarket and the local farmer's market. I usually... I think it is. And I usually get my bike repaired around here, but that's rarer, right? [pause] and let me think of it as more of a day-to-day thing... Oh, and I also like to shop here for cell phone accessories. And that's what I buy around here”.

Although they frequent similar places, each interviewee lives in a different neighborhood, with different characteristics. However, all of them declared that they visited and bought from their neighborhood retail agglomerations infrequently. Recognizing the need to go to the local retail agglomeration is closely linked to a utilitarian purchasing motivation (highlighted by Lily's explicit use of the term) and a goal-orientated store browsing (i.e., exemplified by the jargon mentioned by Vincent), especially for recurring purchase items or those that require little cognitive effort to make the purchase (i.e., as stated by Eddie and Elizabeth). There is no concern to socialize with the other people in the vicinity or the need to meet socio-emotional needs (Wilson and Hodges, 2022). Vincent's recollection appeared to be an exception, but his explanation converges towards a more utilitarian behavior:

“Uhm... I love the neighborhood farmers' market. [pause] The market takes place every Saturday, from 5am to 1pm. I usually buy from the same stalls, but I don't really make friends with the people, it's more of a friendliness thing. I usually talk to the retailers, and also to someone I know who is there. But most of the time I do my stuff rather than chat... Because generally, when I want to get straight to the point, I don't usually talk, no, when I want to be more... more objective. When I do talk, it's always something more friendly, something like: "Give me this, bye, how are you?" If it's with a market vendor, it's more friendly, when I talk to them. Ah, there's a difference, there is a difference. If compared to that day-to-day business... day-to-day business is more formal, right... and the treatment is also more objective... so when I talk to them day-to-day, we're more... let's say, I need to buy a cell phone case, for example, then I go there and I don't interact in the same way as at the farmer's market, because I'm already being more objective, then the treatment is more formal, it's more: "I need this, you can give me this for such and such a price" So, even to get that sympathy, it's a bit more complicated.”

The next four stories show a different point of view, in that they are all based on interviewees who visit and shop frequently in their local retail agglomeration. Marcus is a civil servant at the local university who has lived in the same neighborhood as Lily for 20 years. His comment about his daily neighborhood retail life was said in a very humorous tone:

“I normally leave my house and walk calmly to the local stores and the main neighborhood supermarket without any problems. I usually visit supermarkets, clothes stores, greengroceries, DIY stores, bakeries, bars, coffee shops, things like that [...] I always like to go to the same stores because I get to know the people and talk to them a lot, exchange ideas with them. It's not just about the buying process. I tend to interact with everyone (customers, employees, retailers) because most of the places I go to have an acquaintance who works there or a friend who is shopping there at the moment”.

Arthur lives and works in the same neighborhood as Marcus, owning a pet shop for 10 years on one of the main streets in the neighborhood. He describes his daily life in the neighborhood's retail sector as follows:

“You can do whatever you want to do [in the neighborhood] by foot. It has this advantage. Here today, for example, unless I'm going to the market to buy something [which I know I'm going to buy a lot of products], I am walking. I try to solve everything as quickly as possible by walking. I usually go to the bakery, sometimes a fitness store, a men's shirt store, the gym, the supermarket. [...] Everyone here has seen each other at least once on the street. The example I can give is even here [at my shop], because whether you like it or not there are a lot of people who come here that I've certainly seen in the town square, that I've seen in the gym, that I see in the gym every day, sometimes passing in the street or at the weekend, going to a bar or a restaurant, you end up... like this, you end up socializing with people. Like here, I'm coming back from the gym, I pass by someone I know, I pass by a friend of my father's, who I already know has been a friend for many years, since my father has always lived here too. So many of my customers are already known to me before I have the store. Not acquaintances that I talk to, but that I see often. They go to the same places, you know?”

Jamie has only lived in one neighborhood in his entire life, the same low-income neighborhood in which he is currently a community leader. His account of everyday retail life is also told in a cheerful tone:

“Shopping, you know. When I go to the shops, I do my shopping for food, health, you know? And so... And sometimes you're out and about, right? So, after all, sometimes on a Sunday when you're off, ah, I'll go... Sometimes I go for a coffee in a bakery, sometimes to see people, that sort of thing. Get out of the house a bit. And those times you leave the house, you come here to your local retailer. [pause] Dude... As a resident, as well as being a community leader, the shopkeeper sometimes passes on life experience. The bakery that we are in is over 50 years old. So, it's from father to son, that sort of thing. So, you see a generation growing up at the beginning of all this”.

John lives in the same place and for the same length of time as Jamie, inheriting the management of the local stationery shop from his now retired father. This store has been located in the central retail agglomeration of the neighborhood for over 30 years, and he is already training his daughter to take over the management of the store in the near future. His view of daily life in the neighborhood is as follows:

“Normally when... my shopping routine at my neighborhood is at the supermarket, local shoe shops, snacks at the snack bar in the town square, it's pretty quiet. It's a reasonably good routine. I have a good relationship with local businesses. [pause] One positive thing? The fact that I can find practically everything I want here. It's hard to find what I'm looking for that is unavailable around here. what the DIY store doesn't have, for example. So, these are very positive aspects, both in terms of the supply and the coexistence with local commerce”.

It is noticeable that the last few excerpts differ from the reports of those interviewed who visited their local neighborhood retail agglomeration infrequently. Although there is no elimination of the utilitarian nature of everyday shopping in a retail agglomeration (i.e., mainly in the similar type of stores visited or in the reinforcement of the practicality of the neighborhood store, as noted in Marcus' and Arthur's statements), the tone of the interviewees' speech has a more positive character, of pride in the practicality and variety of stores in their neighborhood (i.e., personified in Arthur's and John's speeches), as well as the tone of familiarity with the people who coexist on the premises, the calm and peaceful environment in which to travel and socialize with other people (whether they are shopkeepers or not), and the generational aspect of neighbourhood commerce (explicitly stated by Jamie).

These topics converge towards a more positive and pleasurable view of the shopping experience in the local retail agglomeration (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), in which frequent consumers can experience this more intensely, meaning that the positive points of shopping locally go beyond practicality due to the short distance and are similar to hedonic purchasing

motivation objectives (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). In addition, a person who frequents the retail agglomeration in their neighborhood increases their familiarity with the place and the people who frequent it (Pan and Zinkhan, 2006), which can increase the likelihood of creating positive social ties with other consumers or shopkeepers (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003).

The contrast between interviewees' points of view along the purchase frequency spectrum is in line with the literature on patronage intention being influenced by social factors derived from situations occurring in retail agglomerations (Blut et al., 2018). The point of socialization in a retail environment is explored in more detail in the next section.

4.2.2 Study two – neighborhood retail agglomeration's social factors

The relationship with other people within a neighborhood retail shopping situation was described in a positive light by most of the interviewees. Shortly after commenting that he is a very sociable person, Marcus makes the following comment:

“Like meeting up with someone in a shop? Yes! Sometimes at the beer distributor, then it becomes a neighborhood bar, you know? This has happened several times, and we end up building friendships and nurturing relationships with people. I have many friendships that were born in these places, especially at the food truck stands in the town square... moments of music, culture and leisure sponsored by the neighborhood association.”

His statement corroborates the notion that the retail environment contributes to building the social life of its customers by providing an environment for building social relationships (Rosenbaum and Montoya, 2007). In addition, Lucy is a nutritionist who works in the same place as Eddie and has lived in the same neighborhood as Jamie and John since childhood. This is her initial opinion of the social side of her neighborhood retail agglomeration:

“Yes. Ah, because it's part of my daily life, part of my culture. Because my social life from a very early age was developed with people who also live in the neighborhood.... [the local retail agglomeration] It's usually a meeting place for friends who also live in the neighborhood and get together to socialize. That's it.”

During the interview, Lucy made an additional comment about her relationship with local retailers:

“They're usually people I'm familiar with, right? So, the people who both work there and go there have been there for many years, so you end up creating a certain contact with these people for a long time... An example: A shop owner, a clothes shop owner, who has known me since I was a little girl, she ended up becoming a family friend. We have more intimate contact on subjects, about each other's lives...”

This statement allows us to add that the retail environment is not just a place for commercial transactions, but also a space for building socio-cultural identity (Rosenbaum and Massiah, 2011). Therefore, neighborhood retail has a restorative potential as it is closely related

to the daily lives of those who live nearby (Rosenbaum et al., 2016). An analogous point of view to Lucy's came from the interview with Nick, a resident and pastor of the Presbyterian church in this same neighborhood:

“Yes, it is indeed. You end up becoming part of the family, you know, the company, you end up... Yes, there have been interesting situations, you know, where you go to someone's store so much that on their birthday they invite you to their birthday party... "Oh, it's my birthday, come over, I live here in such and such a place". Then you see that it's no longer just a business relationship, it's a friendship relationship, and I've already experienced that. [pause] it's also happened that I'm passing by [the retail agglomeration] and then you have to wait until an appointment. Then I get to the town square early, right? Then, ah, I'm here doing nothing, I go to the stationery store to socialize, right? which I frequent a lot. Then, as I already have a lot of experience and knowledge, you can sit there and chat while you wait for your time to come. I particularly do this with the stores I have the most relationships with. At the bakery or the neighborhood butcher's, these are places I'm already well known, right? So it has happened, yes, that I necessarily go there not to buy, but just to socialize with people”.

This statement is interesting because reinforces the function of the meeting point elucidated by Marcus, while also reinforcing Lucy's view and explaining the role of familiarity with the place and the people who frequent the retail agglomeration as an important point for creating positive personal relationships (Parish et al., 2008).

Ruby is an aspiring lawyer who lives in a high-income neighborhood next to her law school. This is her opinion on the importance of social interactions within a high street retail agglomeration:

“Yes, quite a lot. Our interaction with the retailer is very important because we create bonds with them too. I don't think I've ever had one... I don't even know just them [the retailer friends], but everyone there. I don't think I've ever been treated differently, apart from cordiality and a lot of sympathy. It's very important because it captivates the customer, it makes you come back more often, it makes you want to buy there and not elsewhere, it boosts the economy there. That's why I think this bond is so important.”

Ruby's opinion reinforces the importance of interactions between individuals in a physical store shopping situation, especially between retailers and their customers (Falter and Hadwich, 2020). In addition, it also elucidates the positive impact of customer rapport in a retail context (Eroglu et al., 2022).

Another similar point of view is that of Mary, a city hall employee and former community leader in the neighborhood where she lives. Below is her opinion on interacting with people in the retail agglomeration:

“It's important to interact with people in the shops, in the streets, it's very important for me in the shops. And that's what I do too. I usually stop to buy things and leave, because it's always too busy, but it never works out, because we stop and talk about the life of the shopkeeper who's there, there's always a story, something to tell, or we meet

a resident of the neighborhood who's always telling us something about their life, because I've been a community leader for two terms, there's always a situation... that needs some help, something. And talking about commerce or the person's own life because that's what neighborhood commerce is like, you get to know everyone and after a trip to the supermarket or the bakery, it takes about half an hour for you to meet a resident, meet someone else, someone you haven't seen for a long time, you know? So it's usually a chat, something like that, you know?"

Going to a retail agglomeration near your home whose function is to meet both your commercial needs (e.g., products that are missing from the pantry) and social needs (e.g., making friends with people who live near you, whether they are customers or shopkeepers) contributes to the generation of positive behaviors towards the neighborhood retail agglomeration (Grimmer, 2021).

An additional point can be seen in the speech of Andrew, a 60-year-old man who works as a doorman in Arthur's building during the night shift and lives in a poor neighborhood near his workplace:

"I often go to the supermarket and the bakery, and there I meet several childhood friends who were also born there and frequent the same stores. We interact a lot. Absolutely. It's because it's something that, I don't know, you pass on trust to others too, you know? The trust you have in the retailer, you pass on that trust to others".

When explaining the issue of trust, Andrew's opinion elucidates that there is a need for third parties in some neighborhood retail purchase situations, a practical and positive example of service encounters with a third party involved (Abboud et al., 2021). The fact that in this context there are people with a high degree of intimacy with each other (i.e. between consumers or between the consumer and the shopkeeper) contributes to a reduction in information asymmetry and a more horizontal power relationship (Abboud et al., 2023).

A different view was expressed by Janice, a 22-year-old who recently moved from another city to her current neighborhood to live with her husband. When asked about her interaction with people in the neighborhood, this was her first response:

"Not exactly. But of all the shops around here, both here and in neighboring districts, interaction is basically saying hello and good morning. you don't need much interaction. As for the little shops, they're tiny too, so we just go in and say, "I'm having a look". Then the person sometimes comes to see us, if we call [long pause] So, I'm not a big fan of talking to them [people at retail agglomeration] for that reason, so they're just residents who hang around the store and tell people about their lives. Yeah ... mainly in the market, stationery and bakery. They go to the shops to keep up to date. I think it's because there are so many elderly people. Most of them I see are over 40, 50 years old, and they like to go for a walk around the neighborhood. My mother-in-law, for example, was just going to the market to look at things in the blazing sun. She didn't even intend to buy anything, she just wanted to take a walk around. I don't have that habit. When I go, I go with something in mind, do it and leave. But I know people who don't do it like that, who are more relaxed, who go there to socialize and so on".

In addition to the fact that her account converges on the notion of neighborhood retail as something essentially utilitarian for people who visit the neighborhood infrequently, her lack of trust with her neighbors doesn't make her deny the positive point of the retail agglomeration as a place for people to meet and a catalyst for social relationships, and how important this can be for certain residents, especially those who have a social life linked to the daily life of the neighborhood (Urtasun and Gutiérrez, 2006).

Poppy's opinion follows a similar line of reasoning. This interviewee is a social worker who has lived all her life in the neighborhood where she was born. When asked about her interaction with people in the neighborhood's retail scene, she said the following words:

“I usually go alone or with my son. My contact is basically with the cashier. I don't usually interact with other people in these places [pause] Because it's already a well-known place, I don't find it so difficult to need someone there to guide me so that I can buy those products. For me, it's not so important to create bonds, because it's a fairly mellow relationship. I don't have that much interaction on a friendship level, or that thing, that social and emotional bond with these places. For the people in my neighborhood, it is. A lot. It's a... In the grocery store near my house, there are usually several chairs outside and people sit there to talk, buy a candy, a water and sit there chatting. So I feel that it's quite important for them, yes. For me, not so much, because I don't usually stay at home. And when I'm at home, I'm not usually on the street either”.

This interviewee's view is in line with Janice's point of view, indicating that people with a more utilitarian purchasing motivation give less weight to the social relationships that come from commercial spaces, but they have a clear view that this does not prevent other residents from enjoying the local commerce socially. So there are factors that can make social interactions within a neighborhood retail agglomeration less than desirable, but the point of agreement is that this place contributes positively to the social life of residents (Rosenbaum, 2006).

A discussion based on the social impact on the well-being of individuals is reported in the next section.

4.2.3 Study two – neighborhood retailing and resident's well-being perceptions

There is a consensus among the interviewees that the retail agglomeration in their neighborhood contributes to the well-being of the residents. Marcus' opinion on the subject is as follows:

“When you go and meet a friend [at the retail agglomeration], talk, chat, exchange a joke, laugh... all this will affect the rest of your day in a pleasant way, it gives you a greater sense of joy... Whenever you have friendly contacts with people - and the moment of purchase can also be that - you will have a greater sense of belonging to

the neighborhood, more satisfaction. And this corroborates your idea of continuing to live there, being well off in a place that you like, that welcomes you and brings you friendships and other positive interpersonal relationships.”

This statement corroborates findings in the literature in which the retail environment plays a key role in building the social life of residents (Sun et al., 2021), contributing to improving the well-being of those who go there and build friendships with consumers and shopkeepers (El Hedli et al., 2013). Andrew's opinion corroborates this line of reasoning:

“Whenever I go to buy something, there's always someone there and I meet them, chat. So you go, without the aim of meeting someone, but you end up meeting them. They're super friendly. It's very nice to see people going out, coming in and buying and so on, and chatting. It's very nice. People have a very heavy routine, but going there, talking to people helps, you get a lighter head, you know? you forget your problems. If you want to forget your problems, go to the bakery, sit down, have a cup of coffee, someone comes in, stops and starts chatting. Have a cup of coffee together, it's very nice... It's a way of treating, you know, treating others, treating human beings. It's very “warm” if I can explain it like that. It's not “cold”, it's that warm encounter... "hello, good morning!" and so on... like, giving a hug, a handshake... it's very gratifying. But they're all friendly, they're very nice people. And that leaves an impact on me, because the free time I have is when I get home, go to the bakery, come back and sleep. And in the evening I have to work again. So it's always the same routine. But this routine makes me happy... I like it. I wouldn't leave that neighborhood for anything in the world!”

The interviewee agrees with Marcus' argument and brings up the logic of routine behaviors within the retail agglomeration as important both for building well-being and for emotional connections with the neighborhood (Sirgy and Cornwell, 2002). Jamie's opinion also converges with this logic:

“Yes, yes, yes. You come in unmotivated and leave motivated. Sometimes people see that you're sad, you know? So yes. Yes, of course. A lot, especially socializing. IBES [Neighborhood Initials], which stands for Institute of Social Welfare, right? So, socialization helps a lot. I was brought up by my grandfather, so I was shy, but I think that a lot, that dialogue with the shopkeepers from a young age, you know what it is, helps a lot with your behavior. There are retailers here who have known me since I was a child... And they are still here now, as an adult.”

Jamie's story relates to personal growth based on the relationship between consumers and retailers (Pera and Viglia, 2015). In a complementary way, Diana represents the second generation of retailers in her family, and lives on the floor above her restaurant located next to Britney's tattoo studio. Her opinion is as follows:

“For those who know you, right? So you feel at home. I feel that way about my customers. They often come to eat their home cooking [emulate homemade comfort food] ... so to speak, right? We have customers who are here every day, and sometimes I even say to the customer: "I say every day, can we do something special for you? "Tell us what you really like to eat and I'll put it on the menu, this is your home kitchen, okay?" So I think that changes things, yes, I think it's very favorable. And people come here from Monday to Saturday. [long pause] As a resident

too, right? Sometimes you walk, right? You take a stroll, so to speak, and it's comfortable, right? Making this journey [through the neighborhood's shops]. You do not have to take a car, you don't have to worry about traffic, looking for a parking space, all that stuff. Ah, it makes me happy, I like living with so many offers, right, so many good things... Suddenly, having my own business, having the satisfaction of my customers who know me, that makes me happy in my profession. I'm happy to deliver my best, especially to those who are part of my daily routine. I think that if I lived, for example, Friar's Island [the neighborhood with the highest per capita income in the city, but no local shops] I wouldn't be as happy as I am here, right? I have to take a car, go to a bakery, I have to buy the bread the day before, I don't think I'd be as happy as I am currently.”

The interviewee's speech is interesting since it corroborates to the social side of the retail agglomeration and how interactions between stakeholders are beneficial to people's sense of well-being and also denotes that aspects inherent to the retail agglomeration's servicescape (e.g., tenant mix, maneuverability, orientation) are important antecedents in building a good consumer life (El Hedli et al., 2021).

Bruno is a successful local businessman and Matthew's neighbor, owning a pizzeria and bakery in the same neighborhood where he lives. When asked about the relationship between commerce and well-being, he gives his opinion from both a resident's and a retailer's point of view:

“I find it much more pleasant. I don't like shopping malls. I find street commerce much more pleasant. Much more pleasant. You walk out and that's it. You go to the "Nippon stall" [local newsstand], you meet a friend, and then you meet another. You pass in front of "the yard" [local bar], there's someone having a beer, you have a beer with him, chat and continue your walk. Anyway, I think this perception of going to the town square, now that there are shops there, and meeting a lot of people, is something the city has never had. People have always met by appointment. I think that now we're managing to solidify this everyday coexistence that isn't linked to a formal meeting. They impact my day as a consumer, a lot. Positively, of course, because I end up going to the places where I know the owner is or that there's someone who will serve me well. And as a retailer, I think it's essential for us to be there, whether it's me or my partner, so that we can pay attention to our customers. Really listen, man. Listening to that, listening to Julia's [next-door retailer] complaint: "man, it's hard, how can homeless people stay here outside the store..." listening to someone else say: "man, it's so hot! I always come here to store, you should have coconut water". I don't know, it's the perception that my employee isn't going an extra mile to talk to my customer. Understand? The insights you get from day to day, right?”

This interviewee's opinion corroborates the aspect of the social network based on the routine of the retail agglomeration (Gilboa and Jaffe, 2021), uplifting the role of the retailer in building these interpersonal ties as a way of making both the shopping experience and people's day more pleasant (Sirgy, 2021).

When asked about a hypothetical removal of the neighborhood retail agglomeration, the interviewees demonstrated that their lives would be negatively impacted. Andrew's view sums it up:

“People are going to walk more, huh? If the shops leave, we'll have to walk more, because then it's an extra walk to get to the supermarket, right? So it's going to get tiring. When it's in the neighborhood, it's much easier. If there are no shops, then we get sad, we get sad.”

Residents who are used to the neighborhood retail agglomeration depend on its provision of products and services for a good routine (Wei et al., 2021), and also derive emotional aspects from visiting this retail format (Mari and Poggesi, 2013; Elliot et al., 2013). Diana's speech also follows this line of reasoning:

“Removing the local retail agglomerations, making the area here only residential, you'd get home back from work and you wouldn't look at anyone else, right? So I think that if you have commerce, you have a circulation, and then sometimes you meet a neighbor, you know, and you meet employees, you know, you really get to know them, I think the impact would be huge.”

Marcus complements this idea with the following sentence:

“Well, I wouldn't have the friendly contacts I have, the knowledge, the people to talk to and relax with... so I'd end up having a sadder and less enjoyable day. If there hadn't been the current neighborhood retail structure where I live, I would certainly have made fewer friends.”

Residents' social lives would be much less busy in the absence of a retail space focused on the neighborhood's utilitarian and social needs, culminating in an increase in negative emotions (Rosenbaum et al., 2020). In addition, the interviewees also say that the whole neighborhood would be negatively impacted. Bruno's opinion is as follows:

“Man, I think the city would be even more chaotic. Because there's already traffic for everything these days, depending on the time of day. And I think people would drive even more, and that would be the big problem. The increase in the number of cars, the lack of... Yeah, man, it's amazing. People take cars to walk two or three blocks. And then you don't have parking, you don't have... You don't have people walking down the street. I only see this mildly changing at the weekend. So I think it's impossible for this neighborhood to live without commerce. It would destroy the neighborhood to live without commerce. Literally, it would become almost like a cemetery.”

Jamie complements this idea with the following opinion:

“Ah, the neighborhood would die. The neighborhood was going to become a kind of “Interlagos” [nearby neighborhood]. It wouldn't have an attraction. We don't have a beach, we have town squares and so on. If there were no shops, the neighborhood would die. It would turn into an “Old West”. It would become a dormitory neighborhood, a dull neighborhood. It would have so many emotional consequences! Of course, always. Well, where would you sometimes go for coffee? You'd have to go to another community. I wouldn't go out, you know?”

So, I think so. Local commerce can't die. Just as the returned glass beer didn't die, commerce won't die. There are things that technology won't be able to break. Because here, even though we're parochial, we don't lose the habit of going to the local shops. The "80s generation" onwards likes to look at things, see things. So, yes, you buy, you like to see, touch [the products] ... sometimes you pay more, knowing that you can go to the "Mercado Livre" [online marketplace] and pay less. But just touching it, talking to it, talking to someone... it makes all the difference."

From this perspective, the neighborhood retail agglomeration contributes directly to rewarding shopping experiences that lead to satisfaction with consumption (Teller and Reutterer, 2008), a better experience within the neighborhood and positive emotions that, together, contribute to a potential improvement in residents' life satisfaction (Kjell et al., 2016). The analogies of inhospitable places (i.e. the cemetery in Bruno's words and the "old west" in Jamie's comments) lead us to understand that the combination of the retail structure and the social relationships developed in this area are very important for the well-being of the residents and for the vitality of the neighborhood as a whole (Teller and Elms, 2012).

Given this relationship between retail agglomeration and well-being and its possible impact on the attractiveness of the region, the next section focuses on the logic of building local community from the neighborhood retail agglomeration.

4.2.4 Study two – neighborhood retail agglomeration and sense of community

There is a consensus among the interviewees that neighborhood retail agglomerations contribute to building a sense of community among residents. Marcus' comment on the subject is as follows:

"I believe it does. It strongly contributes to a sense of community, a sense of belonging to the neighborhood, especially when I relate this retail to the public town square. You gather a group of food trucks in the square and this transforms the public space into a food court. Or the other example where food trucks and food stalls supply the "Chorinho" [Choromingo Project, a neighborhood event that brings musicians to play live concerts for free every Sunday at the local town square], creating a shopping environment associated with cultural attractions that make it possible to generate friendships and strengthen belonging to the neighborhood and qualifying a community".

This statement is interesting because it links the concept of sense of belonging to everyday situations in the neighborhood as well as associating the proactive participation of commerce as a catalyst for social cohesion and building community identity (Sirgy et al., 2010). Arthur's comment complements what Marcus said:

"Man, I think so. It could be a bit better, to be honest. Perhaps with a few others, it could be a little cozier, let's put it that way, but sometimes it gets too stuck in just one store. I think it lacks a bit of interaction. Another town

square, something like that, you know. Oh yeah, even something cultural, because nowadays, for example, in Lovers Square [the neighboring district], you see it on Sundays. They've started doing something nice there. You have a beach, you have a space that wasn't used. Nowadays it is, there's music playing there, the street retailers, let's put it this way, are there, they're doing their thing, people are interacting, they're spending more time by the beach. I think perhaps this is lacking a little more during the week. But at the weekend I feel there's vitality in the neighborhood.”

This interviewee's point of view reinforces the notion that the retail agglomeration environment provides a space for the development of community life (Previte and Robertson, 2019), although in the case of his neighborhood he feels it is too concentrated on one specific shopkeeper. The fact that he is both a resident and a retailer in the same neighborhood contributes to a more refined point of view regarding the association between public and private initiative, bringing into his speech the concept of regional vitality (Mouratidis and Poortinga, 2022) and arguing as a point of improvement for a better influence of the retail cluster on the attractiveness of the neighborhood (Teller and Schnedlitz, 2012; Alexander et al., 2020).

With a complementary vision, Patricia is a young real estate broker who lives in the same neighborhood as Vincent. When asked about retail contributing to the sense of community in her neighborhood, she said the following:

“It contributes because, as I told you, people here in the neighborhood are very close, everything is always very crowded, everyone is always talking, but I think the most striking thing is at the Saturday farmer's markets, where the same people are always there, and sometimes we hear... then I have the older people, as I told you, right? There are times when there's music, there are old people dancing, there's... everyone gets to know each other, they talk to each other during this little event, it's really nice. And here at night too, every day from about 6 o'clock, there are lots of food carts here, on the avenue too, all next to each other, and it ends up bringing a lot of people together, especially at weekends. It would also be a place that attracts a lot of people.”

Patricia's view of the interaction between the neighborhood retail agglomeration and the sense of local community is in line with Marcus's argument that it facilitates social cohesion between residents and Arthur's opinion that improves the vitality of the region, as well as highlighting what the other two interviewees said about the importance of regional events focused on local needs as a way of uniting residents in favor of a strong community (Dupre, 2019).

Another recurring argument in the interviews is the role of retail assistance and involvement in regional causes. This line of reasoning can be seen in Nick's comment:

“Of course. I'm a bit out of the loop today, but there's always some kind of commercial program, right? There are programs for Children's Day, special programs for Mother's Day, right? And we always take part in some way, right? It's good, I see this movement like this, I think it's very healthy for the neighborhood. The churches

sometimes take part, yes, but generally the churches have their own agenda, right, and do programs that are open to the neighborhood. So this also helps this sense of neighborhood. Here at our neighborhood there are churches that offer affordable language courses, there are churches that offer food for homeless people, there are churches that offer clothes, there are several fronts. There are churches that offer opportunities for treating drug addicts. So there are several fronts that churches work on. And I see that some of these programs have the support of the community, with the community's own participation [pause] But I see that all these groups also work in this direction and I see the support of the neighborhood leadership itself in this direction. Jamie and everyone else, they work hard..."

Due to his profession, the interviewee's point of view is interesting because he gave examples of the influence of retailers, service providers and the community leadership itself aligned with the retail calendar and with social causes that are relevant to the neighborhood. Therefore, the union of various stakeholders in favor of local needs is positive for building a sense of unity among the individuals who frequent the neighborhood (Källström et al., 2021). In a humorous tone, Jamie has a similar opinion to Nick:

"Yes, yes. Yes, businesses here are very concerned about the neighborhood. All the situations we've been through, you know, the PM strike [2017 military police strike], sometimes flooding, all those moments of difficulty always start in isolation and the businesses come together to solve the problem. Then I can also say, not just as a resident, but as a leader, that they take part in all the social actions. They're very... Here we sometimes see them hiring a homeless person. Understand? It's hard for someone to come here hungry and not be taken in. I even have a bit of difficulty with that. You know? Sometimes we even "pull their ears" [slang for scolding]."

Since the comment is focused on the role of the neighborhood retailer, it is possible to note that the members of the retail agglomeration have a proactive stance that contributes to strengthening the sense of belonging among residents (Alkire et al., 2020). A complementary opinion lies in the view of Matthew, an interviewee who has lived all his life in the same neighborhood as Arthur and currently manages his own bar located near his home.

"Yes, this neighborhood here has a great sense of community. Because since the neighborhood was created, you know, since I'm one of the oldest residents, it's... the community here has come together a lot, you know? So everyone here is united to help the neighborhood improve. Even the shopkeepers' association here collaborates a lot, you know? Like, Children's Day, they close the street... then they call the local retailers to put up their things, a food truck, a beer stall, something like that, you know? So the neighborhood is very united in this relationship. But commerce plays a big part in building the neighborhood's identity."

Matthew's view corroborates the logic of the "soul of the neighborhood" and its impact on the construction of residents' identity with their neighborhood (Kourtit et al., 2021). Mary's comment brings an additional view to that of Jamie and Matthew:

“Absolutely, absolutely. Even I, I don't know if I should say this now, but as a community leader during COVID I set up a WhatsApp group for the residents, and that's still going today. The residents themselves sell what they make, you know? And it's a very large group that has grown a lot since the pandemic. Nowadays the community buys things made by the community itself. I think that's very important, that you value the things in your neighborhood and that you buy in your neighborhood too, you know? I think this is very valuable, I think it's necessary, right? Even the retailers like it a lot, because even they themselves take part, especially the smaller businesses... most of them are part of this group and they launch their promotions in the group and then the residents go to them to buy, you know?”

It is interesting to note that there are several possibilities for the impact of community leadership in reinforcing the role of the retailer in building community identity. While Jamie comments more on the transformative role of high street retailers (Anderson and Ostrom, 2015), Mary exemplifies the creation of a rudimentary form of omnichannel as a solution to a temporary adversity (i.e. the coronavirus pandemic) that has positive consequences beyond its initial function. Therefore, the retail environment can create a sense of belonging through value co-creation (Kim and Baker, 2022).

Another argument in favor of the positive influence of neighborhood retail on the sense of community lies in a vision of mutual help between tenants and residents. Poppy's view on the subject is as follows:

“Yes, of course. Precisely because there are very old families there, it does build up the family that has a business and the family that has always bought from that business. In a question, for example, here of having two [kitchen] gas distributors and they have their fixed customers. My mother has been buying gas from the same person for 30 years. If the place is closed, she doesn't buy from the other one. She waits for the place she's always bought from to open up.”

The interviewee says that the familiarity and long-standing relationship with the retailer in the neighborhood agglomeration is a strong predictor of the patronage intention of this location, creating a relationship of trust and high resistance to switching to a new retailer (Horakova et al., 2022). Similarly, Elizabeth says the following:

“I think so, right: I'm frequenting the businesses in my neighborhood, where I live, right? And that would be good for me because it's for them to grow more, to sell more, right? And having them is more... I don't even know what to say. It's good for us, right?”

Britney's opinion complements the previous statement. She is a renowned tattoo artist, whose studio is right by Arthur's petshop and whose house is just a few meters from her workplace. She talks about retail interaction with the local community as follows:

“YES. Because of this exchange [between people] that I already see happening. It's been said that I'm prioritizing buying here, that the shopkeepers who have a store here prioritize tattooing with me, I can already see that happening.”

Residents' thinking goes beyond the need to financially help the retailers near their homes, but there is an understanding that the retail agglomeration is part of what it means to belong to that neighborhood. This logic is in line with behaviors that seek mutual gain for both parties, based on the view that the personal growth of residents and the reputation of the neighborhood itself depends on the performance of local commerce (Grzeskowiak et al., 2016)

A fourth argument that emerges from the interviews is the role of the retailer in building community well-being. According to Vincent:

“I think so, absolutely. I think that because of the interactions, it gives me more of a sense of community, because when you have more interactions or a sense of belonging, I think it helps you create a sense of community, of wanting the community's well-being, because after all, there are people who live here, there are people who feel good here, there are a lot of people who are new here and need help, so it's very much in that sense too, of strengthening the place, you know? commerce serves to strengthen social interactions and that leads to belonging [to the neighborhood]. That's more or less how I think of it...”

This interviewee's speech explains the concept of community well-being and gives an example of a reality he has experienced: feeling welcomed and belonging to the neighborhood despite living alone and far from his friends and family. This account is interesting because it draws a parallel between the social and emotional impact provided by a retail space concerned with the well-being of its customers (Sirgy and Lee, 2006). This point of view is reaffirmed by Lucy's speech:

“Yes. Ah, because it becomes a routine for people to go there. So, as well as buying what you need, you end up going there because you get to know the people, you... it creates a sense of community. Having those people in that store for many years, always in the same place, the same stores... because when you create bonds with people, it becomes part of your life to frequent those places. As much as there's a commercial relationship involved, you also go there for the social and emotional aspect of it, to meet people, to feel welcome, to know who's going to be there for you.”

The interviewee's speech anchors her argument on the point of familiarity with the retail space, its members and the social interactions that derive from it as a way of building an emotionally attractive region, meaning that the physical space of the retail agglomeration is in fact imbued with socio-cultural representations (Warnaby and Medway, 2013).

Understanding that the daily life of the retail agglomeration provides a social coexistence that catalyzes well-being and community identity, the next section seeks to understand the position

of the perception of quality of life in the evaluation of the attractiveness of the neighborhood, as proposed in P1.

4.2.5 Study two –Quality of life and neighborhood attractiveness

There is a majority opinion on the order of influence in the relationship between quality of life and neighborhood attractiveness, with particular explanations from each person. A pragmatic view on the subject lies in the opinion of Jack, a marketing professional who lives and works in a prime neighborhood of the city, but during his time as a college student he lived in a low-income neighborhood close to the current one.

“It's natural to assume that quality of life comes before the establishment of an attractive neighborhood. As long as that neighborhood doesn't offer QoL, it won't be attractive based on my individual evaluation criteria, otherwise it will be attractive purely for financial reasons. If it has no well-being to offer, you'll only evaluate the price. And if you're not guided only by price, you won't want to live there. In my mind, well-being has to come first, and then attractiveness follows. And it loses attractiveness when it stops promoting well-being too.”

The interviewee's statement makes it clear that an attractive neighborhood requires a good perception of quality of life, linking a housing decision to an assessment of the well-being that the place provides (Morris, 2019). A similar view can be seen in Matthew's comment:

“A place with a high quality of life. Well, come on. For me, real estate speculation is business. And I think... A place with a high quality of life. Well, here's what I think: a place rated as good to live in is a place where you have a good quality of life. Understand? So if you show that you have a good quality of life, it becomes a better place to live. And that's my explanation. I'm convinced that quality of life is the precursor to a good place to live.”

This view is also shared by Marcus:

“Yes, I think the main thing is the feeling of a good quality of life. Even if you don't have that quality of life because of some effects... in the case of my neighborhood, it's air pollution... but the feeling of quality of life is compensated for precisely by these shared moments of joy, belonging to the community and the question of safety [pause] In the end, I think quality of life comes first. The quality of life that will make the place a good place to live. I can't imagine a very good place to live if it doesn't have quality of life for its residents.”

Andrew's opinion also complements the point made by the previous interviewees:

“A neighborhood with a high quality of life. Because look, since the old days, nobody wants to leave the neighborhood. Everyone respects each other, greets each other and... No one wants to leave. The quality of life in the neighborhood makes everyone want to stay there, stay there, okay? It's such a good thing. Because for you to live well, the neighborhood has to have a good, structured quality of life. And that makes perfect sense.”

In addition, Vincent has a similar opinion:

“If I want to live in such-and-such a place and I know that there's a neighborhood that has... is known as good, is seen as attractive and with a good quality of life to live in, I'm going to want to live there, I'm going to try to find a way to live there, I'm not... no matter how similar the quality of other neighborhoods, or how much other factors influence it, I'm going to want a neighborhood that is attractive, despite the circumstances. And what makes a neighborhood well-liked is the perception of quality of life, without a doubt. Because real estate speculation can act on neighborhoods that aren't always good to live in, but there is real estate speculation there. If you go for it, you're going to be misled, because often those places aren't ready, neither commercially nor socially, they're not ready for you to feel that perception of quality of life. So, I think that for me, the perception of quality of life is what draws my attention the most. Property speculation doesn't have such an effect on me. I'd rather see that I can live well psychologically in that neighborhood, that it's going to be good for me, that it's going to make me feel good over time, than be in a place where the price of rent and apartments is going up... you know?”

The interviewees show that economic factors are not exclusively used to decide how attractive an area is, but rather there is a need to add socio-emotional aspects that derive from living in this neighborhood. The combination of objective and subjective well-being factors makes up the general assessment of the quality of life of the place (Cummins, 2005), which is an antecedent of how attractive the neighborhood is to live in.

Other interviewees used comparative arguments to justify their opinion on the order between the quality of life and the attractiveness of the neighborhood. Diana's speech exemplifies this point well:

“Quality of life. I think that's why, as I said, you have the facilities, right? you know everyone, sometimes in another situation you could be living in an excellent condominium, with all the fancy stuff, but not necessarily feeling well and realized. What brings me here is this quality of life, having everything so close, having the beach, having shops, meeting people. I think it's all very easy, right? You have a ballet school, you have an English school, you have the primary school, everything, you can get around. I think having a quality of life comes before qualifying as a good neighborhood to live in, because a good neighborhood to live in could be Friar's Island... But here we are close to the shops, but there's always something to do here, right? It will give you quality of life.”

Arthur also has a similar view on the subject:

“Quality of life. For example, let's make a comparison here. In our minds, a neighborhood with the highest quality of life in Vitória would be this one. And a neighborhood with a not-so-high quality of life would be “JC” [a north-side neighborhood in the same city], for example. It doesn't have the quality of life that we have here, but the quality of the service there, all the practicality, as I said, which it also has in some places, makes the neighborhood very attractive. Today I'm experiencing this because my girlfriend has been living there for a year and it's been really nice for me because I'm seeing that everything I used to do here I can do there... but you know, of course, here I feel more at ease because I've lived here for 36 years, so just like I said, you pass by on the street, you know someone, you've seen them, you feel more at ease walking around, but not having that there also attracts me, because of the quality of life, because you can go down with your dog, there's a town square, there's somewhere

you can let your dog out, there's all the shops, gyms, supermarkets, bakeries, pharmacies, everything exactly the same.”

The two interviewees use comparisons with other high-income neighborhoods to say that the absence of a neighborhood retail agglomeration has a negative impact on the quality of social relations in their daily lives, as well as making their daily lives more difficult in terms of increased costs and time spent. This opinion reinforces the discussion of the role that the retail agglomeration plays in both its ability to develop well-being for its residents (Troebbs et al., 2018) and its performance in generating a more positive view of the region in which it is located (Alexander et al., 2020).

It's worth noting that some of the interviewees found it difficult to give their opinion on the order of the relationship between quality of life and local attractiveness, although their justifications provided interesting arguments. One of these people is Lily:

“But doesn't a good place have a high quality of life? It's because I find it difficult to separate these two things. Good to live in and... quality of life. Understand? For me, a good place to live is one with a high quality of life. So, this sentence you've just said makes it clear that there's a high correlation, but that quality of life leads to attractiveness. Good to live in is, for me, a good neighborhood, good to live in is a neighborhood that has quality of life.”

The interviewee's academic background allowed her to use scientific jargon (e.g., the correlation between the two concepts), as well as making it clear that it is not easy to make a distinction between the two terms. However, in her speech it is possible to see that the local quality of life leads to an evaluation of the attractiveness of this same region linked to the concept of "good neighborhood", in other words, it denotes the association with place brand concept (Boisen et al., 2018).

With a similar point of view, Janice says the following words:

“Quality of life is always good, but what's the difference between the two? Yeah, I end up understanding it as the reputation of the place, when it's a good place to live, I understand it more as reputation. Look, to tell you the truth, I don't know if I'll be able to answer that... because I've never lived in a neighborhood with a good quality of life or a good reputation, all three of the neighborhoods I go to, none of them have a good reputation. Everyone gets scared when I tell them to come and visit me, they say: "Janice, but you live in such and such a place". No, people, calm down, it's not like that... I think that for these reasons I'd prefer a good evaluation of the place. That people first look for the reputation of the place to start going there. So, every time I tell someone to come and see me, they're already thinking about the reputation of the place, what people think, what's going around, the news, the gossip. So I think I'd prefer a good reputation first.”

This interviewee has a low frequency of shopping in her retail agglomeration and doesn't see social interaction in this place as something important in her life, but even so she recognizes the importance of a good perception of quality of life as an important point in strengthening the image of the place (Hu et al., 2022). However, the stigma of living all her life in "bad neighborhoods" makes her understand that place branding is a factor that conditions the already complex relationship between quality of life and the attractiveness of the neighborhood, a point of view that highlights the identity role of place branding (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013).

Patricia has a similar view:

"It's kind of related, isn't it? If the place has a good quality of life, it's a good place to live. But I don't know if it's quality of life, are you thinking of something more financial, a more economically attractive neighborhood, or in terms of, as I said, safety, a quiet neighborhood, with lots of people, lots of shops, because that's what I value, I also value a place that isn't a desert, a place where I can feel good, a neighborhood where I know there's safety, a place where I know there's plenty of variety, that I don't have to go far to try to get things. I value that. So I think it would be better to stay somewhere nice, somewhere quiet. Because, as I said, for me it's very interconnected. If you have a good quality of life, it's a good place to live. It's... as I said, I think it's very interconnected [LONG PAUSE] but thinking about it a bit more, I think a good quality of life is more important, it comes first."

This interviewee brings up an interesting line of reasoning by combining attributes of the neighborhood retail agglomeration's servicescape experience (e.g. safety, environment, tenant mix) considered influential in generating the retail format's attractiveness (Teller et al., 2016a) with subdimensions of well-being (e.g. social life, community life; Ekici et al., 2018; Uysal et al., 2016; Kjell and Diener, 2021) as precursors to feeling good about one's neighborhood, meaning that in her speech it is possible to elucidate the mediating role of residents' well-being in the relationship between neighborhood retail agglomeration's servicescape experience and neighborhood attractiveness.

Therefore, there is evidence to support the claim that residents' perception of quality of life is an antecedent to their assessment of the attractiveness of the neighborhood in which they live, as postulated in P1.

In the next chapter we discuss the findings of both studies presented in this section.

5.0 DISCUSSION

This chapter seeks to reconcile the empirical findings of both the survey and the interviews to generate theoretical contributions on the phenomenon of local attractiveness.

In general terms, both the quantitative and qualitative data converge on the understanding that the servicescape experience of the neighborhood retail agglomeration has a positive impact on the attractiveness of the neighborhood in which it is located, following the line of reasoning postulated by the stimulus-organism-response model (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974) and bottom-up spillover theory (Lance et al., 1989).

In this way, we highlight the importance of the role of well-being derived from the shopping experience in the neighborhood retail agglomeration by demonstrating that this is a mechanism that best explains the positive impact of the retail agglomeration's servicescape on the residents' opinion that their neighborhood is attractive as a residential and commercial region (i.e., the direct effect between experience with the servicescape of the neighborhood retail agglomeration on the attractiveness of the neighborhood is not statistically significant, only its indirect effects). This finding from the analysis of the survey data is corroborated by the analysis of the interviews, as the interviewees' statements indicate that their well-being is a consequence of their experience in the neighborhood retail agglomeration (e.g., as reported by Arthur, Diana, Jamie, and Lucy) and an important antecedent in building a positive evaluation of the image of a neighborhood as a good place to live (e.g., pragmatically described by Jack, Matthew and Marcus).

The results of the two studies show that the interaction of the consumer with the offer of the neighborhood retail agglomeration is the stimulus that leads to responses evaluating the degree of attractiveness of the location through perceptions of quality of life of these residents. This line of reasoning differs from the analyses present in the literature, since Teller and Thomson's (2012) proposition focuses on the influence of the applied marketing mix of the retail agglomeration on the execution of purchasing behaviors in this location through evaluations of the attractiveness of this retail format, while Jain et al. (2022) denotes that the social stimuli experienced within a location are the initial link in a participatory process of regional brand building that leads to positive responses towards the location and the people who live there.

The theoretical model of this study is in line with the positive impact of the retail agglomeration marketing mix on evaluations of how attractive the shopping area is (Teller and

Reutterer, 2008; Teller et al., 2016a) and can influence how attractive the neighborhood in which it is located (Teller and Elms, 2012; Alexander et al., 2020).

However, we add to the discussion the role of residents' perceptions of well-being in the light of bottom-up spillover theory (Zhao and Wei, 2019) as an important intermediate variable in the efforts of a proactive stance of the neighborhood retail agglomeration in building a neighborhood that is objectively more attractive than its surroundings. Thus, the main theoretical contribution of this work lies in two serial mediated effects based on the extrapolation between satisfaction with concrete domains of the individual's life (i.e., consumer well-being and agglomeration attractiveness) and more abstract evaluations of life satisfaction (i.e., subjective well-being and neighborhood attractiveness).

The first hypothesis posits that the physical space of the retail agglomeration as a whole (i.e. the sum of the internal and external store environments and the adjacent public space) acts as a major environmental stimulus in evaluating the attractiveness of the location (Teller et al., 2016b, de Cosmo et al., 2022), to the extent that the resident's experience of the commercial space near their home contributes to increased satisfaction with the provision of services and with an environment conducive to social relations with other stakeholders present there (El Hedli et al., 2013). In addition, consumers who are satisfied with their shopping experience tend to exhibit positive behaviors towards the place of purchase, such as: higher desire to stay (Elmashnara and Soares, 2022); lower switching intentions (Horakova et al., 2022); customer loyalty (Troebbs et al., 2018); and patronage behaviors (Arentze et al., 2005; Pan and Zhinkan, 2006; Vilnai-Yavetz et al., 2021). Furthermore, an attractive retail agglomeration improves its performance and generates positive results for the urban region in which it is located (Alexander et al., 2020), meaning that retail is an integral part of the "body and soul" of a neighborhood (Kourtiti et al., 2021).

This reasoning is corroborated by the direct, positive and statistically significant effect of three different paths: Servicescape experience and consumer well-being; consumer well-being and retail agglomeration attractiveness; and retail agglomeration attractiveness on neighborhood attractiveness. In addition, there is also evidence of the relevance and significance of the serially mediated indirect impact of the servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness by consumer well-being and attractiveness of the neighborhood retail agglomeration (i.e., $SE \rightarrow CWB \rightarrow AA \rightarrow NA$).

Qualitative data indicates that the neighborhood retail agglomeration contributes to making their daily lives easier, both through the speed of shopping (e.g., comments from Arthur and Nick) and as a place to socialize and make new friends (e.g., Marcus and Andrew),

indicating that there is not only a preference for the neighborhood retail agglomeration as a primary shopping location (e.g., Bruno and Britney's comments) but also as an important part of their assessment of how good it is to live in that neighborhood (e.g., Jamie and John's comments). Therefore, stimuli present in the retail environment are likely to influence abstract evaluations of the attractiveness of larger geographical regions (i.e., feelings of pride, belonging, recommendation and commitment to the neighborhood; Kourtiti et al., 2022a) through a serial indirect impact between concrete life domain evaluation (i.e., consumer life; Sirgy et al., 2007) and attractiveness evaluation of a smaller geographic region (i.e., patronage intention, satisfaction, and desire to stay in a neighborhood retail agglomeration; Teller, 2008).

The second hypothesis postulates that the impact of the retail agglomeration's servicescape experience has a positive effect on the attractiveness of the neighborhood in which it is located indirectly through a serial mediated effect of different well-being dimensions: consumer well-being and subjective well-being. In this way, attributes of the retail agglomeration (e.g. atmosphere, tenant mix, maneuverability, orientation, customer service) are important influencers in building a retail environment that goes beyond its functional aspects, culminating not only in improved consumer life satisfaction (El Hedli et al., 2021), but also in greater satisfaction for residents with their own lives by extrapolating from the consumer domain to positive overall life satisfaction (Grzeskowiak et al., 2016).

This reasoning is corroborated by the direct, positive and statistically significant effect of three different paths: Servicescape experience and consumer well-being; consumer well-being and subjective well-being; and subjective well-being on neighborhood attractiveness. In addition, there is also evidence of the relevance and significance of the serially mediated indirect impact of the servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness by consumer well-being and subjective well-being (i.e., SE→CWB→SWB→NA).

Qualitative data extracted from the interviews indicates that the social factor within a retail agglomeration is imperative both for the positive evaluation of the location (e.g. Matthew and Patricia's reports) and for increasing the well-being of those involved, whether they are customers or retailers (e.g. Vincent and Ruby's opinion). This contributes to people feeling personally fulfilled and emotionally involved with the retail agglomeration (e.g., opinion of Diana and Marcus), culminating in a sense of community and social cohesion as well as a feeling of pride and belonging to the neighborhood (e.g., opinion of Andrew and Lucy).

Thus, a retailer's proactive stance can contribute to improving local well-being (Anderson and Ostrom, 2015) by recognizing that a retail space is not just a place for commercial transactions (Rosenbaum et al., 2017) but rather a space for expressing local

sociocultural identity (Giovanardi and Lucarelli, 2018), which enables the construction of social relationships that are important to the lives of individuals (Tombs and McColl-Kennedy, 2003). These social aspects arising from retail environment leads to a flourishing life (Diener et al., 2010; Kjell and Diener, 2021) of both retailers and consumers (Nasr et al., 2014; Falter and Hadwich, 2020, Rahman, 2021), culminating in higher positive evaluations towards its own neighborhood (Kourtiti et al., 2022b).

This study also elucidated a proposition about the order of influence between residents' quality of life and local attractiveness. Since there is no consensus on the order of influence of perceptions of quality of life (Hu et al., 2022), it was postulated that quality of life is an important antecedent of evaluations of the attractiveness of the neighborhood, a fact that was corroborated by the statements of most of the interviewees (e.g., Jack, Matthew, Andrew).

Findings from the two studies highlights the role of the mix of retailers and the setting of the retail agglomeration as important predictors of positive consumer behavior by strengthening the perception of consumer well-being (i.e., confirmation of H1 via the survey). The frequency of visits to neighbourhood retail agglomerations is increased when residents derive utility from the perception of practicality and ease of problem-solving (e.g., expressed by Arthur, Diana, and Ruby) and via the socialization environment (e.g., Andrew and Marcus), making it more likely that this local consumer will be inclined to pay a higher price for products in this retail agglomeration (e.g., evidenced in Jamie's speech) and support the local economy (e.g., evidenced in Elizabeth and Britney's speeches).

After the integrated discussion of the results obtained from the two studies, it is necessary to make the final comments on the conclusion of the work, limitations and suggestions for future research.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

This research into the phenomenon of local attractiveness aims to answer two questions: “How can the servicescape of the retail agglomeration make its local neighborhood more attractive?”; “Is the perception of resident’s well-being in fact a mechanism that best explains the impact of the retail agglomeration on the attractiveness of the local neighborhood?”. In order to answer the proposed questions, this study sought to achieve a general objective accompanied by five specific objectives: (1) To investigate how the servicescape of the street retail agglomeration interferes in the evaluation of the attractiveness of the neighborhood in which it is inserted; (2) To evidence the mediating effect of consumer well-being and attractiveness of the retail agglomeration in the relationship between experience of the servicescape of the neighborhood retail agglomeration and attractiveness of the neighborhood; (3) Evidence of the mediating effect of consumer well-being and subjective well-being on the relationship between the servicescape experience of the neighborhood retail agglomeration and neighborhood attractiveness; (4) Evidence the parallel mediation of well-being perceptions as a better understanding of the influence of servicescape experience on neighborhood attractiveness; (5) Evidence of residents' perceptions of quality of life as an antecedent to evaluations of local attractiveness.

The results of the two studies point to significant findings of the impact of the servicescape experience of the neighborhood retail agglomeration on the evaluation of the attractiveness of the neighborhood in an indirect way, that is, this influence occurs only when mediated by the perception of well-being of consumers living in the region. This indirect effect is understood from the retail environment as an integral part of the daily lives of neighborhood residents (Gilboa and Jaffe, 2021), promoting satisfaction with the shopping experience through meeting local needs (Wilson and Hodges, 2022) and interaction between customers and retailers (Falter and Hadwich, 2020). This improvement in the perception of consumer well-being can extrapolate to general evaluations of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2010) via a sense of belonging to a group (Sirgy et al., 2010; Jung et al., 2021), personal growth (Ryff, 2018; Mesurado et al., 2018) and achievement of personal goals (Pera and Viglia, 2015; Sharma et al., 2017), culminating in the view that the retail agglomeration environment is in fact a place for building local identity and making the neighborhood more attractive (Kourtiti et al., 2022a).

By demonstrating the mediating role of residents' perception of quality of life in the relationship between servicescape experience and evaluations of local attractiveness, this research converges with the argument that quality of life is an antecedent of positive evaluations

of the place (Hu et al., 2022) to the detriment of the view that it is a result of transformative service initiatives (Boenigk et al., 2021; Alkire et al., 2020; Mulcahy et al., 2021) or a proxy for assessing the attractiveness of an agglomeration (Glaeser, 2011; Yang et al., 2019).

It is possible to infer managerial implications from the results obtained in the two studies, since the attributes of the applied marketing mix of the retail agglomeration are important cues in the formation of a pleasant experience (Teller and Thomson, 2012), as well as primary antecedents in the construction of high satisfaction with consumption from both a commercial and social point of view (Eshaghi et al., 2023; Rahman, 2021). Therefore, it is necessary for retailers who are part of a neighborhood retail cluster to rationalize the construction of the internal and external ambience of their store (Roschk et al., 2017; Bloch and Kamran-Disfani, 2018), the number and variety of stores and service providers (Teller and Reutterer, 2008; Blut et al., 2018), and their customer service quality (Falter and Hadwich, 2020; Kursunluoglu, 2014).

It is also possible to infer implications for society from the results obtained in the two studies. Partnerships between public authorities and local retailers can be useful both for developing events that increase the vitality of the area and attract more people to the area (Dupre, 2019) and also for solving local problems with the help of the retailers' or residents' association as a way of generating public endorsement actions to meet the specific needs of a locality (Aydoghmish and Rafieian, 2022; Bonakdar & Audirac, 2020; Rodríguez-pose, 2018).

This study is not without its limitations. The choice of a cross-sectional methodology for the first study implied the choice of data collection instruments aimed at assessing subjective quality of life factors (i.e. dimensions of well-being; Cummins, 2005). This methodological decision may diminish the discussion of the findings by focusing on one of the two main components in the formation of the complex concept of quality of life (QOL). In addition, the complexity and temporal effect of the perception of quality of life (QOL) indicate that a longitudinal application of the same questionnaire would enhance the discussion and strengthen the findings of this research.

It is suggested that future research into the phenomenon of local attractiveness should investigate the moderating role of neighbourhood branding in the relationship between residents' perception of quality of life and local attractiveness, especially comparatively between neighbourhoods that have and do not have an institutionalized place branding action, since positive attitudes towards the place are more positive among residents of a tourist location than tourists (Zenker et al., 2017; Jai et al., 2021), 2017) and successful place branding

strategies contribute to people's greater attachment to the place (Boisen et al., 2018; Jaian et al., 2022).

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APPENDIX I – SPAR-4-SLR PROTOCOL

IDENTIFICATION

Domain: Agglomeration Economies (AE) and Transformative Service Research (TSR)

Research questions: "What do we know about the impact of local neighbourhood services on regional attractiveness?" and "Where should the investigation about the role of neighbourhood retailers should be heading?"

Source Type: Academic Journals

Source Quality: The Chartered Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Guide (CABS AJG)

ACQUISITION

Search mechanism: Web of Science (SSCI) and Scopus

Search period: 2002-2022

Search keywords: ("transformative service" AND ("consumer well-being" OR "subjective well-being" OR quality-of-life)) OR ("high street" OR "retail agglomeration" OR "agglomeration" OR "retail format")

Total number of articles returned from search: 362

ORGANIZATION

Organizing codes: Standard bibliometrix package codes (e.g., keywords, authors, cited references)

PURIFICATION

Article type excluded: 172 low-quality articles such as duplicates, low quality journals, unrelated topic, unrelated research domain.

Article type included: 138 articles from related topic and research domain that were published in below CABS AJG 3* ranking (e.g., Cities, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services) but are rated as Q1 in business and management journals.

EVALUATION

Analysis method: Standard bibliometric analysis (i.e., bibliographic and topic modeling)

Agenda proposal method: Gap identification

REPORTING

Reporting conventions: Standard bibliometrix reporting style (i.e., figures and tables)

Limitations: Emphasis on keyword co-occurrence analysis

Sources of support: Coordination of Superior Level Staff Improvement

APPENDIX II - SCALES

Table 22 – Servicescape experience’s scales

Ist order Latent variable	Code	Original item	Translated item
Customer service	CS1	I am generally satisfied with the customer service quality offered by the agglomeration	Eu estou satisfeito com a qualidade do atendimento ao consumidor prestado pelo centro comercial
	CS2	the customer service quality offered by the agglomeration Is better than I expected	a qualidade do atendimento ao consumidor prestado pelo centro comercial é melhor do que eu esperava
	CS3	The overall customer service quality by the agglomeration Is close to my ideal	A qualidade do atendimento ao consumidor prestado pelo centro comercial é próxima ao meu ideal de serviço
Parking	PK1	There are always enough free parking lots.	O centro comercial tem sempre vagas livres para estacionar
	PK2	There are sufficient different parking possibilities	Os preços dos estacionamento são aceitáveis neste centro comercial
	PK3	... Is easily and quickly reached from the parking lots	O centro comercial oferece diferentes tipos de estacionamento
Orientation	OR1	You can easily orientate yourself at ...	A sinalização dentro do centro comercial é fácil de entender
	OR2	The shops are clearly arranged at ...	A disposição das lojas dentro do centro comercial é fácil de entender
Maneuverability	MNV1	It’s easy to get to...	Eu chego facilmente no centro comercial
	MNV2	I can reach ... quickly	Eu chego rapidamente no centro comercial
	MNV3	I can reach ... without problems	Eu chego no centro comercial sem muitos problemas
Retail tenant mix	TMIX1	... has a great variety of stores.	O centro comercial possui uma grande variedade de lojas
	TMIX2	... has attractive stores.	O centro comercial possui várias lojas atrativas
	TMIX3	Many well-known stores are located at ...	O centro comercial possui muitas lojas conhecidas
Service tenant mix	TMIX4	... offers great variety of bars, snack counters and restaurants.	O centro comercial oferece uma grande variedade de bares, lanchonetes e restaurantes
	TMIX5	... offers many leisure options.	O centro comercial oferece uma grande variedade de opções de lazer
Infrastructure	INF1	There are enough toilets in the town centre	O centro comercial possui um número adequado de banheiros
	INF2	There are enough cash dispensers in the town centre	O centro comercial possui um número adequado de caixas eletrônicos
	INF3	There are enough recreational areas in the town centre	O centro comercial possui uma quantidade adequada de áreas de lazer (praças, bancos, jardins)
Atmosphere	ATM1	The environment is pleasant at..	O centro comercial possui um ambiente alegre
	ATM2	The sensations from colors, visual layout, smells, music and temperature are agreeable at...	As cores, o visual, os cheiros, a música e a temperatura do centro comercial geram sensações agradáveis
	ATM3	The environment is agreeable at...	O centro comercial possui um ambiente agradável
Security	SEC1	I feel safe at...	Eu me sinto seguro no centro comercial
	SEC2	There Is sufficient security at ...	Tem segurança suficiente no centro comercial
	SEC3	There are few thefts and robberies at...	Tem poucos roubos e assaltos no centro comercial

Table 23 – Well-being scales

1st order Latent variable	Code	Original item	Translated item
Relationship	CWB1	I feel that during my agglomeration visit, the staff are interested in my needs	Eu sinto que durante minha ida ao centro comercial os funcionários estão interessados nas minhas necessidades
	CWB2	I trust the agglomeration staff	Eu confio nos funcionários do centro comercial
	CWB3	While I am at the agglomeration, I feel that I am taken seriously.	Quando eu estou no centro comercial, sinto que sou levado a sério
	CWB4	While I am at the agglomeration I am treated fairly	Quando eu estou no centro comercial, sou tratado de forma justa
Positive emotions	CWB5	While I am at the agglomeration, I have a feeling of happiness	Quando eu estou no centro comercial, me sinto feliz
	CWB6	While I am at the agglomeration, I experience pleasant feelings	Quando eu estou no centro comercial, tenho bons momentos
	CWB7	While I am at the agglomeration, I feel joy.	Eu me sinto alegre quando eu estou no centro comercial
Engagement	CWB8	While I am at the agglomeration, I am interested	Eu me sinto interessado quando eu estou no centro comercial
	CWB9	While I am at the agglomeration, I am attentive	Eu me sinto atento quando eu estou no centro comercial
	CWB10	While I am at the agglomeration, I am engaged.	Eu me sinto engajado quando eu estou no centro comercial
Absence of negative emotions	CWB11	While I am at the agglomeration I feel stressed*	Eu me sinto estressado quando estou no centro comercial
	CWB12	While I am at the agglomeration, I have negative feelings*	Eu tenho sentimentos negativos quando estou no centro comercial
	CWB13	While I am at ..., I am embarrassed*	Eu me sinto envergonhado quando estou no centro comercial
Meaning and accomplishment	CWB14	While I am at the agglomeration, I feel optimism.	Eu me sinto otimista quando estou no centro comercial
	CWB15	I feel during my agglomeration visit that I've done something important for me	Eu sinto que minha ida ao centro comercial proporciona algo importante para mim
	CWB16	After I left the agglomeration, I feel as if I have achieved something	Assim que eu saio do centro comercial, sinto que consegui conquistar algo importante
Subjective well-being	SWB1	In most ways my life is close to my ideal	A minha vida está próxima do meu ideal
	SWB2	The conditions in my life are excellent	Minhas condições de vida são excelentes
	SWB3	I am satisfied with my life	Eu estou satisfeito com a minha vida
	SWB4	So far I have gotten the important things I want in life	Até agora eu tenho conseguido as coisas importantes que eu quero na vida
	SWB5	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing	Se eu pudesse viver a minha vida de novo eu não mudaria quase nada

Table 24 – Attractiveness scales

1st order Latent variable	Code	Original item	Translated item
Satisfaction	SAT1	How satisfied are you with the town centre?	O quão satisfeito você está com o centro comercial?
	SAT2	How does the town centre meet your expectations?	O centro comercial atende as suas expectativas?
	SAT3	Think of an ideal town centre. To what extent does the town centre come close to that?	Pense no seu centro comercial ideal. O quanto que o centro comercial chega perto de seu ideal?
Patronage intention	PI1	Would you recommend the town centre to other persons?	O quão provável você visitaria o centro comercial novamente?
	PI2	How likely are you to go to the town centre again?	O quão provável você iria novamente ao centro comercial e compraria algo?
	PI3	How likely are you to go to the town centre again and buy something?	O quão satisfeito você está com o centro comercial?
Retention proneness	RP1	You are willing to stay in the town centre as long as possible	Eu estou disposto a ficar no centro comercial o maior tempo possível
	RP2	You enjoy spending your time in the town centre	Eu gosto de passar meu tempo no centro comercial
	RP3	You plan to do many things here in the town centre today	Eu planejo fazer muitas coisas no centro comercial
Neighborhood attractiveness	NA1	I feel a strong attachment to my city, it's a part of me	Eu sinto uma forte conexão com o meu bairro, ele faz parte de mim
	NA2	I feel at home in my neighbourhood	Eu me sinto em casa no meu bairro
	NA3	I am proud to live in my neighbourhood	Eu tenho orgulho de viver no meu bairro
	NA4	I would rather not move away from this neighbourhood	Eu não gostaria de me mudar pra fora do meu bairro
	NA5	I identify with the people who live in my neighbourhood	Eu me identifico com os outros moradores do meu bairro
	NA6	I am very pleased with the neighbourhood	Eu estou bastante satisfeito com meu bairro
	NA7	I would definitely recommend a friend/acquaintance to move to my neighbourhood	Eu definitivamente recomendaria para um amigo ou colega morar no meu bairro

APPENDIX III – QUESTIONNAIRE SCRIPT

Introduction:

- The informed consent form is presented
- Respondent is asked if they would like to participate in the research

Concept and main filters

- The concept of neighborhood retail agglomeration is presented
- The respondent is asked if they have an agglomeration in their neighborhood
- The respondent is asked if they have visited this agglomeration in the last two weeks

Agglomeration specification

- Respondents are asked about their agglomeration purchase frequency
- Respondents are asked about the importance of the agglomeration for their lives
- Respondents are asked about their perception of the number of stores and services
- Respondents are asked about their perception of store and service variety
- Respondents are asked about their length of stay during their last visit
- Respondents are asked about their expenditure during their last visit
- Respondents are asked about their preferred mode of transport
- Respondents are asked about their perceived distance from home to the agglomeration
- Respondents are asked about their perceived time spent from home to the agglomeration

Neighborhood specification

- Respondents are asked about their neighborhood name
- Respondents are asked about their neighborhood zip code
- Respondents are asked about their time living in that neighborhood
- Respondents are asked about the importance of the neighborhood for their lives

Latent variables - Servicescape Experience

- 14 randomized SE items are presented
- Attention check:

“Several Brazilian neighborhoods have a predominant type of store. Please choose restaurants as your option”

- 11 randomized SE items are presented

Latent variables – Customer well-being

- 16 randomized CWB items are presented

Latent variables – Agglomeration attractiveness

- 9 randomized AA items are presented

Latent variables – Neighborhood attractiveness

- 7 randomized NA items are presented

Latent variables – Subjective well-being

- 5 randomized SWB items are presented

Demographics

- Gender
- Age
- Educational level
- Household monthly income
- Number of people living in the household

APPENDIX IV – INTERVIEW SCRIPT

1: What is an everyday trip to the retail agglomeration like for you?

2: Can you think of any memorable situations that happened to you in this retail agglomeration?

2.1: If yes, ask them to elaborate on this 2.2: If no, elicit a memory of some interpersonal relationship within this environment

3: Is interaction with people important to you when you're in the retail agglomeration?

3.1: If yes, ask to elaborate on this 3.2: If no, ask to tell what the most important factor is and/or a situation where interaction with people was favorable

4: Have you ever gone to the retail agglomeration with the aim of socializing/meeting a specific person?

4.1: If yes, ask them to elaborate on this 4.2: If no, ask about their opinion of people who create friendships in this environment

5: Do you feel that the other people in this place are friendly? Please elaborate on this

6: Do these social relationships have an impact on the rest of your day?

6.1: If yes, ask to elaborate on this 6.2: If no, ask to what extent the person sees socialization within the retail agglomeration as influential in their life

7: Does frequenting this retail agglomeration benefit your happiness/well-being?

7.1: If yes, ask to elaborate on this 7.1.1: If yes, investigate the main cause of this low attendance

7.2: If no, ask about their visit/purchase frequency 7.2.1: If no, investigate whether this is a person who uses the agglomeration purely transactionally or whether there have been any negative events.

8: Do you believe that this retail agglomeration contributes to building a sense of community in the neighborhood?

8.1: If yes, ask them to elaborate on this 8.2: If no, what should be done to achieve this status?

9: Would the removal of this retail agglomeration from your neighborhood have any negative consequences for your life?

10: Thinking about your ideal of high street retail agglomeration, what is missing in your local agglomeration to achieve this status?

11: Do positive experiences within the retail agglomeration contribute to your well-being?

12: Does living in this retail agglomeration bring you greater satisfaction with your life?

12.1: If yes, please elaborate on this 12.2: If no, ask what could be done by retailers to achieve this goal

13: What positive emotions do you feel when you have a good experience in this retail agglomeration?

14: What negative emotions do you feel when you don't have a good experience in this retail agglomeration?

15: Can being satisfied and feeling good about the retail agglomeration in your neighborhood make you more satisfied with your life in general?

16: In your words, what does it mean to be at one with your life?

17: Does being well and satisfied with your life make you rate your neighborhood more highly?

Please elaborate on this

18: Does an attractive neighborhood need to give the impression of a good quality of life?

18.1: If yes, please elaborate on this 18.2: If no, please comment on what makes a neighborhood attractive to you

19: Does the well-being you feel in this place affect how attractive you find your neighborhood?

20: In your opinion, what comes first: a place with a high quality of life or a place rated as good to live in?