Geography Coursework

By

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Context

Introduction

The aim of my coursework, investigating shopping patterns in Brent, is based on answering one fundamental question, 'is there a shopping hierarchy in Brent?' as well as several others, which I myself have chosen all relating to the investigation:

➢ Does the quality of the environment affect the success of the shopping area?
➢ Will technological advances affect the way people shop and therefore the success of these shopping areas?
➢ Is there a similarity between the sphere of influence of the shopping areas and their success?
➢ What factors determine the success or failure of these shopping areas?

I will set out to achieve this task by gathering as much information as I can from the various locations in Brent my class and I will visit – which are Brent Cross, Staples Corner, Kilburn High road, Harlesden High Street and my local corner shop that I will do individually in my own time – all helping me to form the foundation and back bone of coursework. While on location in these various shopping areas, I will ask the pedestrians that I meet in the street – as it is their information that determines the outcome of my coursework – several questions from my questionnaire, which I would have made in class before the actual visit, allowing me to know what the local population think of their shopping experience in their unique shopping area and how they would rate its performance. As well as doing a questionnaire before the visit to these various shopping areas in Brent, I will also do a pedestrian count and an environmental quality survey which will allow me to answer the fundamental question of whether there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent as the more developed a particular shopping area is – in terms of what goods it sells and its condition – and therefore the more people it will have the higher it will be in a shopping hierarchy. Furthermore using these data collection methods mentioned above will enable me to answers the unique questions I came up with for the coursework as well as providing me with graphs and charts which I will analyses to help me come up with a conclusion for the various questions this coursework asks. To produce an accurate and precise reading of the information I get with the data collection method mentioned above, I will include land use maps of the different areas in Brent mentioning the shop names, bus stops and types of goods the various shop sell, which will allow me to use the land use maps to reflect on the on whether one particular area is better developed than another – because of the goods it sells and its accessibility – making it be higher in the shopping hierarchy for Brent and answer my main aim for the coursework, as well as several other I made myself e.g. what factors determine the success or failure of these shopping areas? I expect to find a variation in the type of data I gather at these shopping areas as our decision to choose them as a class was as a result of all of them being unique and from our knowledge of Brent we acknowledged that these areas were perfect for our coursework as they enable us to compare their different stages development as they all differ allowing see whether there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent and answering our individual questions.

Background

➢ Brent Cross

Brent Cross is a well-established shopping complex, which has been around for many years providing customers with a high rate of performance for their shopping needs by having a wide variety of reputable shops selling both high and low order goods. It is situated in North West London and can be easily accessible by a wide range of people as it has various bus routes and motorways linking it to the rest of London and parts of Hertfordshire – because of the M1 motorway stranding from Brent Cross to the Northern parts of England – making it have a larger sphere of influence than many other shops in Brent and even London. My visit to Brent Cross on the day of our class trip to the various shopping locations in Brent proved to be one of considerable value, as I had first hand experience in inspecting its performance as a shopping complex and its position in the shopping hierarchy in Brent. The site itself appeared to be in good condition as there was very little evidence of litter or that it suffered of vandalism since most of the entrances to the shopping complex were clean and showed signs of being regularly maintained to this near perfect quality. Although Brent Cross did not suffer some forms of visual pollution, the sight of the traffic congestions caused by the surrounding motorways and roads could prove to damage its reputation as a immaculate shopping complex as the vast amounts of vehicle and noise pollution being produced in the surrounding area may discourage some asthma sufferers as well as other people from visiting the location which can be seen in the various methods of data collection I used at this particular site. However its exterior appearance of traffic congestion and vehicle pollution did not reflect the appearance in the interior in any way, as the owners compensated by making the interior look fashionable and homely.


➢ Staples Corner

Staples Corner Retail Park is another example of a well-established shopping complex in Brent; it is situated off Edgware and the North Circular Road providing customers with cars easy access to its wide range of high order goods. However being secluded from most bus or train routes coming in to the area, causes many of visitors to be car owners while restricting the amount of customers visiting the retail park on a regular bases – with them opting to visit once a month or when in dyer need of something, seen through my questionnaire – making the commercial shops located within its vicinity rely on peoples knowledge of them being there. The site itself is free from visual population with its car parks and walls having very little to no litter and graffiti at all, although the motorways surrounding the area may be off putting to some people as they maybe afraid of being caught in traffic congestion trying to get to and/or leaving from the mega stores at the location. Furthermore the fact that the mega stores located in Staples Corner like Currys and PC World only sell high order comparison goods, provides a problem for the future of the stores since most customs order these

type of goods from the internet because they save time and money by allowing you to do it in your own home, therefore making retail parks like Staples Corner lose more and more customers everyday and rely on people who do not use the internet as a means of shopping, consequently Staples Corner in particular has built a UCI and restaurant in the area to try and give people another choice of coming to the are other than shopping, although this still attract little business with the area being like a 'ghost town' as of the competition for Brent Cross which provides more services and is only a short distance away.
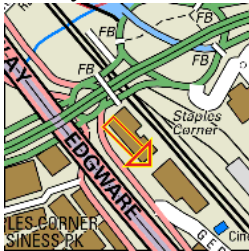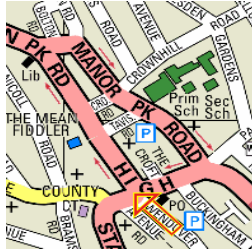

➢ Kilburn High road

Kilburn High road is an up and coming shopping high street with major brand names such as Marks and Spencer's and Sainsbury opening new and reputable shops across the high road because of the areas abundance of shoppers resulting from the various transport links across the vicinity making the area easily accessible by all types of transport. Consequently this increase in well know reputable shops investing in the area has played a in major part on the development and removal of the pound shops that once littered the high road causing Kilburn's reputation as an unfashionable location to shop to be rejuvenated into a trendy and hip place to go. Although Kilburn has a long way to go before being fully developed since there are still many pound shops scattered across the high round, on my visit to the site I had the opportunity to view the wide variety of shops Kilburn high road had to offer that sell high and low order goods, as well as multi-cultural shops, theatres and restaurants which the public seemed to love as many of them could be seem in Kilburn. However Kilburn high road still suffers from the every day problems encountered with a successful shopping area such as congestion, noise and litter caused by the pedestrians and cars owners who go by or visit the high road. Although this may discourage many shoppers from visiting another shopping area the customers I had the opportunity to interview on my class trip to Kilburn all rated High road with an average or above average score for its shopping performance which provides a good outlook for Kilburn as a contending shopping area in Brent and an accent in the hierarchy
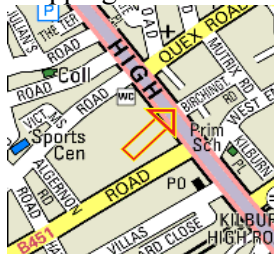

➢ Harlesden High road

Harlesden High road is a low developed shopping High Street with few well established department stores within the immediate area. It suffers from various forms of pollution including air, noise and visual caused from the lack of maintenance and heavy congestion on the roads that enter the high street. Its main problems come from

the crime that is centred in the surrounding areas causing Harlesden High road to endure years of vandalism and abuse resulting in many people shying away from shopping within the area. However, although the area itself has very few well known recognised stores within it, what it does have is small but diverse shops that tender to the local community needs in buying food and clothes at a low price in contrast to many other high streets in London. Consequently this lack of prominent store has halted Harlesden High Road's development as the investments go elsewhere leaving the high road with nothing to give back to its local community as it has very few to no restaurants, cinemas or leisure centres.

> ➢ Corner shop

Even though my local corner shop is located in Westminster and not Brent it is like any ordinary corner shop or newsagents which convenience goods are bought from, these can range from food on the go like sandwiches and drink to everyday products such as milk and bread. However since the corner shop itself is small in comparison to other shops, it cannot offer the variety in convenience goods that a supermarket does making customers only visit the corner shop when only buying food on the go e.g. chocolates. Consequently many corner shops suffer if a supermarket opens near them since the supermarket offering a wider variety of convenience can attack more customers than the corner shop, making the corner lose customers. However as the location of my corner shop is near several different bus stops it currently has no problem in attracting customer as it is an easy place to get being so close to bus stops. Even though the corner shop has no prospects of expanding in the future to offer a wider range of good it is presently doing fine as it is convenient for local people to travel to and for people travelling near the area to get to.
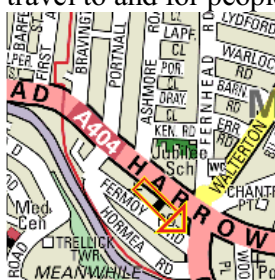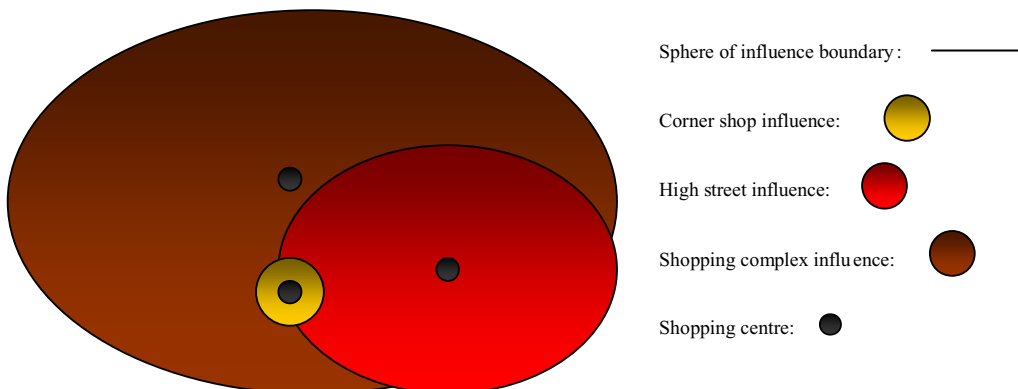
Hypothesis

From the various researches I have undertaken to gain a broader insight into the shopping areas I will be studying, I have predicted for several reason which I will explain, that staple corner should be place at the top of the shopping hierarchy for Brent followed closely by Brent Cross, Kilburn High Street, Harlesden High Road and at the bottom my local corner shop as seen in the diagram below. I say this because from the background information I carried out I found that Staple Corner was an accessible place to get to and sold only comparison goods meaning that it should have had a large sphere of influence as people generally travel further to purchase comparison goods, as a result of this large sphere of influence I believed it had I place it at the top of the shopping hierarchy. Brent Cross closely followed since it too sold comparison good but mostly clothes which can be bought elsewhere meaning people don't have to travel to it from far places since clothes can be bought on a local high street. However as it was very accessible and I witnessed a lot of people shopping there I predicted that it too will have a big sphere of influence but not as big as Staple Corner. Furthermore I placed Kilburn High Street in third place since it was very accessible, sold some comparison goods although mostly clothes and had many people shopping within its vicinity meaning it had a mediocre sphere of influence and not enough to challenge that of Brent Cross or Staples Corner. Harlesden High Street came in fourth place as most of the shop located in the area were pound shops and sold only convenience good meaning that only local people and people from the surrounding area would shop there since people generally travel less to purchase convenience goods resulting in a small sphere of influence. As my local corner shop only sold convenience good and only local people like me visit it to get items such as milk and bread I placed it last in my prediction since it would have a very small sphere of influence as only people from the immediate area would shop since there are many other corner in the area limiting its sphere of influence and people normally travel very short distance to by every day convenience goods.

Geographical Theory

As my study is based is on a number geographical theories with the fundamental being shopping hierarchies in Brent, I will be using a range of techniques to determine which of the locations will be placed where on the shopping hierarchy. One of these techniques is the sphere on influence, which tells us the area served or affected by a settlement. The scale of the sphere of influence depends on a number of factors as they all contribute increasing or decreasing the vastness of the sphere of influence. The accessibility of shopping area helps in expanding its sphere of influence as the better the transport and the more the roads entering the shopping area the more people from wide distance will be able to reach the shopping area without any inconvenience. The goods that a shopping area sells also affect its sphere of influence as people may travel further for high order comparison goods since there are prepared to search for the best offer, which is in contrast with low order convenience goods that people use daily and are not prepared to travel long distance to search for the best offer. Additionally competition from other shopping areas will limit and sometimes decrease the sphere of influence of the particular shopping area since more people from living in the surrounding area and further away will be visiting the competing shopping area instead of the losing shopping area.

Small shop such as corner shops and pound shops would have a limited sphere of influence as the goods they sell are low order convenience goods such as bread, milk and juice which are used quite frequently so therefore have to be bought daily bases. This and the fact that these types of goods are cheap and can be found easily prevents people from travelling long distance to such for better offer therefore making corner shops have a small sphere of influence in comparison to shops that sell high order goods. Consequently the simple fact that high order comparison goods are sometimes very expensive and are not readily available since only large department stores sell them, result in their prices varying from store to store thus of the competition from other department stores, encouraging many customers to search for the best offer, since searching for them can result in people saving 10's or even 100's of pounds. Many of the types of goods include furniture and electrical items as people do not regularly need these things but only purchase them once or twice a year, making them prepared to travel long distances to search for the best offer and thus increasing the sphere of influence of the large department stores.

Sphere of influence boundary :

Corner shop influence:

High street influence:

Shopping complex influence:

Shopping centre:

The accessibility of shopping complexes or high streets also has a major affect on their sphere of influence since this accessibility allows people from far distances to

easily commute to the particular high street or shopping complex since there is no inconvenience in reaching the location. For a certain location to be accessible for people that live a long distance away, it must have many main roads and more than one motorways leading into it which will provide people from far off remote areas to reach the location easily and quickly. Since these roads will decrease the amount of traffic in the surrounding area therefore cutting down on the time people spend in coming to the shopping area making them spend more time shopping at the location then travelling to and from, enticing them to come even more.

Public transport is another fundamental factor in making a place accessible to all, as this gives the opportunity for those who lack the convenience of having cars to travel to the shopping area just as easy as those who do have cars, therefore encouraging them to visit more frequently as travelling to the shopping area causes them no inconvenience. Although public transport in all is very effective the different types of transport such as buses, trains and trams that are offered to the public in public transport do have their downfalls. Buses cause congestion on the road and are not always reliable since they are often late or too full to enter. Trains on the other hand are faster and have more space for more people although they too are late and sometimes are closed down for repairs and emergencies making them too unreliable. However as trams travel on the road and do not get stuck in traffic since they have the own separate rail on the road they end up travelling much faster and with enough space for many people, but their downfall comes in their number since there are no available trams in Brent seeing as they only operate in some parts of London. In conclusion accessibility affects the sphere of influence of a shopping centre since the easier a place is to get to the more people will travel there if the goods they want to purchase are sold there and more frequent these people will travel to that particular location as travelling their doesn't inconvenience them.

Furthermore another theory that I will be studying is the range of goods which is the maximum distance a person is willing to travel for a good or service, therefore telling us the sphere of influence of the particular shopping area that provides this service or sells this good. The range of goods affects my study in several ways as it helps indicates the sphere of influence of a shopping area and the type of goods it sells, since more people are prepared to travel further to search for high order comparison goods than low order convenience goods, which can be found in a local corner shop. Consequently this additional information will help me identify where in the shopping hierarchy the various area will be placed. Threshold population is the final theory I will be studying as I believe it will help me determine the answer to some of the questions I have set myself and subsequently the place of the shopping areas on the hierarchy, since it tells us the minimum number of people needed to ensure that a service will profit. Consequently a department store such as one that sells high order comparison goods will need a high threshold population in the surrounding area before it is built, as this information will allow the developers to know whether investing in the area by building a department store will be profitable and if not where to build it.

Glossary (an easier explanation of the geographical theories my investigation will involve)

- **Sphere of influence** – the area which is served or affected by a settlement or facility

- **High order goods** – Goods which a large number of people man want to purchase e.g. computer, television

- **Low order goods** – Goods with a low demand for e.g. milk, bread, butter

- **Comparison goods** – Goods which people are prepared to travel far distances to compare e.g. furniture

- **Convenience goods** – Goods which are needed on a daily bases and are readily available e.g. milk, bread, butter

- **Threshold population** – the minimum number of people needed sustain a service and ensure a profit is made whether small or large

- **Range of good** – the maximum distance people are willing to travel in order to find what there are looking for

- **Accessibility** – how easy a place is to travel to e.g. transportation

- **Shopping hierarchy** – the order in which shops of different stature as of the goods they sell are placed on a shopping pyramid with the more important ones selling specialist comparison goods at the top and those selling convenience goods at the bottom

Methodology

I had started preparation for my coursework a few weeks before the actual visit to the different locations my class and I visited, which gave me the opportunity to research the various locations to get a broader insight into them. Additionally this time before the actual visit allowed me to start my data collection methods which involved my doing a questionnaire, environmental quality survey and pedestrian count that proved to be backbone of my investigation, since the data collected from these methods allowed my to get the public opinion on the shopping areas. Furthermore I did land use maps to allow my to see what types of goods the shops in the shopping areas sold and public transportation was available there.

➢ Questionnaire

My questionnaire was fundamentally a series of closed ended questions which allowed me to get the publics opinion on whether they felt their shopping area was of exceptional standards or whether it lacked some of qualities needed to be a superb shopping complex or high street. The collection of the primary data I received from my questionnaire at the various shopping locations, will enable my to answer my coursework's fundamental question on whether there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent as well as the additional question I have set myself to answer. This is because the questions that I had asked the public at these shopping locations all related to the many geographical theories I will be studying – *sphere of influence, accessibility, threshold, range of good and type of goo d* – all which will help me determine whether there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent and if so where these shopping locations should be place on the hierarchy.

Questions in my questionnaire:
1. Gender
2. Age
3. How did you travel here?
4. How often do you travel here?
5. Approximately how far is your home from the location of this shopping area?
6. How easy is it to travel here?
7. What goods are you here to buy?
8. What improvements would you like to see here?
9. Approximately how much are you going to spend?
10. Do you use the internet as a means of shopping?

➢ Environmental Quality survey

Essentially my environmental quality survey was an inspection of how the well maintained the various shopping areas I studied were in comparison with each other, as well as whether any types of pollution such as visual, noise or air plagued the immediate and surrounding area. In my environmental quality survey I looked at several different environmental factors that could have affected the shopping area these include litter, congestion, air quality, noise, vandalism, greenery, open spaces and parked cars all which I gave a score out of five with five being very good and one being very poor when I visited the shopping areas. With the information I had
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➢ Pedestrian Count

In essence my pedestrian count was a count of how many pedestrians walked past a particular shop in the shopping area for a particular period of time, therefore informing my of how busy the current location I was at is. However as I divided my pedestrian count into gender and age groups it also told me how many which particular age or gender group was sighted at the shopping location more. This extra piece of information proved to be useful since it provided me with additional background information on the shopping areas as well as telling me which shopping area more people visit.

➢ Land Use Map

On location in the various shopping areas in Brent I drew a land use map of a small area at each shopping area which tells use or the shops and public transportation located in the area, inherently an OS map of the chosen area. This will help me determine what types of shops are currently situated at the shopping area giving me an insight onto whether the shopping area offers mostly convenient or comparison goods. Knowing this I can them accurately state where in the shopping hierarchy I think the shopping areas should be as the more comparison goods a shopping location sells the higher its sphere of influence and the higher it should place on the shopping hierarchy

Analysis

Graphs

How often do you tarvel here?
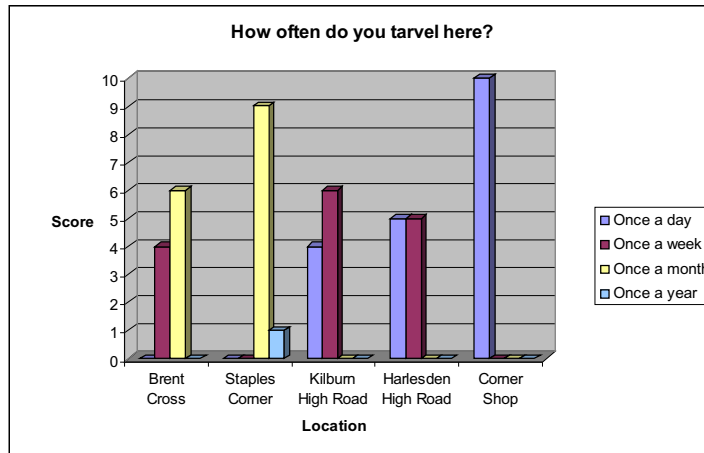
This particular graph which is the graph for how often each of the ten members of the public I interviewed travelled to the shopping locations helps me in my investigation since it allows me to distinguish between the shops that sell high order comparison goods which are visited less to the shops that sell low order convenience goods which are visited much more frequently such as a corner shop. With this information I will be able to determine where the shopping locations go on the shopping hierarchy in Brent since the shops the sell high order comparison goods have a bigger sphere of influence, since customers will come from a great distance to find cheapest offer the shopping area offers and purchase the goods from the shops available at the shopping areas. And as we can see from the graph Staples Corner seems to be visited less often than any other shopping location I have studied, meaning that it sells high order comparison goods which are needed less often causing people visit the shopping area less often, since these are goods such as computers, electronics and furniture which people prefer to travel long distance to search for the best offer leading to the particular shopping area to have a considerably big sphere of influence from this resulting in it being in a high place in a shopping hierarchy. However for place which are visited more often such as my local corner shop as shown in the graph, it could suggest that it shop sell low order convenience goods for example milk, break and butter which are used more frequently resulting in people not being prepared to travel long distance since it is something they use on a regular basis. Consequently this means that such shop will be paced low on the shopping hierarchy since the have a small sphere of influence because of the goods they sell.

How easy is it to travel here?
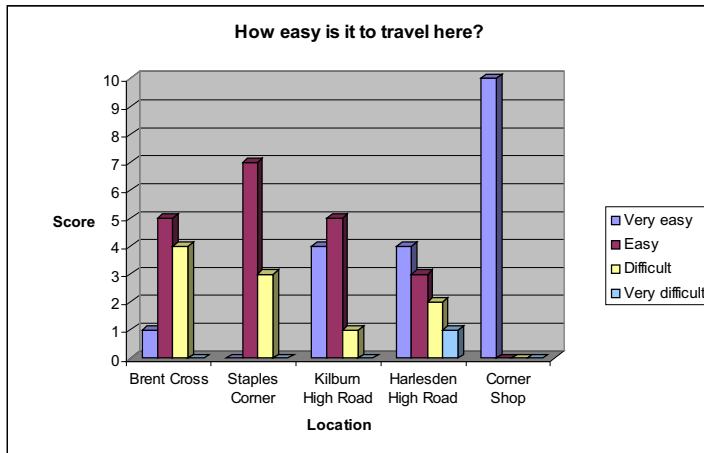
The graph above assists me in telling me the accessibility of the shopping areas. Although it is right to say the better the accessibility of a shopping area the higher it should be on the shopping hierarchy since having this good accessibility should give it with a large sphere of influence it is completely incorrect in this case. This is because as you can see in the graph above my local corner shop is a very accessible place to reach although it does not have a large sphere even though of this since only people from the immediate area visit it unlike a shopping area like Brent cross which caters to different customers from all around London giving it a large sphere of influence and an average score for accessibility as above.

What goods are you here to buy

Essentially the information this graph provides will give me with the data I needed to conclude my investigation and answer my fundamental question as well as the one I set myself. This because, by me identifying the category that each of the items I allowed the people who I collected the data from choose when I asked this particular question belongs, I will enable me to obtain the knowledge of where people went for a particular type of good say comparison or convenience. Consequently from looking at the graph extensively and analysing it, it has showed me that people travel to Staples Corner the most to buy high order comparison such as electronics than in Harlesden and my local corner shop where people go to by mostly to by food. This results in the sphere of influence for Staples Corner being larger than that of my local corner shop or Harlesden High Road since people are prepared to travel further to search for comparison goods than for convenience goods.

Approximately how much are you going to spend?
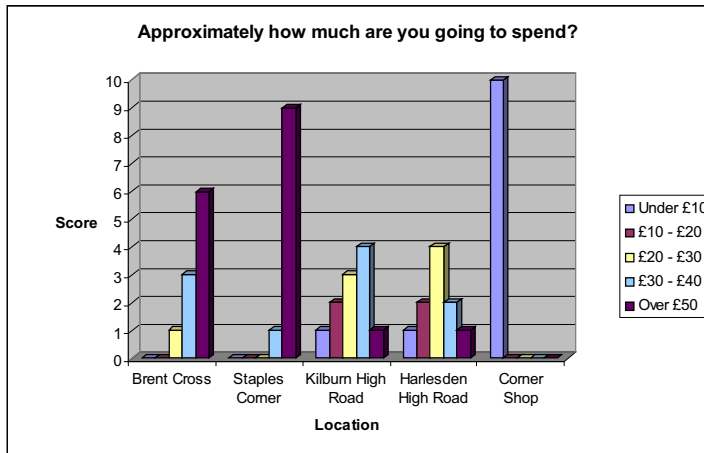
For this particular graph I will be able to learn the amount of money each customer is going to spend at the shopping area which gives me a good insight into what type of items the shopping area sells, since high order comparison are much more expensive than low order convenience goods. Consequently this massive price difference makes more people prepared to longer distances to acquire the best offer for the particular high order comparison they are looking for, increasing the sphere of influence for the shopping areas that retail the goods the person is looking for a low price. The exact opposite can be said for shopping areas that have little money being spent in them informing me that the shopping area may sell low order convenience goods which people use frequently and because it is at such a low price they is no point in going to look elsewhere. We are able to see this in the graph where the Staples Corner is receiving a great deal revenue from the wide range of customers visiting it, where as my local corner shop receives a small revenue in comparison.

Do you use the internet as a means of shopping?
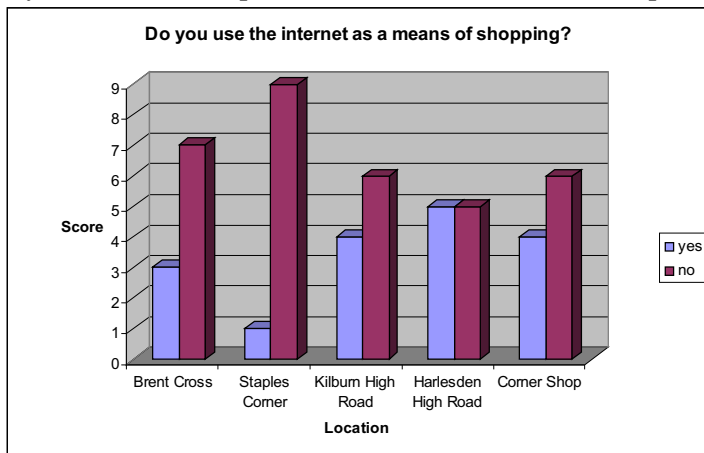
Since many more people are acquiring internet access, shopping online proves to be a better and more convenient alternative of shopping than travelling to high street or shopping complex. This is because internet offers a wider range of goods and prices of these goods are often lower then the retail prices in shops, therefore as the number of people using the internet increasing the more a shopping area will suffer as a result of a decline in customers. With the information above I can be able to predict which shopping location will eventually start losing business as well as answer the questions which I set myself. As we can see above the number of people that use the internet as a means of shopping is dramatically low in a place such as Staples Corner and Brent Cross compared to the other shopping locations this is because people who travel to

these shopping location either do not have internet access or don't use it as a mean of shopping since the internet generally offers comparison goods which are cheaper and more convenient to purchase than purchasing from large shopping complexes such as Staple Corner and Brent Cross. Therefore the reason why people travel the distance is because the do not use internet as a mean of shopping as it is much more easy and convenient to purchase the particular good you are looking for. Consequently I believe that in the near future people will be buying their comparison goods online than in places such as Staple Corners in particular making it lose it customers.

Bi polar Analysis

Staple Corner

	Very Good	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Open spaces				✓		Open spaces
Litter					✓	Litter
Congestion				✓		Congestion
Greenery				✓		Greenery
Vandalism					✓	Vandalism
Noise				✓		Noise
Parked Cars				✓		Parked Cars
Average Score				✓		**Average Score**

Average Score of 4.3
Score of 30 / 35

Brent Cross

	Very Good	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Open spaces			✓			Open spaces
Litter				✓		Litter
Congestion			✓			Congestion
Greenery			✓			Greenery
Vandalism				✓		Vandalism
Noise			✓			Noise
Parked Cars				✓		Parked Cars
Average Score			✓			**Average Score**

Average Score of 3.4
Score of 24 / 35

Geography Coursework

Kilburn High Street

	Very Good	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
	1	2	3	4	5
Open spaces		✓			
Litter			✓		
Congestion	✓				
Greenery	✓				
Vandalism			✓		
Noise	✓				
Parked Cars			✓		
Average Score		✓			

Average Score of 2
Score of 14 / 35

Harlesden High Road

	Very Good	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good
	1	2	3	4	5
Open spaces		✓			
Litter	✓				
Congestion	✓				
Greenery		✓			
Vandalism		✓			
Noise	✓				
Parked Cars		✓			
Average Score		✓			

Average Score of 1.6
Score of 12 / 70

Local Corner Shop

	Very Good	Poor	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	
	1	2	3	4	5	
Open spaces			✓			Open spaces
Litter			✓			Litter
Congestion			✓			Congestion
Greenery			✓			Greenery
Vandalism			✓			Vandalism
Noise			✓			Noise
Parked Cars		✓				Parked Cars
Average Score			✓			**Average Score**

Average Score of 2.9
Score of 20 / 35

The Bi-polar analysis for these shopping areas is a depiction of their surrounding environment obtained by the environmental quality survey while I was visiting the shopping locations to get a broader insight into them. The Bi-polar analysis tells me of the average score for the different shopping locations environments helping me to determine which I the must maintained and therefore attract the most people. From the analysis I can see that Staples Corner has the highest average of all the shopping locations I dealt with meaning it was the maintained, this average came to be so high since all the environmental factors I studied when I was at the location proved to be of above average standard since:

11. there was no litter
12. no vandalism
13. the noise being was quite low,
14. parking was no problem since the retail park offered free parking to its customers
15. the retail park itself have nice well maintained greenery
16. the were a lot of open space
17. congestion was no problem since the location was surrounded by motorways giving the quick and easy access to all customers.

Pictogram

How did you travel?

➢ **Answers for Brent Cross**

By Bus

By Car

By Train   NONE

Other   NONE

➢ **Answers for Staples Corner**

By Bus   NONE

By Car

By Train   NONE
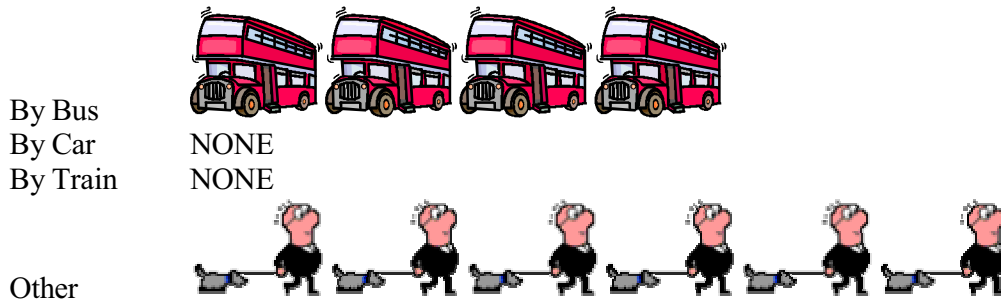
Other   NONE
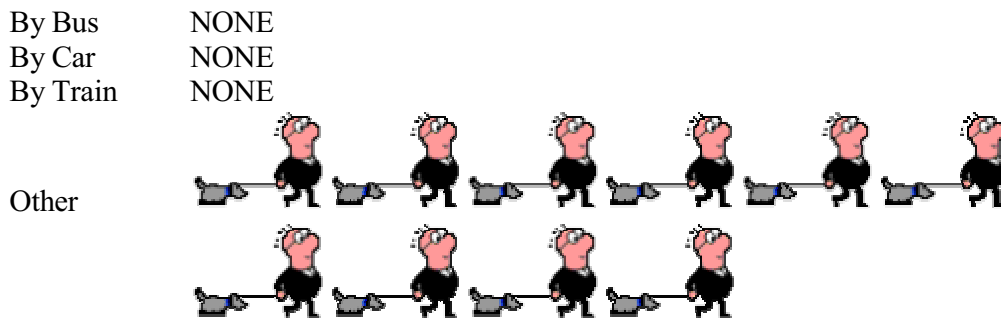
➢ **Answers for Kilburn High Road**

By Bus

By Car

By Train

Other

➢ **Answers for Harlesden High Road**

By Bus
By Car   NONE
By Train   NONE

Other

  ➢ **Answer for local corner shop**

By Bus   NONE
By Car   NONE
By Train   NONE

Other

This pictogram for how people travelled to the various location helps in my investigation since as you can see it gives me information which will provide me with the ability to judge on the sphere of influence because as well as the sphere of influence being determined by other factors it can also be determined by method used to reach to the shopping location. This is because people who travel to a shopping location with more than one route to get there means the place is more accessible and therefore can cater to more people increasing its sphere of influence. However, although Staples Corner shoppers who travel to Staples Corner only use one method to get there and it is by car, it could suggest that the sphere of influence for Staples Corner could be large because for people to use cars to get to the shopping location could mean it is far therefore increasing the sphere of influence of the location. On the other hand this problem of only having your customers use one method to travel to the shopping location could be a limiting factor for Staples Corners since it is not accessible for people without car meaning it cannot cater for a large number of people except for those who have cars. Therefore it is Brent Cross that comes out top in this challenge since it has a more than one way for the customers to reach the store being by car and bus extending its sphere of influence as it can cater for people with cars who may have travelled far since it has parking and for the who travel by buses since it had a wide range of different buses that connect with Brent Cross in their route.

Conclusion

During the course of this investigation I was able to acquire valuable information about the shopping areas I was studying through the vast amount of research I undertook before and throughout the investigation. Primarily this information came for the data collection methods I performed when I had visited the shopping area to obtain the public direct opinions on the shopping area they were currently at. Essentially the various data collection methods I had done when I visited these sites helped me, when analysed, determine whether there was a shopping hierarchy in Brent and if so where these shopping area I studied should be placed on the shopping hierarchy. Consequently this information proved to be the backbone of my study since it gave me the public opinions and therefore gave me the ability to answer the investigation fundamental question on whether there was a shopping hierarchy in Brent.

➢ Does the quality of the environment affect the success of the shopping area?

I believe from doing my analysis of the environmental quality survey in the form of a bi-polar analysis that quality of environment does affect the success of the shopping area, since more people will come to a well maintained area than one which is being neglected. This is displayed through Staples Corners rise in stature as it is becoming more well know unlike Harlesden High road which even though cater to a lot of people they are all form the local community unlike Staples corner which attracts people from long distances away.

➢ Will technological advances affect the way people shop and therefore the success of these shopping areas?

I believe technological advance as a whole will affect some of these shopping areas, especially the ones that sell high order comparison goods since these can be found much cheaper on the internet allowing people to stay at home and shop instead of travelling around looking for the best deal. Therefore I believe it is Staples Corners that will be the most affected losing its customers that travel to it from far distance in turn losing is large sphere of influence.

➢ Is there a similarity between the sphere of influence of the shopping areas and their success?

From having done my analysis of the various shopping areas, I do believe that there could be a link between the sphere of influence of the shopping areas and their success. This is because for a shopping area to have a large sphere of influence it means that it caters for people living quite far away from it as it provides them with the type of goods they need. Consequently these extra people travelling long distances to reach the shopping area means that the shopping area is enticing more people to go and shop there meaning it gets more customer and profits and in turn is more successful. Shopping areas which have a big sphere of influence generally tend to sell comparison as people are prepared to travel further to purchase them.

➢ What factors determine the success or failure of these shopping areas?

There are many factors that determine the success and / or failure of shopping area and with the shopping areas I studied in particular I also believe a range of factors contributed to their success and / or failure. To begin with, the factors that I believe contributed towards Brent Cross's success was the fact that it was a clean shopping

complex to visit, providing its customer with a wide range of goods form convenience to comparison. As well as having a variety of goods on sale it was accessible for all with there being free car parking for people who shop at the complex to park in, in addition to there being buses for those without cars to travel to the shopping location, all in all Brent Cross provided

 - ➢ a brilliant shopping environment for their customers
 - ➢ a wide variety of goods for them to choose for
 - ➢ parking for their customer who travel by car
 - ➢ buses for those who do no have cars
 - ➢ and its location being near motorways meaning shoppers could come from a great distance and travel home quicker

On the hand for a shopping area like Harlesden High road its decline was caused by a range for factors such as the fact that the crime in the surrounding area may frighten shoppers who can from far distances giving it a limited sphere of influence. Additionally with the location not being well maintained and having vandalism does nothing to improve its reputation as a nice friendly shopping area to shop with the family but instead heightens its reputation as the crime centre for Brent, all this leading it to only having customers from the immediate and surrounding areas as they see it as a quick and easy place to get to.

However Staples Corner Retail Park may not have a big reputation such as that of Brent Cross since it only cater for much fewer people in comparison, although it is spreading its name allowing people to know where it is and what shops are located other than the surrounding area only knowing this it has achieved this in several different ways which are:

 - ➢ the fact that it is a highly maintained shopping area
 - ➢ providing parking for its customers
 - ➢ having bus stops but although with few bus routes so very few people use it
 - ➢ providing a nice, calm and relaxed shopping experience
 - ➢ giving back to its local community by have a cinema and restaurant on site
 - ➢ being a quick an accessible place to reach since it is surrounded by motorways

Furthermore for Kilburn High

 - ➢ Is there a shopping Hierarchy in Brent?

I believe from the studies I have undertaken during the course of this investigation there that there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent for the fundamental reason that many of the shopping locations I studied in my investigation had different sphere of influences so therefore catered for more people if the sphere of influence was larger. With Brent Cross being a well renowned place to shop as well as having a large and catering to thousands of people everyday, I placed it at the top of my hierarchy for the following reasons:

 - ➢ Even though it may not have had the best maintained surrounding it toped my list because it catered for more people than any other shopping area I studied as well as having a large sphere of influence
 - ➢ It is accessible to many of its customers vas it is surrounded by motorways giving it the large sphere as well as providing enough parking space for the people who travelled by car and it also has various bus routes connecting it with the majority of London

- ➢ It provided its customers with a wide variety of goods ranging from specialist comparison goods and convenience goods as well

I have placed Staples corner second in my shopping hierarchy for the following reasons:
- ➢ It has well maintained surrounding and greenery
- ➢ It provides it customers with a calm relaxing shopping environment
- ➢ It gives back to its local community by having a cinema and restaurant
- ➢ It is accessible to all customers who travel by car since it is surrounded by motorways

Kilburn High road has come third for the following reasons:
- ➢ It provided its customers with a variety of goods since it has many different cultural shops
- ➢ It goods come a low price since it does not have the big stores which charge customers a lot of money for their goods
- ➢ It gives back to the local community by having many restaurant and entertainment buildings such as Macca Bingo
- ➢ It is accessible since it has all the public transport link for the customers who don have a car to be able to travel to the site
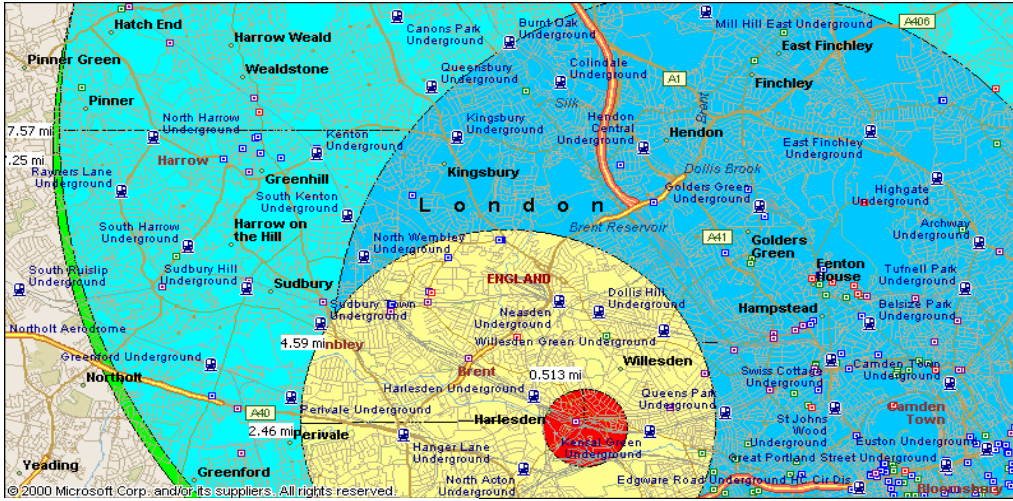
Harlesden High Road came in forth place in the shopping hierarchy for the following reason
- ➢ It was not a well maintained shopping area by the vast amount of litter on its floors and the vandalism that could be seen everywhere
- ➢ The location attracts crime since it is not well maintained
- ➢ It does not give back to its area as it has no restaurants but that of fast food
- ➢ It littered with pound shops that only provide convenience goods for its customer and spoil Harlesden environment since they cause a small space for pedestrians to walk by places their goods on the pavement
- ➢ Although it may be accessible it is hard to get to because of the congestion that occurs because of the fact that cars illegally park on the road making the one way route which normally has two lanes of traffic have one
- ➢ It only caters to the needs of it surrounding area making it have a small sphere of influence
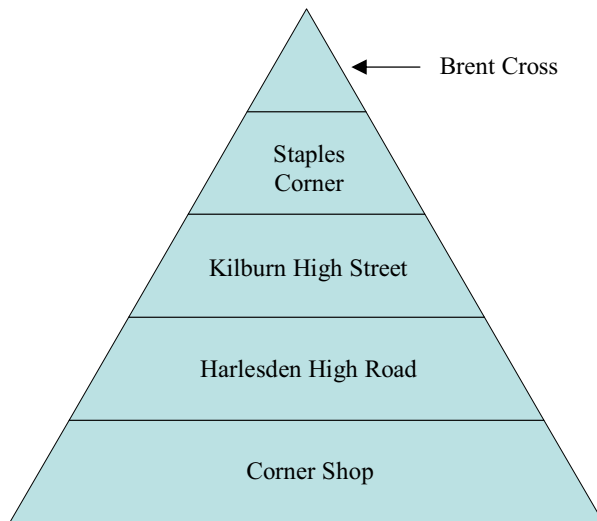
My local corner shop came last in my investigation for these reasons:
- ➢ It has a very small and limited sphere of influence as a result of it only selling convenience goods
- ➢ It caters to the few people that live in the immediate area
- ➢ Is provides no service for the people living in the immediate area
- ➢ It is only accessible to the people living in the surrounding and immediate area.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCES:

- **Staples Corner** (cyan)
- **Brent Cross** (green)
- **Harlesden** (yellow)
- **Kilburn** (blue)
- **Corner Shop** (red)

Brent Cross

Staples Corner

Kilburn High Street

Harlesden High Road

Corner Shop

Evaluation

Even though it may appear my investigation was flawless in nature, during the duration of the investigation I encountered a few problems with the collecting of the data, which my have distorted the results I have produced although only slightly. The fundamental of these problem was the fact that I only preformed the data collecting once so therefore I can not totally say my results are accurate and precise, since without collecting the same information several times the results I got the first time may have been distorted by environmental factors such as time and weather as well as other factors. I believe my results may have suffered because I preformed my data collection methods in different days which resulted in me getting information which my have been influenced by the type of day I did it one and having information from two different day could mean I have two different sets of information influence by the type of day it was. Furthermore the fact that my corner shop is in Westminster and not Brent undermines the fact that I my main question is finding whether there is a shopping hierarchy in Brent, although most corner shops are very similar.

References

www.streetmap.co.uk provided me with the maps of the locations

Bibliography

www.mapquest.co.uk