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PERCEPTION OF SHOPPING CENTERS:

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

BY:

CATHY JEAN BURNS

B.A. Wilfrid Laurier University, 1978

T H E S I S

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts degree
Wilfrid Laurier University
1980

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ABSTRACT

Previous research has indicated that shopping center images consist of various components and that different images are held by consumers, retailers, and mall management. The study examines the consumers', retailers', and mall managements' images of two shopping centers in the City of Waterloo. One center is Conestoga Mall; the other is Westmount Place. Responses were obtained from shoppers, retailers, and management by use of questionnaires and interviews. The data was analyzed using Biomedical Programs (BMD), a frequency count, factor analytic work, and step-wise multiple regression. It was determined that the image components of consumers, retailers, and mall management were different for Conestoga Mall. Consumers and retailers at Westmount Place selected the same image components but differed in the ranking of their importance. Consumers, retailers and mall management felt that Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place had or generated different images.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

By the end of 1980, there will be at least 20,000 shopping centers of various sizes in operation in Canada and the United States.¹ During the past five years, shopping centers in Canada and the United States have been developed and opened at a rate of one thousand per year. These shopping centers generate various images. A consumer has an image of a shopping center. Retailers have images of a shopping center. The mall management has an image of a center. A shopping center might be considered successful if the consumers', retailers' and the mall management's images of the mall are similar.

A major objective of the mall management and retailers is to please consumers and to win their patronage. They need to understand their image to accomplish this objective. The retailers' images of a shopping center should resemble the consumers' images of it. The retailers' images of a shopping center should be similar to the mall management's image of a center. The mall management's image of a shopping center should collate with the consumers' images of it. Image congruency, by the consumers, retailers and the mall management could be considered a measure of a shopping center's success.

The mall management and the retailers, in comprehending what their centers' image is, must answer; what attracts consumers to one shopping center rather than another? In Pierre Martineau's study of retail images, he concludes "shoppers shop at the shopping center whose images are most congruent".² A shopping center will not attract all consumers, for its image will according to the consumers' social affiliation, income,

status, age group, occupation etc. The retailers and the shopping center management should have an understanding of what their image is, thus enabling them to attract the maximum number of consumers by appealing to a particular group of consumers. By maximizing the number of customers they are drawing, the mall management and retailers are achieving their objective of having a successful shopping center. It is very important that the retailers' and the mall management's images of a shopping center does not conflict with the consumers' images of a shopping center.

One might ask why a geographer would want to examine these various images of a shopping center. Image is "a representation of various physical dimensions: temporal, spatial, geographic, economic, social and cultural".³ Image is a mental construct, a symbol and a product. Perception is "both the response of the senses to the external stimuli and purposeful activity with which certain phenomena are clearly registered while others recede in the share or are blocked out".⁴ Perception is a filtering mechanism and a process. Geographers examine the process and the product. Research into image and perception of shopping centers provides some insight into group behaviour.

Consumer behaviour has been defined as a "process of learning; it is modified according to the customer's past experiences and the objectives he or she has set".⁵ The great quantity of work by geographers has traditionally focused on describing the overall numbers, distances and directions of alternative kinds of shopping trips. This work was based on the theories and research methods of economists. Geographers such

as William Applebaum⁶ and David Huff⁷ demarcated retail trade areas. B.J.L. Berry⁸ and James Simmons⁹ classified retail structures of cities. William Christaller¹⁰, A. Losch¹¹ and R. Preston¹² studied hierarchical pattern of the urban system, and W. Reilly attempted to determine the interaction between two retail trade centers. In 1960, David Huff published a paper entitled "A Topographical Model of Consumers Space Preferences", and from this work interest in the cognitive-behavioural approach towards consumer behaviour was generated.¹³ His work emphasized the individual and his space preferences. Thus, geographers were and are interested in the spatial expression of consumer behaviour. Image research also provides some insight into the success of a shopping center. It enables the geographer (and also the retailer and the mall management) to comprehend more fully the strengths and weaknesses of a shopping center as viewed by the consumer. The positive and negative components of a shopping center's image would be known. This would provide a geographer, retailer or the mall management with an opportunity to rectify the negative components and to reinforce the positive components of a shopping center's image.

There are, as mentioned, two distinct approaches to consumer behaviour by geographers. The first can be termed the economic man approach and the other, the cognitive behavioural approach. Although this study primarily concentrates on the cognitive behavioural approach, the economic man approach provided the foundation for the other's development. It would be beneficial, therefore, to review these approaches and understand their contribution to consumer behaviour geography.

b) Geographical Literature Review

The economic man approach, has been divided, by geographers into two research strategies: General Interaction Theory and Central Place Theory.¹⁴ General Interaction Theory is applied marketing geography, for the concern is "how to measure a retail trade area".¹⁵ The store location practitioners, as B.J.L. Berry, calls them, like W. Applebaum and B. Epstein, examine and evaluate shopping centers by demarcating retail trade areas. William Applebaum, looked at shopping centers with his study on "The Dynamics of Store Trading and Market Equilibrium"¹⁶ and "Evaluating Store Sites and Determining Store Rents".¹⁷ He felt that marketing geography should be "concerned with the delimitation and measurement of markets and with the channels of distribution through which goods move from producer to consumer".¹⁸ Applebaum emphasized that geography should be applied rather than academic, and shopping centers provided data for this particular application. The trade area of the shopping centers represented the consumer market and could be delineated by a technique he named "customer spotting".¹⁹ Bart Epstein's "Evaluation of Established Planning Centers" used Applebaum's technique in determining a regional center's trade area.²⁰

Paralleling the work of consulting practitioners has been the gradual emergence of a science of marketing geography in universities. One of the first important contributions, related to marketing geography and consumer behaviour, was the attempt by William Reilly to develop the general laws of retail gravitation.²¹ He states "two cities attract trade from an intermediate town in

the vicinity of the breaking point approximately in direct proportion to the populations of the two cities and inverse to the squares of the distances from these two cities to the intermediate town".²² The equation is:

$$\frac{B_a}{B_b} = \frac{P_a}{P_b} \left(\frac{D_b}{D_a} \right)^2$$

Where:

$B_a B_b$ is the proportion of trade drawn to cities A and B respectively.

$P_a P_b$ is the population sizes of cities A and B respectively.

$D_a D_b$ is the distance from the intermediate town to cities A and B.²³

There have been many attempts to improve upon Reilly's laws. Paul Converse, for example, developed the Breaking Point Formula from Reilly's work.²⁴

$$D(b) = \frac{d(ab)}{\sqrt{\frac{P(a)}{P(b)}} + 1}$$

Where:

$P(a) P(b)$ - Population sizes of cities A and B respectively.

$D(b)$ - breakpoint distances of trade centers

$d(ab)$ - distance between A and B.²⁵

He was able to determine the exact location (the breaking point) where the trade area divides between two competing urban centers.

David Huff developed in 1963 a model based on a series of probabilities.²⁶ These probabilities, of consumers choosing one center over a set of competing places, could be mapped. As a result, overlapping trade area occur and circular trade areas do not occur (Figure 1.1). His formula is:

$$P(i,j) = \frac{F(j)/d(i,j)^X}{\sum_{j=1}^n F(j)/d(i,j)^X}$$

Where:

- P(i,j) - Probability of trip from area; to center;
- F(j) - The attractiveness of j measured by floorspace.
- d(i,j) - travelling time to the center,
- X - Exponent (different from each type of good).²⁷

He attempts to incorporate into the equation, the variability in shopping patterns with different purchase of different goods by the consumer.

Recently, Keith Tinkler has revised Reilly's law of Retail Gravitation and his research adds a new dimension to General Interaction Theory.²⁸ He believes that Huff's refinement of Reilly's law has resulted in the movement away from the initial intent of Reilly's law. Huff examined trade area in the micro scale and not the macro scale. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a consistent thread of thought from the initial Reilly law through various modifications and variations to the Huff model. Tinkler examines Reilly's original equations. He believes that "there

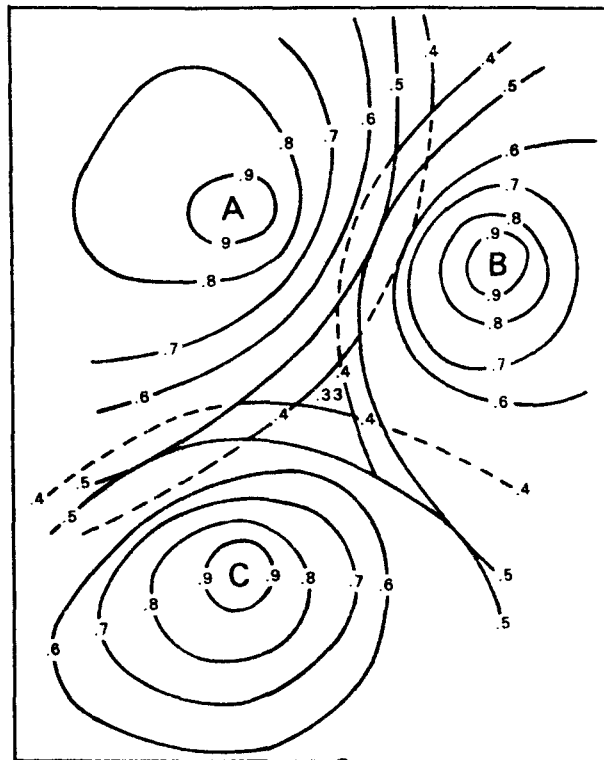


Figure 1.1 Huff's Probability Contours for consumers choosing to shop in each of the three centers.

seems to be a breakpoint to the right of the smaller center B itself, lying right of the larger center A".²⁹ He defines this right side of B as a "shadow" side of center B with respect to center A. It is actually the extension of Center A's primary retail trade area. Center A's influence is extended past center B (see figure 1.2). His actual equation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Pr(A)} = & \frac{\text{Distance A's Population}}{\text{Distance from City A to City B}^\emptyset} \\ & \frac{\text{City A's Population}}{\text{Distance from City A to City B}^\emptyset} \\ & + \\ & \frac{\text{City B's Population}}{(1 - \text{Distance from City A to City B})^\emptyset} \end{aligned}$$

Where:

Pr(A) is the probability of a consumer patronizing City A.

\emptyset = Exponent (2 in Reilly's equation).³⁰

B.J.L. Berry feels these gravity models have strong foundations and are of the greatest use to marketing geographers. A model simplifies reality and is static in time. Unfortunately, consumer behaviour is complex and is constantly changing. It is difficult to incorporate this complexity into a model. These studies however, have enabled the geographer to look at the consumer more closely, and this has produced the cognitive behavioural approach.

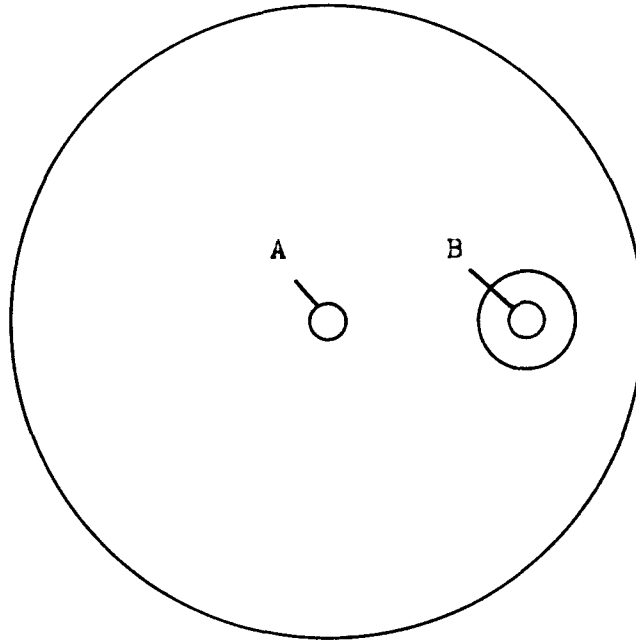


Figure 1.2 An Illustration of the shadow effect of City A on City B.

The other aspect of the economic man approach to consumer behaviour is central place theory. Christaller developed the central place theory to describe the size number and distribution of towns providing goods and services to surrounding areas.³¹ It has been extended by geographers to help explain the location of business centers within cities.³² Central place theory contributes greatly to an explanation of consumer behaviour, by describing location, size and nature and spacing of clusters of retail activity. Berry's classification of a hierarchy of business centers has enabled the categorization of various shopping centers. Figure 1.3 is an illustration of five shopping center structures categorized by B.J.L. Berry. These structures are named isolated convenience stores and street corner developments, neighborhood shopping centers, community (district) shopping centers, central business districts and regional shopping centers. The marketing geographer can classify and map these five structures. A spatial demand cone could be mapped using a store's per capita sales. The store's sales would decline with distance and the map would have hexagons on its uniform plane.³³

Richard Preston's study of "The Structure of Central Place Systems" (1978) is a recent example of central place theory research.³⁴ The success of a shopping center could be determined by an adaptation of the Preston formula:

$$C = R + S - XMF$$

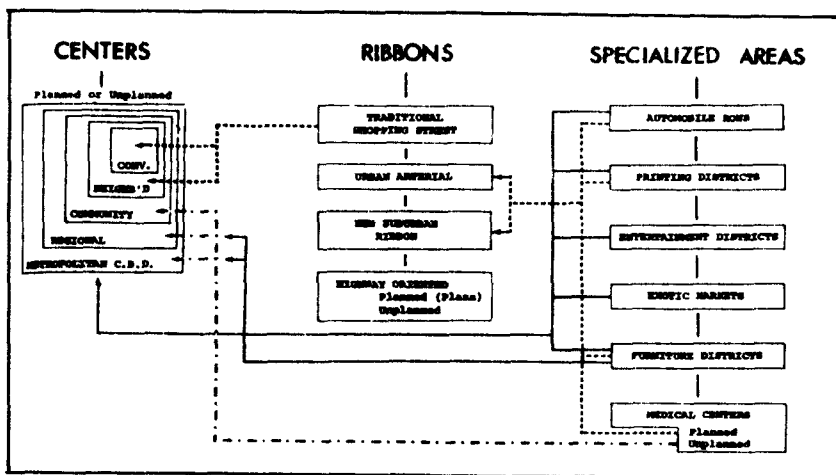


Figure 1.2 The structure of shopping areas.

Source: Berry, Commercial Structure and Commercial Blight, 1963.

Where:

C is the centrality

R=Total sales of retail establishments in central place.

S=Total sales in selected service establishments.

X=Average percent of median family income spent on items and selected services.

M=Median family for a central place.

F=Total number of families in a central place.³⁵

Surrogate values may have to be found for the total amount of retail sales and service establishment sales, as this information is often not available to the researcher. The volume of automobiles, in a shopping center parking lot, might be a viable alternative for the 'R' value. A geographer, using this formula, could determine if a shopping center is successful. The equation measures the drawing power or the number of consumers a shopping center might attract. Geographers unfortunately, have not fully developed this theory.

However, the central place theory fails to allow for the influence of particular tastes and preferences among different groups of customers. This failure is as a result of the nature of the data utilized. Aggregate statistics just cannot be expected to reveal to the geographer the behaviour of a customer or consumer. Central place theory is also rigid and deterministic, whereas consumer behaviour is very dynamic.³⁶ This theory's assumptions are that man is economically rational and that isotropic conditions exist. Both assumptions create a weakness

in the theory. It must be remembered however, that a model must simplify. Central place theory does provide the geographer with an objective measure for determining the success of a shopping center, and with a classification of shopping centers into hierarchies.

The other approach to consumer behaviour based upon the economic man approach is the cognitive behavioural perspective. D. Marble states "this approach focuses upon the nature of the decision making process and the parameters which determine its outcome"³⁷. One fundamental parameter is the consumer's perception and interpretation of what the environment offers. David Huff, famous for advancing Reilly's law of retail gravitation, has contributed to the individualistic approach. He examines the behaviour of the consumer with his study of a "Topographical Model of Consumer Space Preferences"³⁸. Customer satisfaction is measured not solely in economic terms. It is also measured by the degree to which the consumer's general desires and/or specific goals are satisfied, by the fulfillment of customer's deep seated psychological needs, and also includes the customer's social and economic objectives. B.J. Garner identifies four investigatory problems or research within this approach and they are as follows:

1. The nature of the images themselves in terms of people's attitudes towards shopping centers.
2. The relationship between different types of consumer needs.
3. The relationship between different images and the objective facts of the urban retail system.

4. The comprehension of the mechanism by which different
³⁹
 images arise.

The nature of the shopping center images and their measurement, which is part of Garner's Research Strategy Number 1 have been investigated by such geographers as B.J. Garner, A.J. Bruce, R.M. Downs, M. Cadwallader and M. Pacione. B.J. Garner's "The Analysis of Qualitative Data in Urban Geography: The Example of Shop Quality" (1968) is a detailed case study of female attitudes towards women's clothing stores in Bristol.⁴⁰ He was able to distinguish three classes of quality status in shops: chain stores, speciality shops (boutiques) and traditional stores. A.J. Bruce's article entitled "Housewife Attitudes Towards Shops and Shopping" (1970) concerns consumer impressions of shops.⁴¹ His results also show that different types of shops convey different images.

R.M. Downs identified eight sets of criteria which are important in contributing to a center's image in "The Cognitive Structure of An Urban Shopping Center" (1970).⁴² Four are concerned with quality, price, range of shops and hours of shopping; and four criteria are concerned with structure and function of a center.

M. Cadwallader's article entitled "A Behavioural Model for Consumer Decision Making" is an attempt to predict consumer⁴³ behaviour. He used cognitive distance, amount of information gathering, and store attractiveness as variables in his model. Michael Pacione's article "Preference and Perception: An Analysis

of Consumer Behaviour" (1975) was designed to analyse the relationship between consumers' preferences and the image of retail environment.⁴⁴ He was able to break down consumer image of a shopping center into seven image-forming components: accessibility, multipurpose or combined trips, variety, pricing, quality, reliability and atmosphere. These researchers focused on the dynamics of consumer behaviour. They explain how to measure people's attitudes or perception of images towards shopping centers. A.J. Bruce and M. Pacione also attempt to see the relationship between different images and different types of customer needs (number 2 in Garner's research strategies). However, market researchers have done a considerable amount of research in this area. This research will be discussed later. In this study, B.J. Garner's first two research strategies will be used. First, the nature of shopping center image will be examined and measured along with the relationship between different images and different groups of people. A secondary focus will be on the relationship between different images and the urban retailing system, and the understanding of the mechanism by which different images arise (Garner's number three and number four strategies).

c) Definition of Terms

Since the terms 'shopping center', 'retailers', 'mall management', and 'image' are utilized greatly in consumer behaviour research, the following definitions are used in this study:

SHOPPING CENTER - the environment in which retailing occurs. A group of commercial establishments, planned, developed, owned and managed as a unit related in location size, type of shops to the trade area that the unit serves. It provides on site parking in definite relationship to the type and sizes of the stores.⁴⁵

RETAILERS - the individual store owners or managers within each shopping center. The stores include department stores, co-operatives, and independent stores that deal directly with the consumer.⁴⁶

MALL MANAGEMENT - either a group or an individual, appointed by the owners of a planned shopping center to manage their unit (ie. the shopping center as one entity).⁴⁷

IMAGE - the product of the process of collecting, coding and evaluating information about the spatial environment.⁴⁸

Image is a very important element in the measurement of the perception of consumers towards shopping centers. The role of image in economic activities and in urban society was first examined by Kenneth Boulding in the middle 1950's.⁴⁹ He felt that consumer behaviour was directed not only by information and knowledge, but also by the images the consumer perceives. Boulding argues that consumer "function or react not in response to what is true, but to what consumers believe to be true".⁵⁰ Subjective values and knowledge mediate between the consumer and the real world. He also states that "the human mind can handle only a certain number of complex situations and stimuli; therefore it attempts to over-simplify circumstances and thus, abstracts

only a few meanings that are salient".⁵¹ The cartoon character, 'Uncle Sam' of the United States is an example. He represents a vast complexity of values and meanings .

Pierre Martineau, clarifying Boulding's ideas, feels the store and shopping center image is "the way which the store or shopping center is defined in the shopper's mind, partly by its functional qualities and partly by an aura of psychological attributes".⁵² The two most significant phrases in this definition are 'functional qualities' and 'psychological attributes'. Functional qualities refer to the tangible store or shopping center image elements. These elements are price ranges, merchandise quality, merchandise selection and architecture. Psychological attributes are intangible elements. The consumer evaluates the atmosphere of the center. His interest or excitement generated by the shopping center is another tangible element. Shopping center image is complex and consists of tangible functional elements and intangible psychological attributes.

Market researchers recently have focused their attention on these tangible and intangible attributes of shopping center images and their measurement. It would be beneficial to examine these various studies and discuss their contribution to marketing geography.

These shopping center or store image attributes aggregately form the image or images held by the consumer towards a shopping center. These eight attributes can be categorized as follows:

1. Merchandise

The five factors considered are quality, selection (assortment), fashion, guarantees and pricing of goods offered at the center.

2. Service

The factors within this attribute are sales clerk service, presence of self-service, delivery service and services in general.

3. Physical Fitness

This tangible factor incorporates such things as elevators, lighting, air conditioning, store layout, aisle placement, carpeting, aisle width and architecture.

4. Store Atmosphere

This variable refers to the customer's feelings of warmth, ease and acceptance.

5. Clientele

Self-image congruency and social class appeal are variables in this attribute.

6. Convenience

Accessibility or locational convenience and parking are elements of this attribute.

7. Institutional Factors

These elements are reputation and reliability of the shopping center.

8. Advertising

The variables within this attribute include advertising and displays. ⁵³

These eight attributes of a shopping center image incorporate the empirical and hypothetical research of twenty-six market researchers.⁵⁴ Figure 1.4 summarizes the eight image attributes. Those attributes having empirical support have the letter "E" in

Figure 1.4. Image Attribute Studies.

Image/Attitude Attributes	Researchers																	
	Rich	Martineau	Arons	Bucklin	Alderson and Sessions	Rich and Portis	Myers	Rachman and Kemp	McCann	Wingate	Stonier	Kunkel and Berry	Tillman	Kelly and Stephenson	Fisk	Ellsworth, Benjamin, and Rudolf	May	Wyckham Weale
Merchandise																		
Quality	E	E	H			E						E	E	H	H		E	E
Selection, Assortment	E	E	H	H	E	E						E	E	H	H		E	
Styling, Fashion		E	H			E	E	E				E					E	
Guarantee				H														
Pricing	E	E	H	H		E		E				E		H	H		E	
Service																		
Service, General	E	E	H	H			E					E			H			
Salesclerk Service	E	E				E	E						F		H		E	
Self-Service	E																	
Ease of Return	E	E				E		E				E					E	
Credit	E	E		H		E									H		E	
Delivery	E					E									H		E	
Phone Orders	E					E											E	
Clientele																		
Social Class Appeal		E							H	H					H			E
Self-Image Congruency		E												H			E	
Store Personnel		E				E						E	E	H			E	

Source: Lindquist, "Meaning of Image", p.37.

Figure 1.4 Image Attribute Studies.

Image/Attitude Attributes	Researchers																		
	Rich	Martineau	Arons	Bucklin	Alderson and Sessions	Rich and Portis	Myers	Rachman and Kemp	McCann	Wingate	Stonier	Kunkel and Berry	Tillman	Kelly and Stephenson	Fisk	Ellsworth, Benjamin, and Rudolf	May	Wyckham	Weale
Physical Facilities																			
Physical Facilities		E												H					
Store Layout	E	E				E								H				E	
Shopping Ease				H											H				
Architecture		E																	
Convenience												E						E	
Convenience																			
Locational																			
Convenience	E	E			E	E						E		H	H			E	E
Parking	E					E					H				H			E	
Promotion																			
Sales Promotion												E							
Advertising/Display	E	E				E									H				
Advertising			E	E								E		H	H			E	
Trading Stamps												E			H				
Symbols and Colors		E														E			
Store Atmosphere																			
Atmosphere/ Congeniality		E	H									E							E

the appropriate row/column. Those attributes that have only been hypothesized by researchers have the letter "H" in the appropriate row/column. However, these attributes do not allow for the combination of factors; nor do they indicate the relative importance of the various attributes. The frequency mentioned by the researchers in their studies, might be a substitute or an indicator of potentially key attributes.

In summary, thirty-eight percent of the researchers examining shopping center images have empirically found or hypothesized that the consumer considers merchandise, service and locational attributes when evaluating a shopping center image. Merchandise, service and location were the most dominant attributes, and it will be interesting to see if these attributes will be significant in this study.

(d) The Purpose of the Study

It is the purpose of this thesis to examine the images of a shopping center held by the mall management, the retailers and the consumers; to determine whether conflict occurs between these various images; and to see if different shopping centers' images vary significantly. The following questions indicate more fully what will hopefully be answered at the conclusion of this paper:

1. Are the consumers', mall management's and retailers' images of one shopping center congruent with each other?

2. Are the images of one shopping center significantly different from the images of another shopping center or do all shopping centers have identical images?

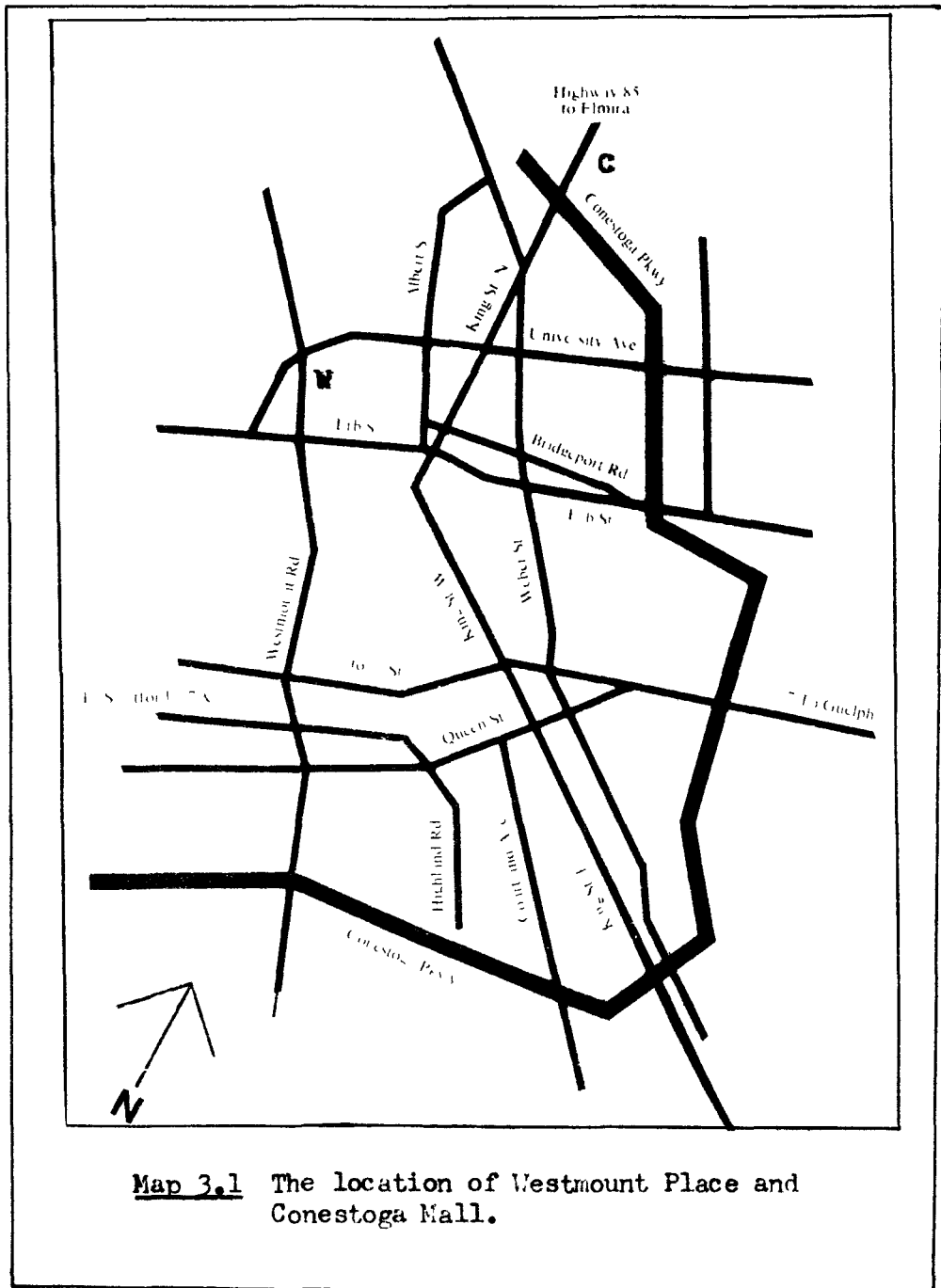
Two shopping centers in the City of Waterloo were chosen to see if these questions could be answered. Westmount Place, located at the intersections of Westmount Road and Erb Street and the Conestoga Mall, located at the north end of Waterloo on King Street (see Map. 3.1).

There are three limitations that need to be considered in this study. This study has concept, area and source limitations.

Concept limitations include term definitions, assumptions and selection of specific tests. The terms of shopping center, retailers, mall management and image are arbitrarily defined in this study (see definition of terms section). The assumption made at the outset was that the data was normally distributed. Also the selection of the tests, as explained in Table 2.2 was arbitrary.

Area limitation is concerned with the selection of the two shopping centers. For the purposes of this study, the term shopping center was represented by Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall. These centers were chosen arbitrarily.

Lastly, a source limitation occurred in this study. The data involves consumers and did not involve nonconsumers. It was unfortunate that people who did not shop at Conestoga Mall or Westmount Place were not included in the survey. However, due to the sampling techniques used in this study, they could not be included.



This study is not concerned with the consumer's decision making process. It does not attempt to predict consumer behaviour. This thesis examines the perceptions of shopping centers by consumers, retailers and mall management. These images can be compared without the researcher inquiring about the consumers', retailers', or mall management's nationality, age, sex, income etc. Shopping center image is the primary interest of this study.

e) The History of Shopping Centers and of Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place

To better understand shopping center images and, in particular, the images of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall, it would be worthwhile to describe the historical development of shopping centers in general and of shopping centers such as Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall in particular.

Throughout history, retailers have aggregated because they can attract more consumers by providing a larger variety of goods and services in the central spot. The location of this aggregation was usually the most accessible place for the surrounding population. In North America, the Central Business District, the focus point of public transportation, was the area of concentration. However, the established pattern changed with the adoption of the automobile. Retailers were able to locate towards the fringe of the city and not directly in the city center. Sears, Roebuck and Company was one of the first retailers to locate

outside the Central Business District, and in the 1920's, they began to establish large free standing stores with on-site parking.⁵⁵ J.C. Nichols, however, is generally recognized as the shopping center founder or pioneer.⁵⁶

In 1925, Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri, was developed by Nichols. The first mall had selected tenants, a planned architecture, on-site parking and one mall manager. It was not until the 1930's that the small strip centers developed on the fringe of large cities. These strip shopping centers were usually anchored by a supermarket, contained a drug store and a few other convenience type retailers. The arrangement of these strip shopping centers was a straight line of stores with a service alley behind. They were situated back from the street far enough to permit a double line of parking.

There was very little commercial building during World War II. However, immediately after World War II, a sharp resurgence in the construction of strip shopping centers occurred.⁵⁷ These centers were much larger and the increase in the number of centers occurred because of the department store management's realization that if they wished to enlarge their store's floor space, the store must locate near the market (ie. the consumers now resided in the suburbs). It was this factor that "shifted some of industry's shopping center emphasis from satisfying the retail shopping needs of the neighborhoods to catering to the much more complex requirements of entire trade areas, measuring in miles rather than blocks".⁵⁸

In 1950, two shopping centers--Northgate in Seattle, Washington and Shoppers' World in Framingham, Massachusetts--⁵⁹ anchored by full-line department stores were opened. The cluster layout of shopping center architecture was introduced in 1954 (in Detroit) due to the inclusion of department store chains as shopping center tenants.⁶⁰ This layout, in "which the single department store was placed in the center of the site with the satellite stores, ring around it, surrounded by parking spaces",⁶¹ was the first to strive for esthetic appeal. By the end of the 1950's the major department stores management began to allow the total floor area of the satellite stores to expand, and this enabled the development of regional shopping centers to occur.⁶²

Shopping centers evolved similarly in Canada although much later. In 1956, there were only sixty-four centers in Canada with forty-one of these shopping centers in Ontario.⁶³ These centers were the strip type of center and consumers spent less than two cents of each retail dollar in them.⁶⁴ By 1973, shopping center sales accounted for over fifteen percent of Canadian retail trade, and in terms of both architecture and management, the difference between the United States and Canada became minimal.⁶⁵ Kitchener-Waterloo's shopping center development has reflected the general trend.

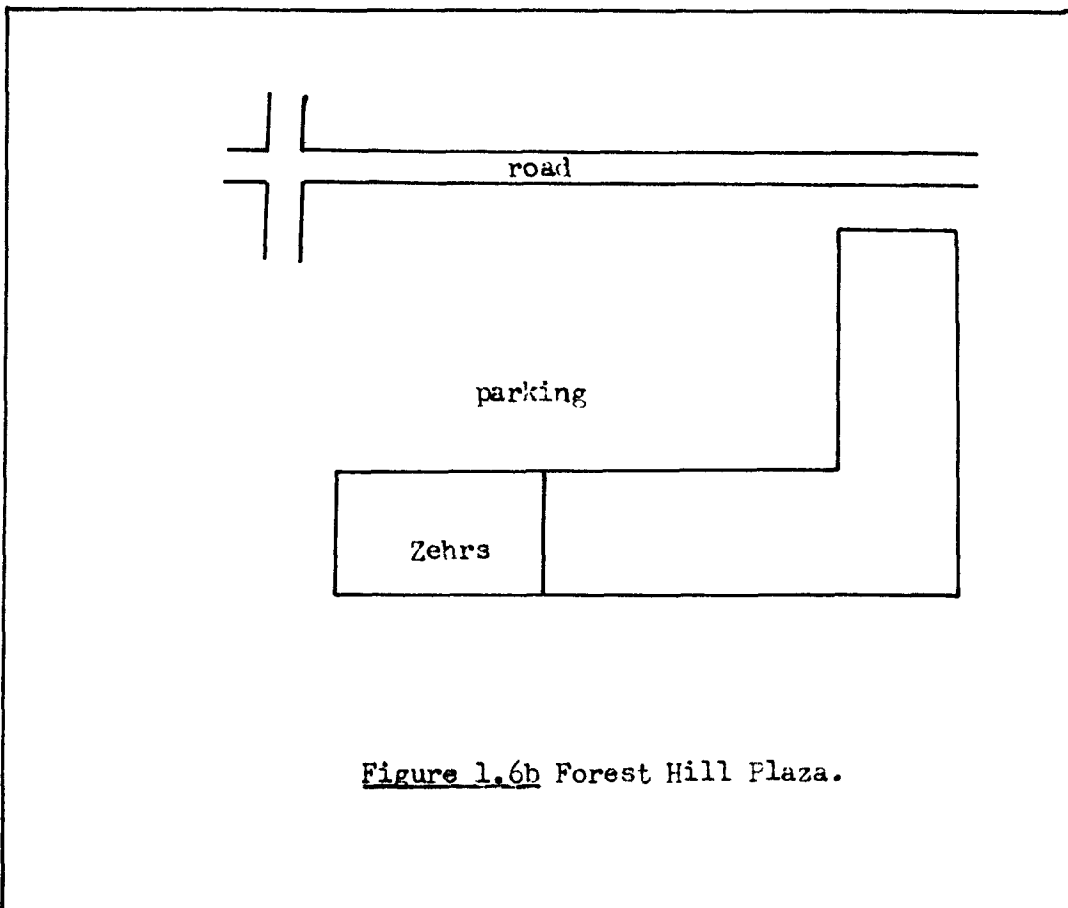
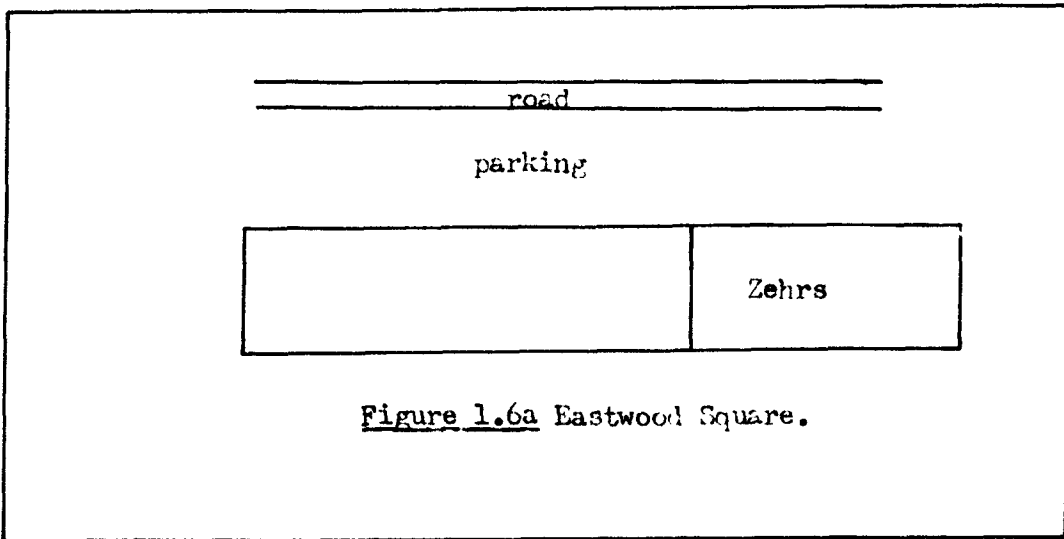
Throughout this thirty year period of Canadian and American shopping center history, shopping center architectural structure has been dynamic. Subject to site variations, many shopping centers fit into one of the following designs (see figures 1.6 a-h).⁶⁶

STRIP:

The architectural design is linear with a straight line of stores. Parking is available at the front. The anchor store, usually a supermarket, is placed at one of the ends. A strip shopping center is "usually a small neighborhood center and the terms have come to be used interchangeably".⁶⁷ A strip may also be a large center. Figure 1.6 a illustrates the center's design. An excellent example in the Kitchener-Waterloo area is located at Eastwood Square on Ottawa Street and Weber Street in Kitchener.

L: This is a strip shopping center with a right angle placed in its design. The center forms an L, with the anchors located on the end of each line. Figure 1.6 b illustrates the architectural design of the L center. Forest Hill Plaza, Greenbook Road, Kitchener, has this L architectural style.

U: The architectural design is "a strip center with two lines of stores placed at right angles to the strip, forming a U".⁶⁸ Parking in front of the stores is available and a service alley is behind it. These centers tend to be community type centers (ie. serve a larger trade area). An example of this design is the original Westmount Place in Waterloo at the corner of Erb Street and Westmount Road. The original open-air section was U shaped, until the enclosed area was added. Figure 1.6 c illustrates the U



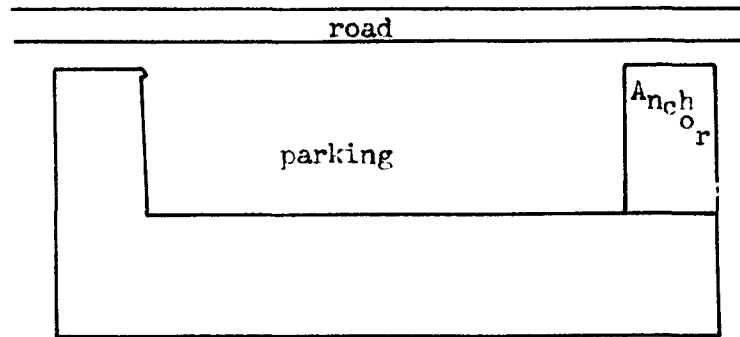


Figure 1.6c The original
Westmount Place.

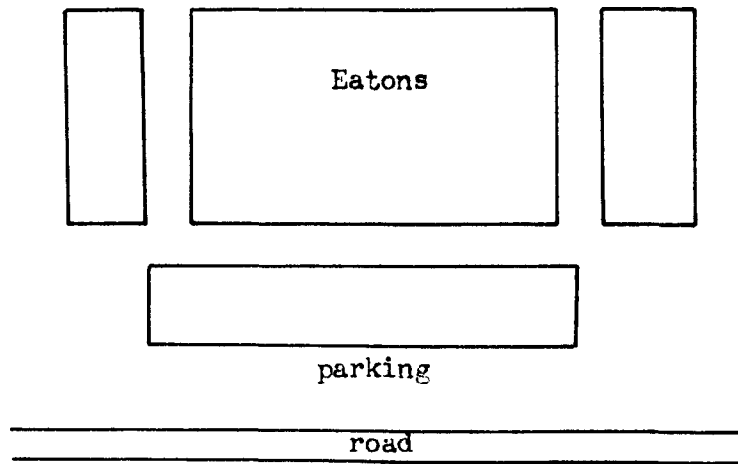


Figure 1.6d The original
Don Mills Plaza.

architectural design (also see figure 1.7 for Westmount Place design).

CLUSTER:

The stores are arranged so as to ring or encircle the anchor store, with parking on all sides. The style was the earliest form used in regional shopping centers.

Northland Center in Detroit, was the first center of this style. An example of this style is the original open-air Don Mills shopping Center on Don Mills Road in Toronto (see figure 1.6 d).

T: The shopping center attempts to accommodate three anchor stores. One anchor is not visible from the front entrances of the other two. Some authorities "consider this a disadvantage in that shoppers may not be drawn to all parts of the center; while others consider this is an advantage in that each anchor store provides an attraction helpful to the other satellite stores in its vicinity".⁶⁹

Fairview Park Mall on Fairway Road in Kitchener, and Conestoga Mall in Waterloo have the T architectural design (see figure 1.6 e). A variation of style is the Triangle. This design is very similar to the T form, but allows all anchor stores to be visible (see figure 1.6 f).

DUMBELL:

This style is a symmetrical strip center (ie. a double strip of stores facing each other with anchor stores at each end).

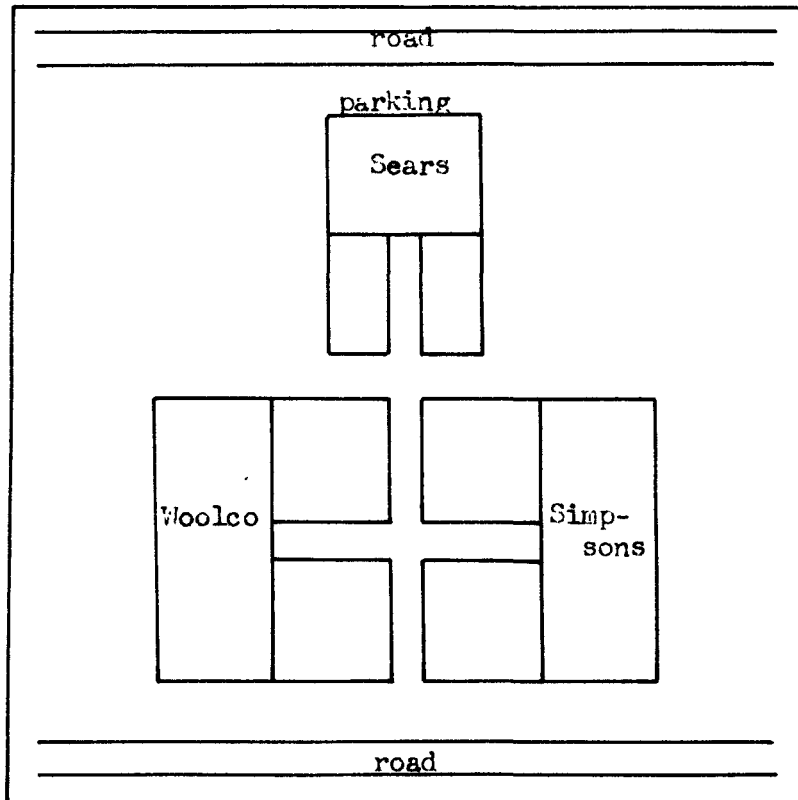


Figure 1.6e Fairview Park
Mall.

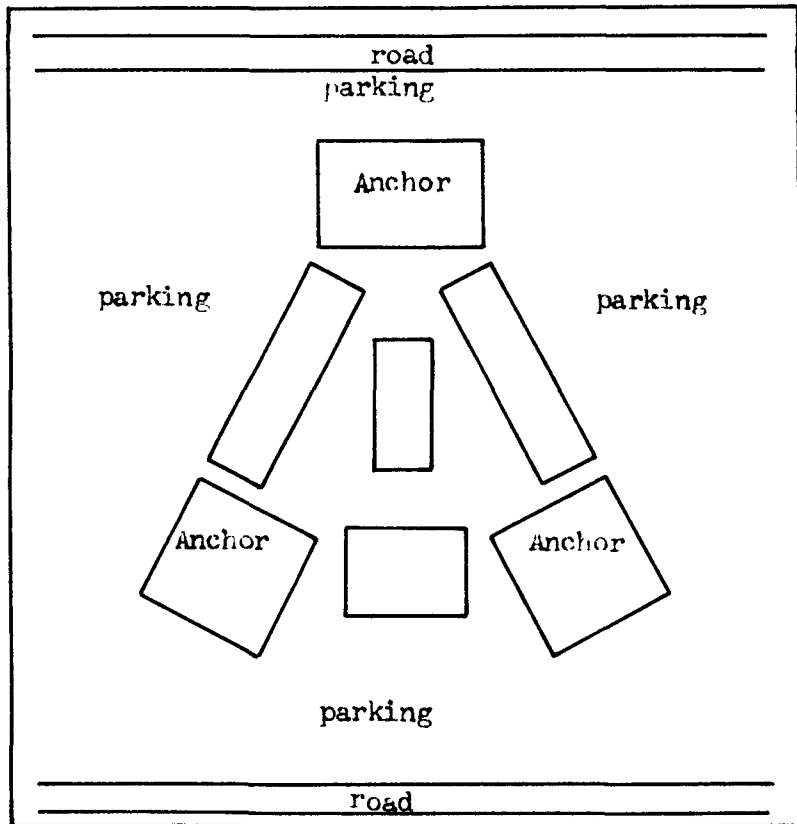


Figure 1.6f The Triangle

Source: Carpenter, Shopping Center Principles and Practices, p 15.

It was developed to generate maximum amount of traffic between the two anchor stores. Stanley Park Mall on River Road in Kitchener is an excellent example of this design (see figure 1.6 g).

DOUBLE DUMBBELL:

It is a dumbbell type of center with one dumbbell horizontal and one dumbbell vertical. This design is found in the Scarborough Town Center in Scarborough (see figure 1.6 h).

These designs are used by developers and shopping center management throughout Canada and the United States. Many of Kitchener-Waterloo's shopping centers have these various architectural styles (as illustrated by the examples). It would be beneficial to examine whether Kitchener-Waterloo's shopping centers have followed the general pattern of development and design. Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place must also be examined.

In terms of 1978 shopping center sales per person, Kitchener-Waterloo was the third highest Canadian City. The sales per person were six hundred dollars.⁷⁰ Calgary had the highest amount of sales and Edmonton had the second highest. Kitchener-Waterloo's market is sixteen percent above the national average with 933,500,000 dollars in retail sales (1.38% of the Canadian total).⁷¹ In 1966, Fairview Park Mall opened in an attempt to capture the large retail market.⁷² Westmount Place was opened in 1970 and Conestoga Mall was opened in 1978.⁷³

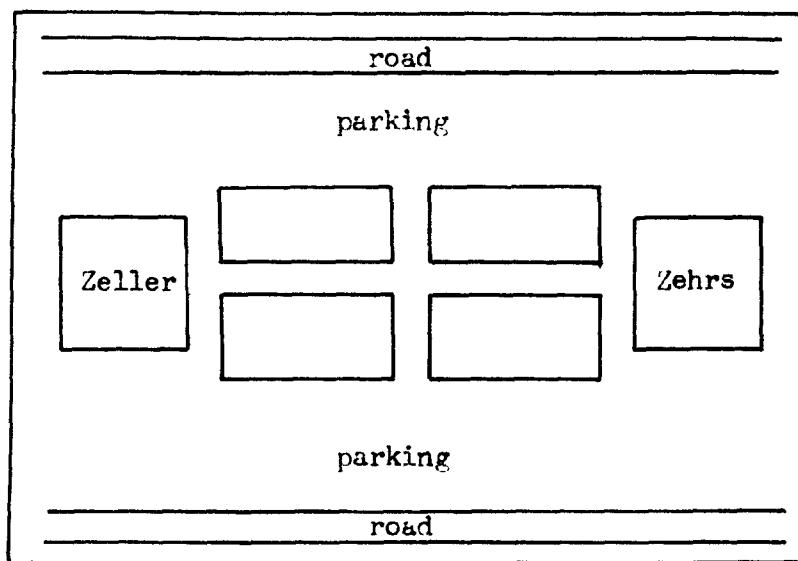


Figure 1.6g Stanley Park
Mall.

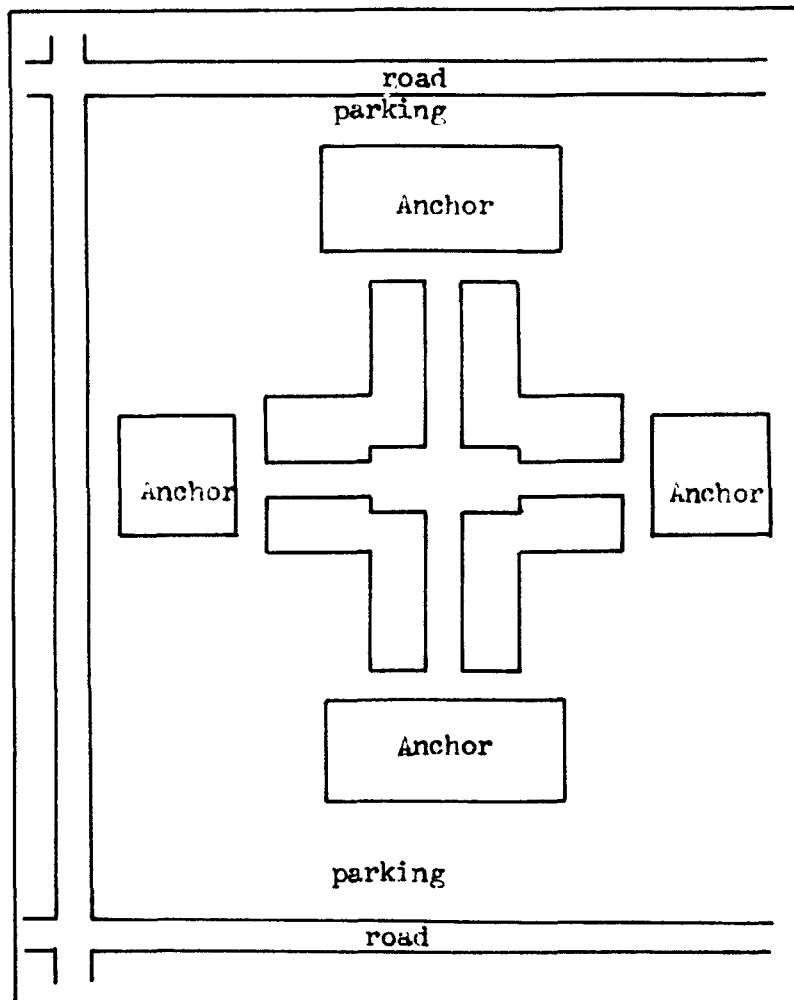


Figure 1.6h The Scarborough Town Center.

There is also Stanley Park Mall, Waterloo Square, Market Square and the soon-to-be opened King Center, in the cities.

Westmount Place, located at 50 Westmount Road, Waterloo, is owned and managed by Marathon Realty. It was opened in 1970 with the U architectural design and had 90,000 square feet of gross leasable area (see figure 1.7).⁷⁴ In 1972, the enclosed section was built and the gross leasable area expanded to 190,000 square feet.⁷⁵ Fifty-one stores are tenants in this center (see table 1.1). The main tenants or anchor stores are the T. Eaton Company with 60,000 square feet and the Dominion Food Stores with 22,000 square feet.⁷⁶ Westmount Place is a community type of shopping center.

B.J. Berry's characteristics for a community shopping center were a gross leasable area of 170,000 square feet with a trade area population of 60,000.⁷⁷ Westmount Place fits into this category with a gross leasable area of 190,000 square feet. Westmount claims a market population of 120,000 (50,000 in the primary trade area, 70,000 in the secondary trade area) and a sales volume of fifteen to twenty million dollars.⁷⁸ The center has parking for nine hundred automobiles.⁷⁹

Conestoga Mall, located at 550 King Street North, Waterloo, is owned and managed by Oxford Shopping Centers Limited. It was opened in 1978 with the T architectural design and contains 349,509 square feet of gross leasable area (see figure 1.8).⁸⁰ Seventy-one stores are tenants (see Table 1.2). The main tenants or anchor stores are G.W. Robinson Co. with 102,617 square feet, K-Mart with 70,500 square feet and Dominion Food Stores with

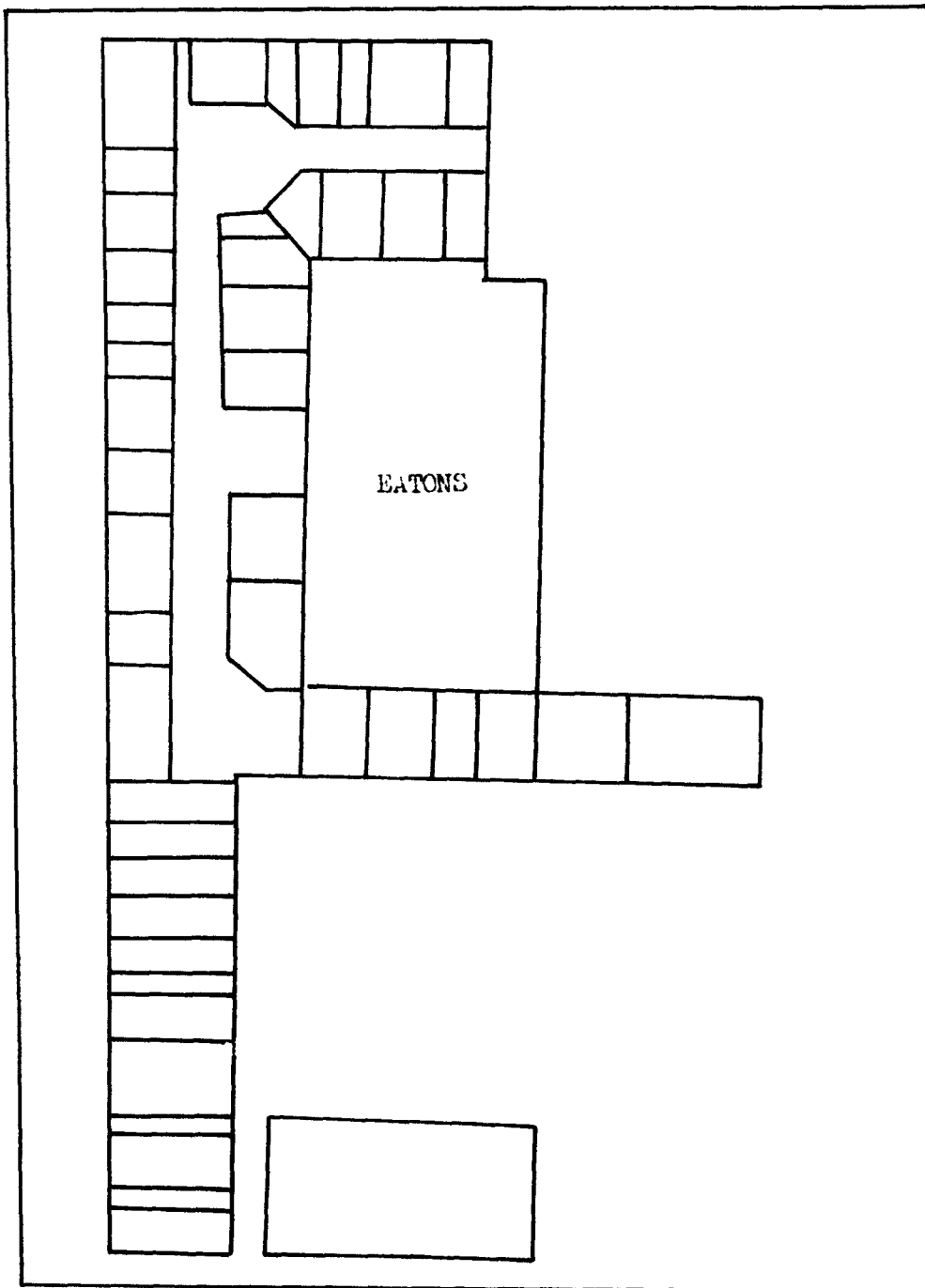


Figure 1.7 The design of Westmount Place.

Table 1.1

Westmount Place Tenants

LADIES' WEAR: Fashion Stop, Town & Country, Smart Set, Zack's

MEN'S WEAR: Ray Delions, Sauder, Star

CHILDREN'S WEAR: Bonnie Togs

DRUG: Westmount Place

PAINT/HARDWARE: Westmount Place

FURNITURE: Living Lighting

ELECTRONIC: Shopper's Records, Synthesis Stereo

CAMERA: Bent's

JEWELLERY: Plaza, Young's

CARDS/GIFTS: Gift Gallery, Port Hole

SHOE: Belinda & Brother, Lashbrooks

FLORIST: Bock's Flower

FOOD/RESTAURANT: Baskin Robbins Ice Cream, Dairy Queen, El
Patio, Smitty's

FINANCIAL: Canada Trust, Royal Bank

OTHER: Mahler Beauty, Meissner Travel, Pleon's Cleaners, Shop
Rite Catalogue, Plaza Barber, Bud Jones Optical, Westmount
Travel

Source: Monday Night Edition, Shopping Center Guide.

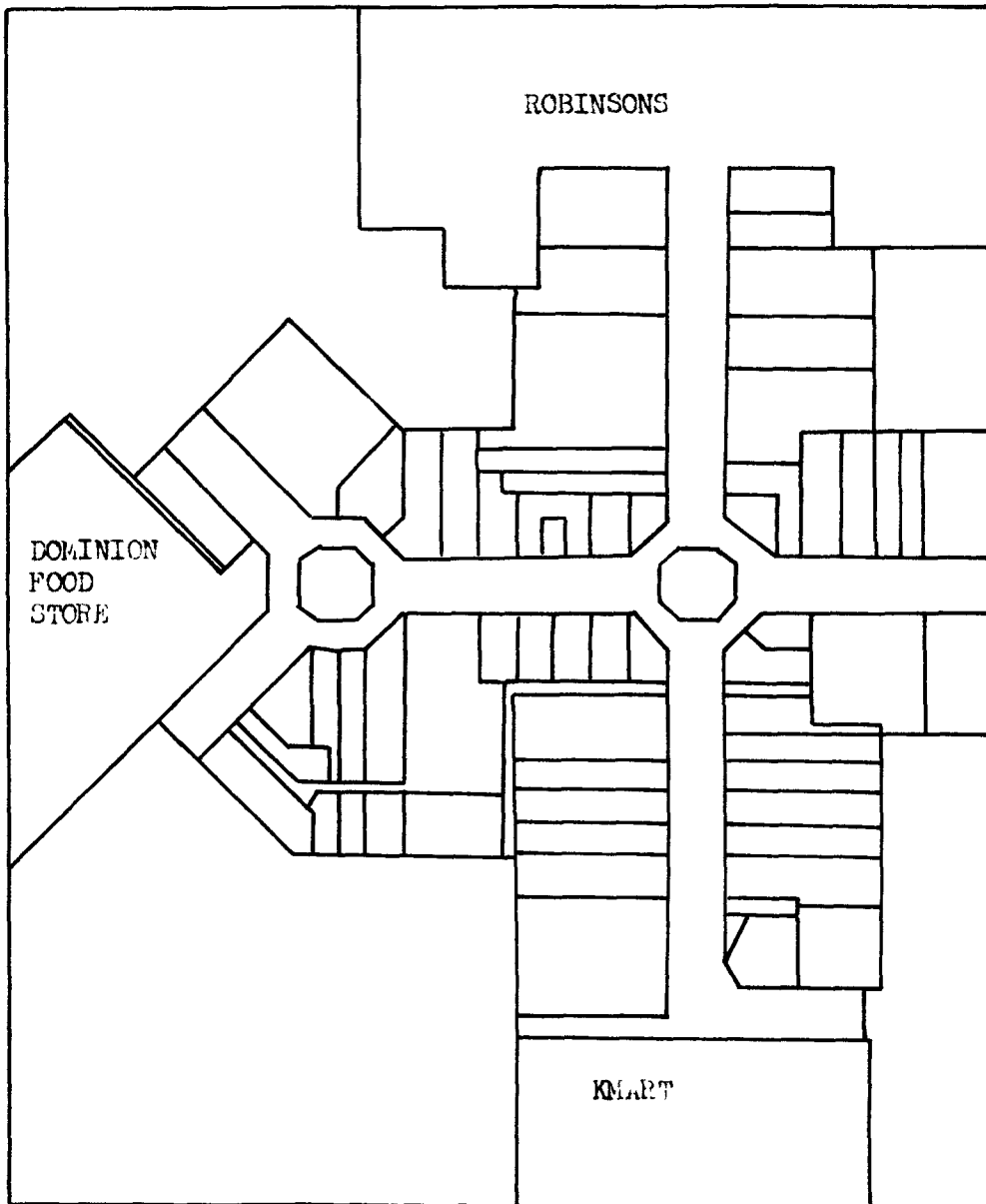


Figure 1.8 The design of Conestoga Mall.

Table 1.2

Conestoga Mall Tenants

LADIES' WEAR: Lady II, Town & Country, Fairweather/Big Steel, Suzy Shier, Irene Hill, Reitman's, Pennington's, Smart Set, Romar, Zack's, Echoes, The Loft, Venus Lingerie

MEN'S WEAR: Tip Top Tailers, Elks, Jack Fraser

FAMILY APPAREL: Family Fair

UNISEX: Athlete's World, Thrifty's, Discovery

CHILDREN'S WEAR: Kiddie Kobbler, Aux Coin Petits

JEWELLERY: People's, Young's Jewellers, Mappins

SHOE: Kinney, Bonita, Belinda & Brother, Maher, Agnew, Dolan

DRUG: Shopper's

ELECTRONIC: Radio Shack, Samco

DRAPERY/FABRIC: Kitchener Textiles, Singer

CARDS/GIFTS: Happy Hour, Greetings

BOOKS: Coles

FLORIST: Flowers 'N Fancies

PHOTO: Direct Film

RECORDS/TAPES: Flipside

PET: Conestoga Pet Village

TOYS: Playtime

FINANCIAL: Canada Trust, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce

FOOD/RESTAURANT: Orange Julius, Health Food Hut, The Hearth, Laura Secord, Tiffany's, Tropik Sun, Wonderland Cafeteria & Ice Cream Outlet

OTHER: CIL, Meissner Travel, Pot Pourri, Bud Jones Optical, Micro Cooking Center, Games, National Key, Tremco Cleaners, Terminal Men's Hairstyling, Total Image Beauty Salon, Info Place, Marks & Spencer, Leisure World

Source: Monday Night Edition, Shopping Center Guide.

36,504 square feet.⁸¹ The tenants pay the average rent of ten to twelve dollars per square foot.⁸² This is a regional mall for it is defined as:

A center with floorspace sizes of more than 400,000 square feet. These usually have a minimum site area of forty acres and space for about 4,000 cars. The major tenant is a department store (and there may be up to three of these), and the catchment area typically contains 100-250,000 people.⁸³

B.J.L. Berry's characterized a regional mall as having a gross leasable area of 400,000 square feet and a trade population of 300,000.⁸⁴ Conestoga Mall fits into this category with its gross leasable area of 400,000 square feet and its retail trade area of 210,000. Conestoga Mall claims a primary trade area of 60,000 people and a secondary trade area of 50,000. Thus, these two shopping centers are similar to other centers being developed in Canada and the United States; in terms of design, similar tenants and size etc. It must be remembered, however, that Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place fall in different classifications of centers, the former being a regional mall and the latter being a community mall. Although these centers are different in gross leasable area and size of trade area, it is the image of Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place held by consumers, retailers and mall managers that is herein examined and measured. This difference in classification might be reflected in how the consumer, retailer or mall management perceives the shopping center (his image) and this

should be evident in the selection of Conestoga's and Westmount's image attributes.

This thesis will examine the image of shopping centers by using Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place. Now that the role of shopping center image in geographic literature, the various definitions and the history of shopping centers, specifically Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall, have been examined and discussed, we may turn to the measurement of Conestoga Mall's and Westmount Place's images.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this study, shopping center images held by three groups will be compared and the images generated by different centers will also be discussed. Before these images can be analyzed, however, they must be measured.

The measurement of shopping center image involves surveying the attitudes of consumers, retailers and mall management. To obtain these for this study, a questionnaire and interviews were used. The results were analyzed by various statistical tests. At this point it might be helpful to comment on the design of the questionnaire, the surveying methods, and the choice of statistical techniques.

a) Sample Design

The data were collected during the months of March and April, 1980. Consumers were randomly selected as they left the shopping center building. This procedure consisted of having the interviewer distribute questionnaires in a previously addressed/stamped envelope to respondents. The interviewer explained the purpose of the questionnaire and asked that the respondent fill it in and mail the questionnaire when completed. This method of questionnaire administration has worked well in other studies.

If the researcher had predicted the consumer decision-making process, it would have been necessary to study the individual consumer's social and cultural background, his personality traits,

his lifestyle, etc. However, it was the intention of this study to focus on the shopping center. Individual consumers were randomly chosen for this reason. It must be emphasized that the shopping center images held by consumers, retailers, and mall management were examined and the consumer decision-making process was not examined nor predicted.

The mall survey technique was also chosen because the researcher could not get permission to conduct interviews or hand out surveys within the malls. There is also less chance of distribution bias in connection with the respondents, no interviewer bias, a better chance of a truthful reply, a better chance or a more thoughtful reply, and time saving to the respondent and the researcher.⁸⁵ The resultant sample from the shopping centers indicate that this was a very successful method. The percentage of sample return was very high.

Six hundred surveys were distributed to consumer respondents at the shopping centers: three hundred at Conestoga Mall and three hundred at Westmount Place. There were two hundred and fifteen consumer respondents at Conestoga Mall representing a 71.67 percent return. Westmount Place consumer respondents numbered two hundred and forty. This means that 76 percent of the population surveyed returned their questionnaire. The reason for such a high response might be the structure and nature of the questionnaire. The respondent could complete the questionnaire at his convenience. It did not require the respondent to divulge any personal information, only their opinions.

The data for the retailer and mall management perception was collected during the months of December, January, February and March, 1979-1980. Fifty-one retailers and the mall management of Westmount Place were given an identical questionnaire and also were interviewed. Seventy-one retailers and the mall management of Conestoga Mall were also given an identical questionnaire and were interviewed.

b) The Questionnaire

Retail store image studies, using questionnaires, are common in recent marketing literature. This thesis combined the dimensions discussed in Lindquist's review of the retail image literature (see Chapter One); Pacione's image components; and the Gentry's and Burns' variables.⁸⁶ This combination of the various components ensured that most dimensions would be mentioned. These components were also pretested (by the other studies) and those that did not translate well from the context of a single retail store to the shopping center context (for example, credit terms),⁸⁷ were deleted from the final questionnaire. The shopping center image evaluative criteria are listed in Table 2.1.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) began with an explanation of the research and an appeal to the respondents for their help. The high percentage of response obtained at both shopping centers might be a result of this paragraph and the nature of the questionnaire itself. Respondents were not required to reveal any personal information and also were able to read what the questionnaire was being used for.

Components of Shopping Center Images

Table 2.1

1. Proximity to Home
2. Availability of Parking
3. Variety of Products
4. Cleanliness of Stores
5. Price
6. Traffic congestion
7. Friendly Sales Personnel
8. Buildings and Landscape
9. Mall Tours
10. Advertising
11. Quality of Stores
12. Variety of Stores
13. Comparative Shopping
14. Reputation of Stores
15. Type of Customer
16. Value for Price
17. Overall Attitude/Feeling

The criteria of proximity to home (number I), availability of parking (number II) and traffic congestion (number VI) were an attempt to measure the tangible attribute of accessibility and convenience.

Variety of product (number III), prices (number V), variety of stores (number XII), comparative shopping (number XIII) and value for price (number XVI) were criteria used in an attempt to measure the merchandise attribute.

Cleanliness of store (number IV) and building and landscape (number VIII) were the two criteria used in an attempt to measure the tangible attribute of physical facilities.

The criteria of friendly sales personnel (number VII) and mall hours (number IX) are an attempt to measure the service attribute of shopping center image.

The attribute of advertising is represented by number X and the attribute of shopping center atmosphere were represented by the criteria of quality of stores (number XI) and overall attitude/feeling towards mall (number XVII).

Institutional factors, such as reputation is represented by criteria-reputation of stores (number XIV).

Lastly, the attribute of clientele was measured by the criteria of the type of customers (number XV). In addition, overall attitude/feeling toward the mall (number XVII) was incorporated to measure the shopping center atmosphere and to be a dependent variable.

A section for additional comments was provided so that the respondent could expand what he/she had decided about the criteria or include ideas and criteria that were not described in the first part of the questionnaire. Over fifty percent of the questionnaire contained additional comments. Many people were obviously willing to express their opinions fully about shopping centers, especially those surveyed at Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place.

The questionnaire also contained a map where the consumer respondent would place an 'x' where he/she resided. The map was incorporated to provide the researcher with the general market area of the shopping centers and to see where the shopping center's consumers were located.

Lastly, the questionnaire asked the consumers the frequency of shopping at the mall. This question was incorporated as a weighting factor, to see if the respondent had only used the shopping center once or used it more frequently. Obviously the image of a center would vary according to frequency of use. A consumer who used the center infrequently might have a very vague or neutral image, whereas a consumer who used the shopping center frequently might have a very positive or distinct image. This question would aid in determining whether this variation in image occurs.

c) The Semantic Differential

The concept of shopping center image assumes a reduction of many perceptions into a collective image. Most research image

studies employ the semantic differential to measure this perception process. The semantic differential is a survey technique that has been widely used, and over the past twelve years has been employed by geographers like Downs, Pacione and Cadwallader.⁸⁸

Respondents of the questionnaire rated the seventeen criteria as to 'how much their attitudes/feelings were influenced towards the shopping center'. Using a seven point bipolar scale ranging from "extremely good" to "extremely bad", the respondents placed an 'x' in the appropriate box (see Appendix A). With the use of seventeen criteria to measure eight attributes, the question arises of how many criteria were viewed as interrelated in the respondents' minds and how many criteria were salient to the respondents in terms of their overall preference towards a shopping center. The statistical technique of Factor Analysis was used to determine if these seventeen criteria were interrelated or, in fact, they would cluster or aggregate into the eight attributes mentioned by the recent market researchers. Stepwise Multiple Regression (another statistical technique) measured the importance of the seventeen criteria. The respondent was also asked about his overall attitude towards the center (number XVII). Thus, the interrelationship and the saliency of the criteria are determined by these statistical techniques.

Recognizing the problems and deficiencies of researcher-determined scales, some market researchers have employed

different techniques. Some researchers have used nonstructured interviews of consumers, followed by content analysis and coding of responses. These techniques are "not subject to rigid statistical analysis and incorporate the researcher's bias as techniques are dependent upon his/her interpretation".⁸⁹ Multi-dimensional scaling also has a problem of interpreting the axis or dimensions of the perceptual map. It is not possible to assess the statistical significance of the multi-dimensional scaling.

The benefits of the semantic differential are numerous; it is easy to understand and quick for the respondent to complete; it allows the researcher to quantify the image data; it is relatively reliable and requires minimal verbal skill by the respondent. To avoid the problem of the forced choice measure created by the semantic differential, an area for additional comments was provided in the questionnaire. In addition, interviews of individual consumers, retailers and mall management supplemented the information provided by the questionnaire. Results from other studies indicate that both the semantic differential technique and the open-ended question technique⁹⁰ should be employed when measuring shopping center images. These techniques are quite compatible. The disadvantages of semantic differential were off-set by the advantages of the open-end question technique.

d) Method of Analysis

The images perceived by consumers, retailers and mall

management were analysed in terms of a frequency count, a factorial study, a regression analysis and a rotational technique called Relate. For the majority of the data analyses, Biomedical Computer Programs (BMD) were used, as they were designed as a tool for social science data analysis.

The flow diagram (figure 2.1) illustrates the various stages in the methodology used for this study. Table 2.2 explains why each technique was used and what each technique contributes to the study. It would be beneficial to describe briefly each of the various stages or tests employed in this study.

The frequency count routine determined the frequency percentages of importance of criteria. This included finding the mean of each criteria and also determining how often each box (for each of the seventeen criteria) in the seven point bipolar scale was chosen.

The technique of factor analysis was employed in an attempt to cluster or group the various criteria into attributes of image. Factor analysis is a multi-variable technique which takes a table (a data matrix) and reduces it. If redundancy occurs in the original variables presented in the questionnaire, factor analysis will attempt to mesh together these variables into combinations or summaries of the criteria. (ie. factors or attributes). Thus, factor analysis has three objectives: to study the correlations of the seventeen criteria by clustering or grouping these criteria into factors such that criteria/variables within each factor are highly related; to interpret each

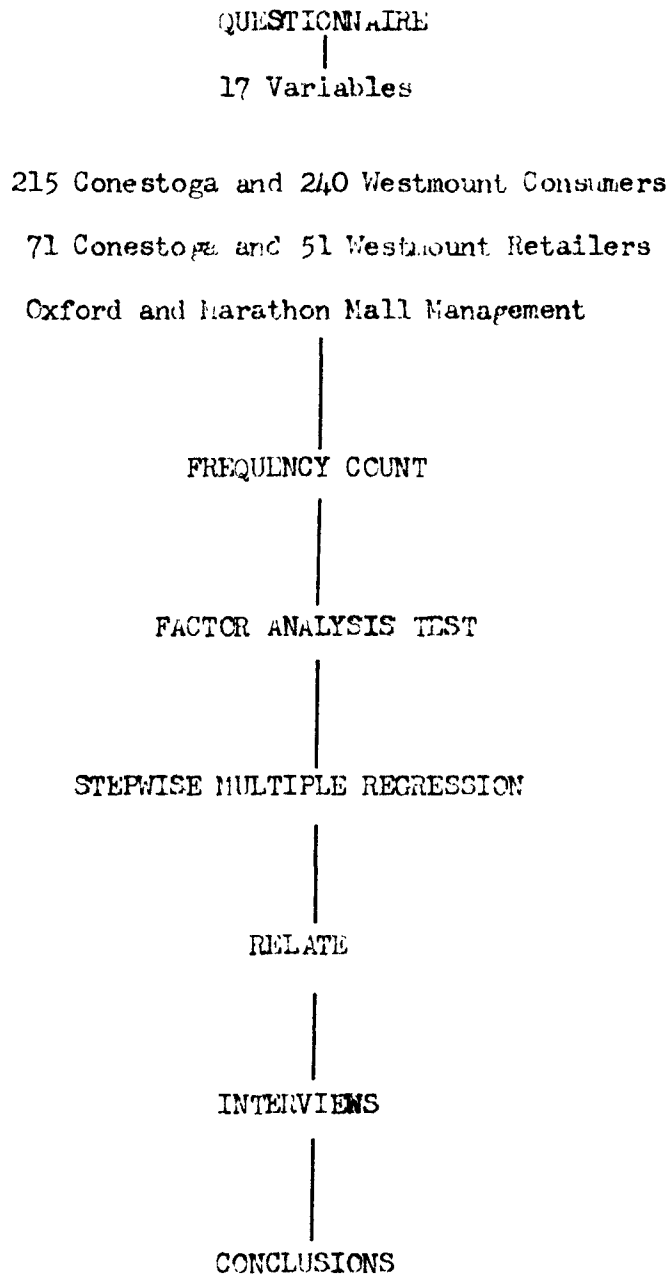


Figure 2.1 Flow Diagram that illustrates the steps in analyzing the images of the two centers.

The Statistical Tests Used in the Study

Table 2.2

<u>Test</u>	<u>Why Used (?)</u>	<u>Contribution to Study</u>
Frequency Count Routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determine the frequency percentage of 17 variables. - see the mean response by consumers, retailers and mall managers on each of the 17 criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allows for general comparison between the three groups tested
Factor Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is a reduction of a set of variables to a smaller set of uncorrelated variables (retain the most important information contained in the original data). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - avoid redundancy in the description of image. - see interrelationship between variables - answers: are all 17 criteria necessary or does some degree of correlation occur?
Multiple Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saliency of factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eliminates unnecessary factors used to describe shopping center images.
Rotational Technique Relate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparing factor structures (congruence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows for comparison of Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place images - see if consumers view both mall similarly or differently, retailers, etc.

factor according to the variables belonging to it, and to summarize many variables by few factors.⁹¹

Despite these benefits, factor analysis does not explicitly handle the problem of variable saliency. Multiple regression enables the researcher to determine which variables are important. Step-wise multiple regression is a technique that will separate the most important variable from those that may not be necessary at all. This technique searches out the greatest contributor to the total variance and effectively rank orders them.⁹² Thus, overall feeling/attitude (number XVII) measured on the bipolar scale represents the dependent variable and the respondents' factor scores are the independent variables. Then, step-wise regression analysis enables the researcher to determine which factors are salient. This would also tell the researcher if different groups chose similar or different components or criteria of image were prevalent in both shopping centers.

Lastly, the use of the rotational technique called Relate enables the researcher to measure the congruence between two factor structures. This will determine whether the images held by the consumers and the retailers of the two shopping centers are similar or dissimilar. The technique will find that "If there is a perfect identity between the two structures, the matrix of cosines (obtained from Relate) will take the form of an identity matrix."⁹³ Also, the larger the elements (not in diagonal) the greater the difference between the corresponding

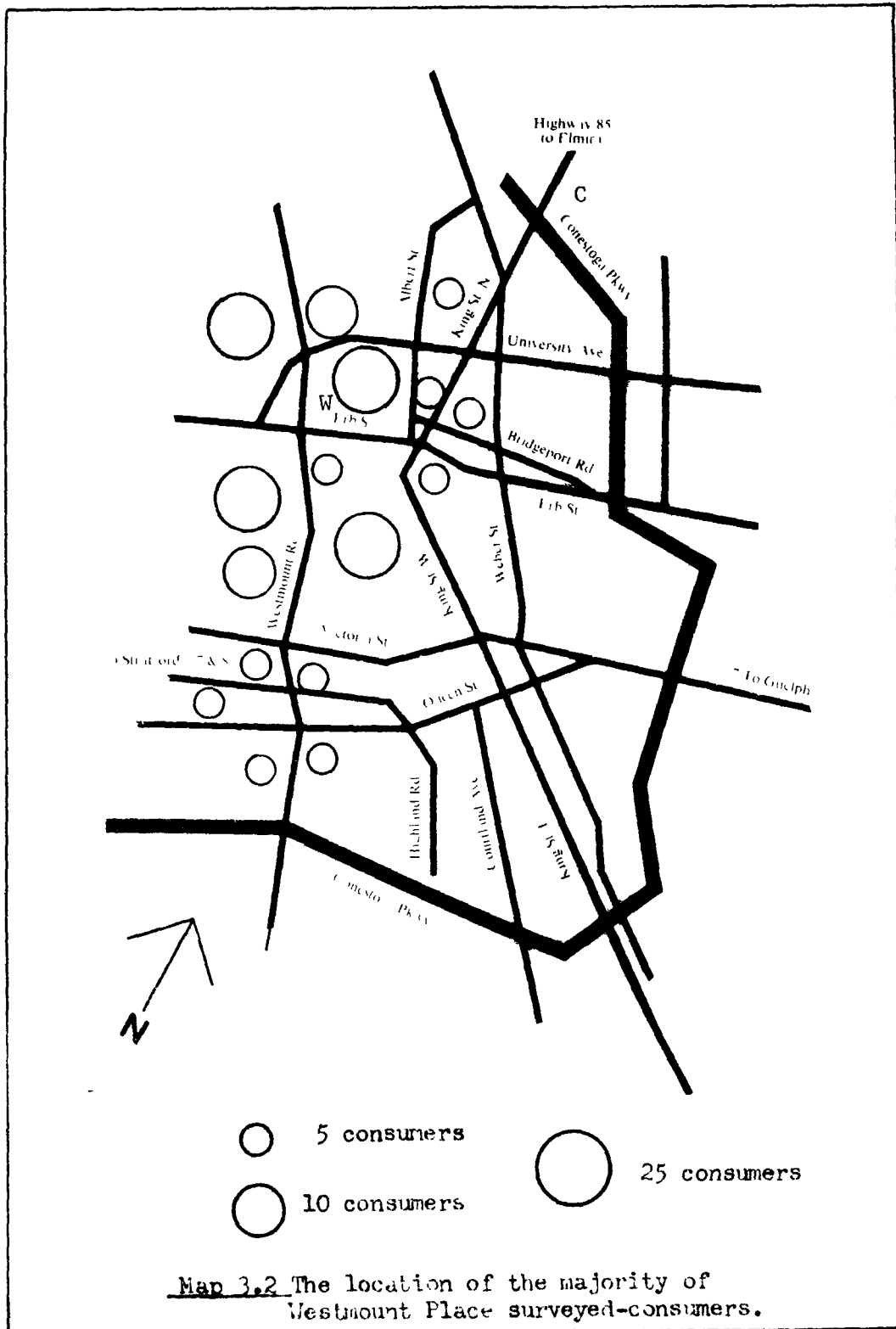
factors, and if the off diagonal elements are close numerically, then the factors are the same, but not in saliency. Thus, this technique allows for an objective measure of the two factors analysis matrices.

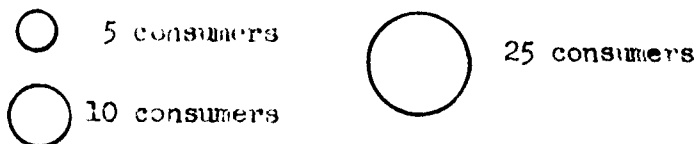
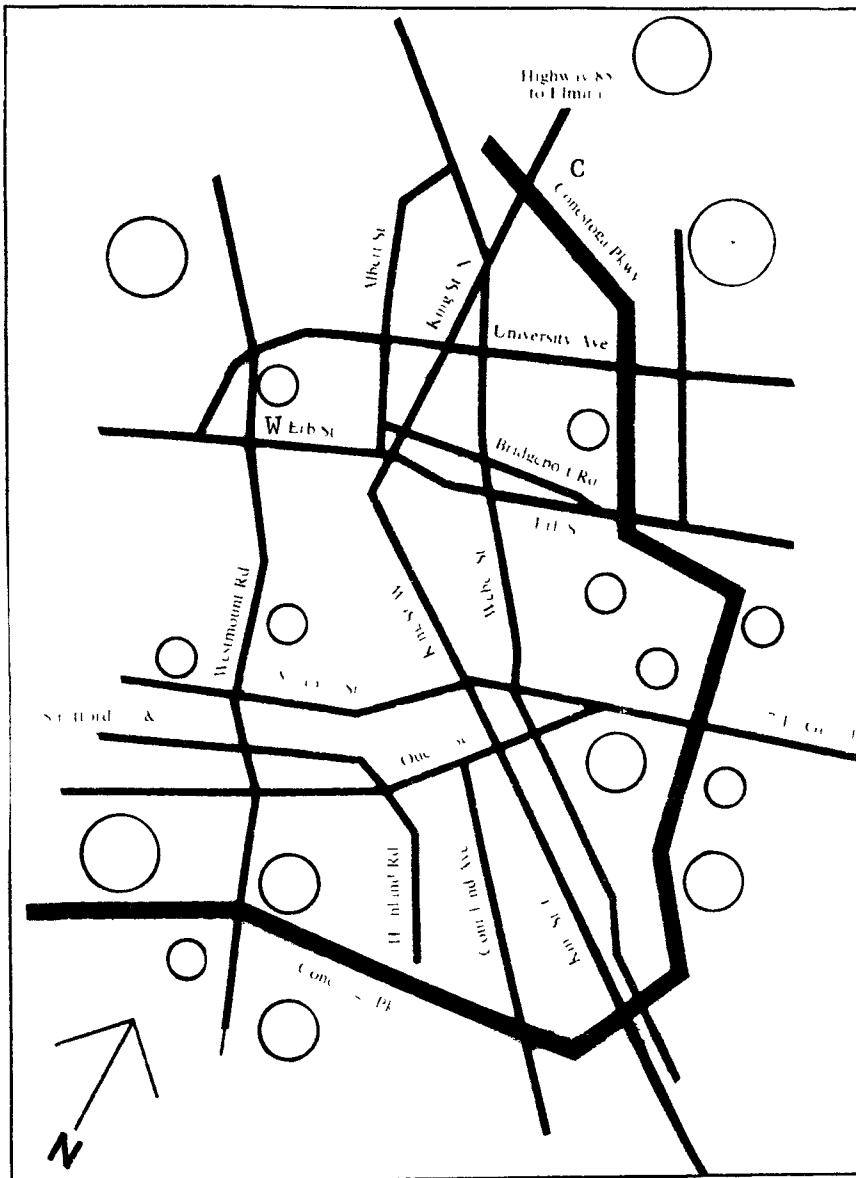
In the following chapter, the results of these various methods of analysis will be described and discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: EXPLANATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall were, as previously mentioned, used for surveying consumers, retailers, and mall management. Consumer respondents of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall were found to reside in different areas. Map 3.2 and Map 3.3 illustrate the market area of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall. Consumers for Westmount Place seem to reside along Westmount Road and close to the shopping center. Conestoga Mall consumers are dispersed throughout Kitchener-Waterloo and many consumers come from Elmira. This difference in the market area could be due to mall-type classification. Westmount Place is a community type shopping center and so consumers would be drawn from areas close to the center. Conestoga Mall is a regional mall and its market area would therefore be much larger and more dispersed. The distinction between the two centers' retail trade area does not affect the measurement of shopping center image. It is the image and how the consumers perceive the shopping center that are important. The size of the retail trade area is important, but is not a significant element in this study. One might expect a different image of a regional mall (like Conestoga Mall) and what one have of a community shopping center (like Westmount Place). This will be discussed later.

Consumers were asked in the questionnaire to rate their frequency of shopping at Westmount Place or Conestoga Mall.





Map 3.3 The location of the majority of consumers surveyed at Conestoga Mall.

Consumers at Westmount Place shopped sixty percent more frequently than consumers at Conestoga Mall. It is interesting that Westmount's frequency of use is higher. This might be a result of the services and shops it contains or the proximity of its customers' homes. B.J.L. Berry suggests that "in the usage, medium centers, serve the greater volume of consumers compared to the regional mall",⁹⁴ and this higher frequency of use might affect the consumers' image of Westmount Place. The frequency count routine will give an indication as to how retailers, consumers, and mall managers ranked the image criteria. Comparisons of the responses will be possible when one uses the frequency count routine.

A) Frequency Routine Results

Consumer respondents rated the seventeen criteria as to 'what described their attitudes or feelings on that particular shopping center characteristics', using the seven point scale, ranging from 'extremely good' to 'extremely bad'. A summary of the rating for the shopping centers is shown in Table 3.1. For Westmount Place, consumer respondents chose reputation of stores, cleanliness of stores, quality of stores and building and landscape as the most favourable criteria. Following those criteria were type of customer, mall hours and advertising. Relatively negative or low level criteria were traffic congestion and prices. Conestoga Mall's respondents felt availability of parking, cleanliness of stores, mall hours and building and landscape were the most positive characteristics of this shopping

Table 3.1

<u>Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall Consumer Mean Scores</u>		
	<u>Westmount</u>	<u>Conestoga</u>
	<u>Mean Rating</u>	<u>Mean Rating</u>
1. Reputation of Stores	5.54	5.02 7
2. Cleanliness of Stores	5.50	5.73 2
3. Quality of Stores	5.29	5.08
4. Overall Feeling/Attitude	5.20	4.67 10
5. Buildings and Landscape	5.20	5.41 4
6. Type of Customer	5.10	4.74 9
7. Mall Hours	4.96	5.49 3
8. Advertising	4.94	4.56 11
9. Friendly Sales Personnel	4.91	4.98 8
10. Variety of Products	4.85	5.10 5
11. Value for Price	4.39	4.00
12. Variety of Stores	4.16	4.56 11
13. Availability of Parking	3.15	6.08 1
14. Proximity to Home	4.17	2.80
15. Comparative Shopping	4.10	4.16
16. Prices	3.95	4.27 13
17. Traffic Congestion	3.23	5.05 6

center. Closely following those criteria were quality of stores, variety of products and traffic congestion. Relatively low or negative level were the criteria such as proximity to home, value for price and comparative shopping. The highest positive criteria in both centers chosen by the consumer respondents were mainly tangible attributes--the physical layout, parking, etc. Price of merchandise was rated negatively by consumers, suggesting consumers felt these centers' prices were expensive. The location factor (proximity to home) was found to rank fourteenth at Westmount Place and seventeenth for Conestoga Mall. The result is contrary to the emphasis placed on distance in General Interaction Theory and Central Place Theory. Therefore, the geographer's cognitive behavioural approach is reinforced. It emphasized the need to incorporate subjective criteria into the study of consumers. This result is consistent with Gentry and Burns, Doyle and Fenwick.⁹⁵ They suggest that accessibility is becoming less significant as society becomes more mobile and more urbanized.

Figure 3.1 shows the mean response of consumer respondents for each shopping center. While the significance of difference for each shopping center are not reported here, it is evident that Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall have both positive and negative characteristics in the respondents' eyes.

Retailer respondents also rated the seventeen criteria as to 'what described their attitudes or feelings on that particular shopping center characteristics', using the seven point scale.

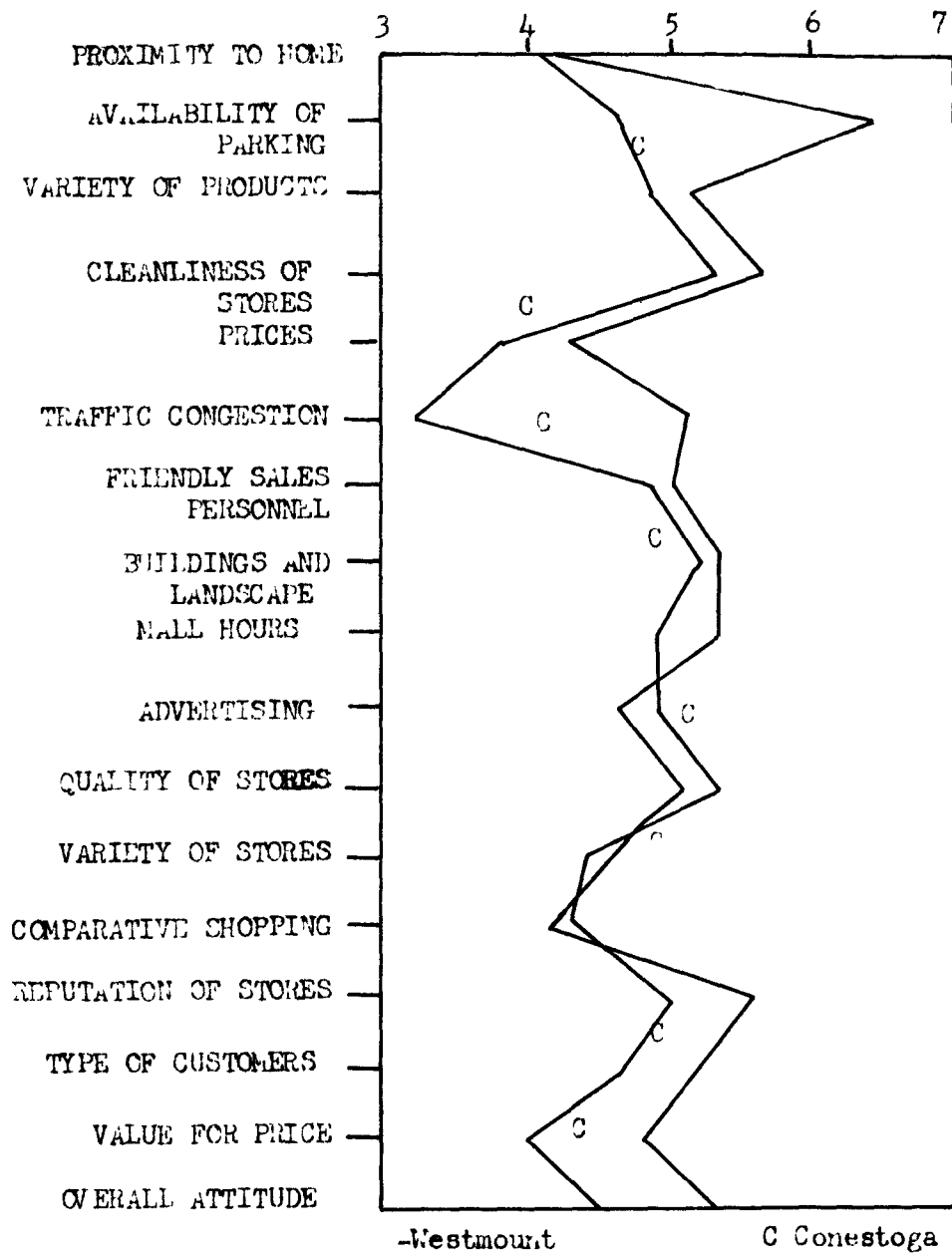


Figure 3.1 The response of consumers regarding the individual shopping center attributes.

The scale ranged from 'extremely good' to 'extremely bad'. A summary of the ratings for each shopping center is illustrated in Table 3.2. For Westmount Place, retailers selected quality of stores, prices and reputation of stores as the most favourable or positive criteria. This was closely followed by the criteria of cleanliness of stores, variety of stores and mall hours. A relatively negative attitude was generated by retailers towards the availability of parking, friendly sales personnel and advertising. Conestoga Mall's retailer respondents selected building and landscape, comparative shopping and traffic congestion as the most positive characteristics of this shopping center. Cleanliness of stores, friendly sales personnel, mall hours and reputation of stores closely followed with a high positive value. At a relatively low level, the criteria of proximity to home was chosen by retailers. The other criteria ranked above average.

It is interesting to note that retailers in Westmount Place felt that their most positive characteristics were intangible (like quality of stores, reputation of stores, etc.). Conestoga Mall retailers, however, felt the physical attributes of the buildings and landscape and little traffic congestion were the most favourable characteristics of their mall. In both centers, mall hours and cleanliness of stores were rated very high. However, Westmount Place retailers rated their sales staff low. It could be suggested that the relationship is not congenial between managers and staff at Westmount Place. Also, availability

Table 3.2

Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall
Retailer Mean Scores on Individual Criteria

	<u>Westmount Mean Rating</u>	<u>Conestoga Mean Rating</u>
1. Quality of Stores	6.89	5.70
2. Prices	6.83	6.37 - 6
3. Reputation of Stores	6.82	6.87 - 5
4. Mall Hours	6.73	6.86 - 4
5. Cleanliness of Stores	6.73	6.85 -
6. Variety of Stores	6.71	5.95
7. Proximity to Home	6.59	4.13
8. Type of Customer	6.58	6.07 -
9. Overall Attitude	6.44	6.63 - 5
10. Variety of Products	6.31	6.21 - 6
11. Comparative Shopping	6.26	6.90 - 2
12. Value for Price	6.23	6.04 -
13. Traffic Congestion	6.15	6.90 - 2
14. Buildings and Landscape	5.93	6.96 - 1
15. Advertising	5.83	5.94
16. Friendly Sales Personnel	4.56	6.86 - 4
17. Availability of Parking	3.62	6.34 - 7

of parking and advertising were the other two criteria that ranked very low. These can be considered negative characteristics of Westmount Place.

The problem of parking was mentioned quite frequently in interviews with retailers. They state that the layout of the shopping center does not give a complete view of the parking facilities that are available at Westmount Place.

The relationship between the mall management (Marathon Realty) and the retailers is not a harmonious one. It would be reflected in the low mean that advertising received. Many of the retailers interviewed felt that the mall could be advertised more frequently by the Marathon management. Conestoga Mall retailers rated the location criteria, proximity to home, very negatively low. This is consistent with the Doyle and Fenwick study.⁹⁶ The retailers' low rating of convenience or accessibility also suggests that Conestoga Mall's location on the Conestoga Parkway with no near-by residential development is important.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the responses by retailer respondents for each shopping center. While significant differences for each shopping center are not reported here, it is evident that Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall have both positive and negative characteristics in the retailers' eyes.

Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall shopping center management were also asked to rate the seventeen criteria as to 'what described their attitudes or feelings of that particular shopping center characteristic'. They also used the seven point scale, ranging from 'extremely good' to 'extremely bad'. Their

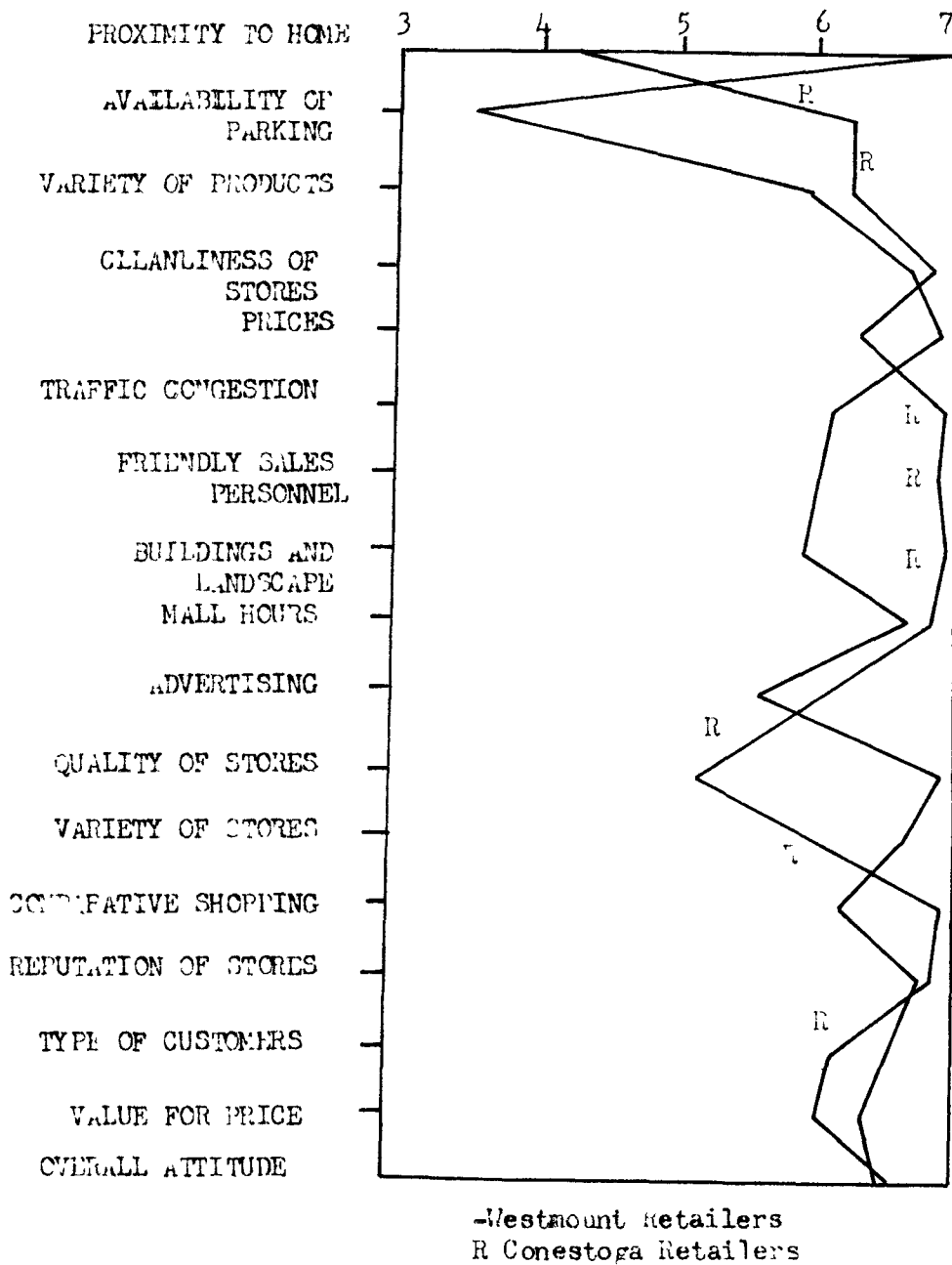


Figure 3.2 The response of retailers regarding the individual shopping center attributes.

rating of Westmount Place and of Conestoga Mall are shown in Table 3.3. Marathon Realty (Westmount Place) and Oxford Development (Conestoga Mall) representatives felt their own shopping centers rated very positively on the characteristics. These results suggest that for each mall, the shopping center management feel all image components or attributes of their center are viewed favourable. Figure 3.3 illustrates the mall managements' response to shopping center characteristics.

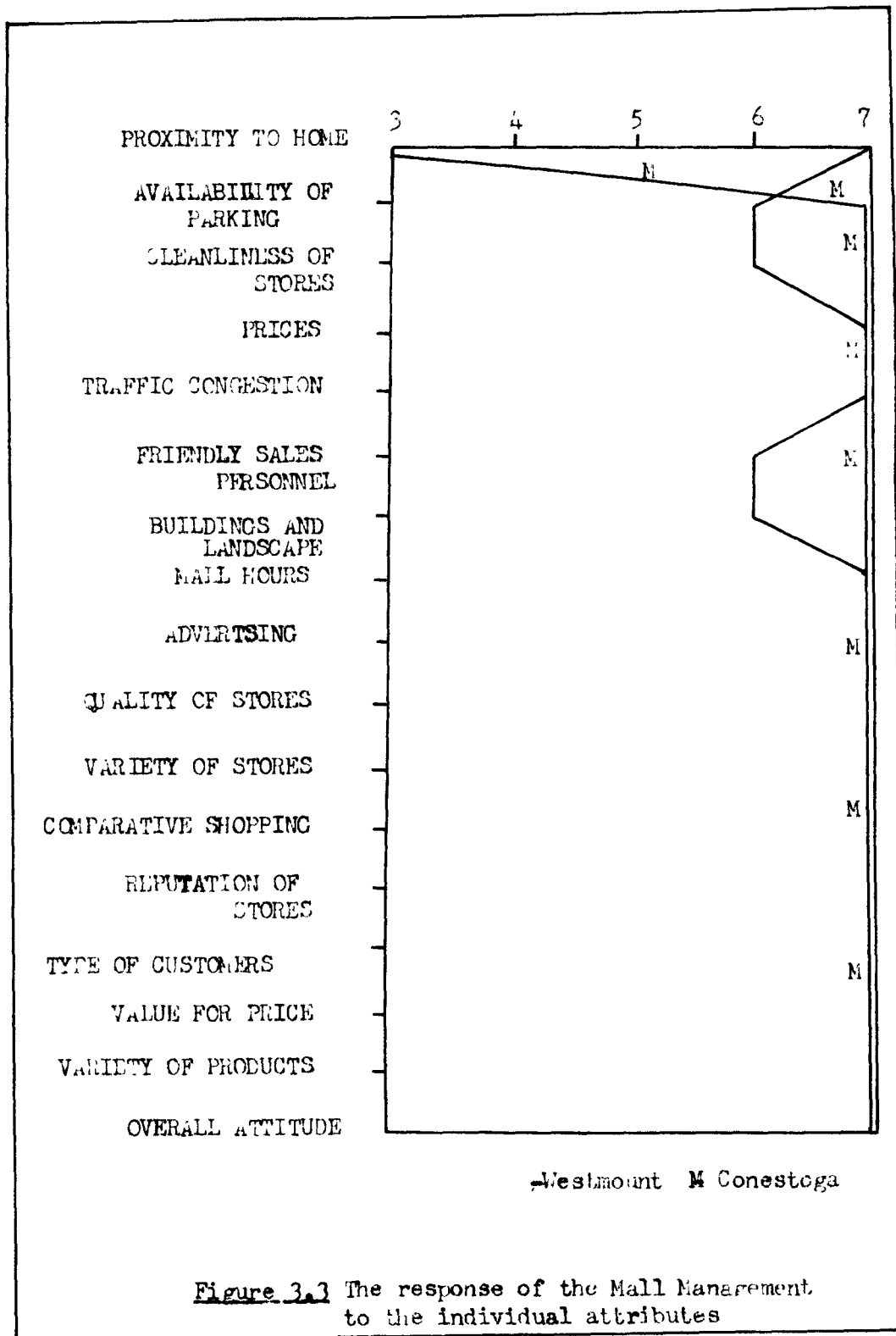
Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place consumers, retailers and mall management rated each shopping center on the seventeen characteristics. A comparison of the graphs illustrate the different responses by the three groups. Consumers of both shopping centers usually rated the individual shopping center's characteristics lower than the retailers and the mall management. Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall retailers' response tended to be in between the consumers' and mall management's responses. While retailers are a part of the centers' management (ie. they must justify their location in that particular center), they are also responsive to the consumers' opinions of the center suggesting the between the consumer and the management type of response. Mall managements' high rating of the centers suggest a belief in the success of their shopping center. It might be a public relations type of response.

Conestoga Mall consumers and retailers chose physical attributes as the most positive or good criteria, while Westmount Place consumers and retailers differed in their choice of

Table 3.3

Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall Management
Scores for Individual Criteria

	Westmount	Conestoga
1. Proximity to Home	7.0	3.0
2. Cleanliness of Stores	7.0	7.0
3. Prices	7.0	7.0
4. Buildings and Landscapes	7.0	7.0
5. Mall Hours	7.0	7.0
6. Advertising	7.0	7.0
7. Quality of Stores	7.0	7.0
8. Variety of Stores	7.0	7.0
9. Comparative Shopping	7.0	7.0
10. Reputation of Stores	7.0	7.0
11. Type of Customers	7.0	7.0
12. Value for Price	7.0	7.0
13. Overall Attitude	7.0	7.0
14. Availability of Parking	6.0	7.0
15. Variety of Products	6.0	7.0
16. Traffic Congestion	6.0	7.0
17. Sales Personnel	6.0	7.0



positive characteristics. Consumers and retailers at Westmount Place, jointly chose the intangible attributes of reputation of stores and quality of stores. However, retailers also selected prices, which was rated negatively by consumers. These results indicate a difference in perception. This variation will be described and discussed more fully later. The importance of the evaluative criteria was pursued further through Factor Analysis.

B) Factor Analysis Results

The consumers' and retailers' semantic differential responses for each mall provided the data for factor analysis. The seventeenth component of the shopping center characteristics (overall attitude) was not included in the data matrix. It was used as the dependent variable in the multiple regression.

Factor analysis takes the responses (a data matrix composed of columns [the sixteen criteria] and of rows [the responses of consumers and retailers]), and attempts to mesh together the columns into summary columns. The individual shopping center characteristics of criteria are webbed or entangled together into combinations or summaries of criteria. These combined shopping center criteria are called factors. Factors, for each shopping center, were obtained from consumers' and retailers' responses.

The sixteen criteria were used in evaluating the results of this varimax analysis. Factoring ceased when all eigenvalues greater than one were obtained, providing a set of factors that explained a large percentage of total variance. The results of

Table 3.4a

Consumer Factor Analysis Results for Westmount Place

	<u>Variance Explained</u>	<u>Cumulative Proportions</u>
Factor 1	6.057	.336
2	1.809	.437
3	1.649	.529
4	1.459	.610
5	1.188	.676
6	1.026	.733

Table 3.4b

Factor Loadings of Consumers for Westmount Place

Primary Factor (Factor One)	
Advertising	.785
Quality of Stores	.780
Availability of Parking	.738
Building & Landscape	.720
Reputation of Stores	.636
Merchandise (Factor Two)	
Variety of Stores	.794
Comparative Shopping	.790
People (Factor Three)	
Type of Customer	.852
Friendly Sales Personnel	.644
Convenience (Factor Four)	
Proximity of Home	.767
Frequency of Use	.699
Value for Price	.677
Customer Service (Factor Five)	
Prices	.716
Traffic Congestion	.676
Mall Hours	.635
Factor Six	
Cleanliness of Stores	.827

Table 3.5a

Consumer Factor Analysis Results for Conestoga Mall

	<u>Variance Explained</u>	<u>Cumulative Proportions</u>
Factor 1	5.105	.284
2	1.751	.381
3	1.621	.471
4	1.451	.552
5	1.204	.618
6	1.134	.681

Table 3.5b

Factor Loadings of Consumers for Conestoga Mall

Merchandise Selection (Factor One)

Variety of Stores	.876
Variety of Products	.704
Advertising	.564

Customer Service (Factor Two)

Mall Hours	.787
Prices	.653
Friendly Sales Personnel	.615

Physical Attractiveness (Factor Three)

Buildings and Landscape	.835
Type of Customer	.650
Cleanliness of Stores	.607

Convenience (Factor Six)

Proximity to Home	.843
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Factor Four

Value for Price	.767
Availability of Parking	.578

Factor Five

Traffic Congestion	.733
Quality of Stores	.557

the factor analysis for consumer respondents at Westmount Place and at Conestoga Mall are given in Table 3.4 and 3.5.

Table 3.4a of Westmount Place shows the six factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater were retained explaining approximately 73.3 percent of the total variance. Table 3.5a of Conestoga Mall shows that six factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater were retained explaining 68.1 percent of the total variance. While problems exist as to the interpretation of factor analysis, one accepted method of analysis is to count as significant any variable that possesses a loading of .5 or greater on a factor. Using this criterion, variables with such a loading or greater are associated with the appropriate factor in Table 3.4b and Table 3.5b.

Factor one, for Westmount Place consumers show high positive loadings on the criteria of advertising, quality of stores, availability of parking, building and landscape, and reputation of stores. This factor is a combination of tangible and intangible attributes. It can be labelled the Primary Factor. The Primary Factor suggests that Westmount Place shopping center's management are trying to be all things to all people. This might or might not result in negative reactions (lower sales or volume of customers, etc.). It sometimes is a problem to management for confusion exists over which consumer group to appeal to and which image component to focus upon.

Factor two is composed of a variety of stores and comparative shopping. This factor can be interpreted as relating to the

overall attribute of 'merchandise'. The aggregation confirms market research studies emphasizing this dimension.

The remaining factors can be labelled as follows: Factor three (people), Factor Four (convenience), Factor Five (customer service), and Factor Six (cleanliness).

For Conestoga Mall consumers, factor one shows high positive loadings on such criteria as: variety of products, variety of stores, advertising, and reputation of stores. This factor can be interpreted as being related to the overall dimension or attribute of merchandise selection and assortment. This confirms market research studies' finding, (see Chapter One), that merchandise is the main attribute or component in shopping center image.⁹⁸ The second factor in Table 3.5b displays high loadings for each criteria: mall hours, prices and friendly sales personnel. Factor two can be labelled Customer Service.

In a similar manner, the remaining factors were labelled as follows: Factor Three (physical attractiveness) and Factor Six (convenience). Factors Four and Five were difficult to interpret because of the diverse variables loaded on them. This was judged not to be serious, since they were not significant in terms of multiple regression.

The results of the factor analysis for the retailer respondents at Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall are given in Table 3.6 and Table 3.7. Table 3.6a illustrating the findings at Westmount Place, shows that six factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater were retained. They explained approximately 69.3 percent of the total variance. Table 3.7, giving the findings

of Conestoga Mall retailers, shows six factors with eigenvalues of 1.0 or greater were retained. They explained approximately 68.7 percent of the total variance. A loading of .5 or greater represented a variance that contributed significantly and using this criterion, variables are associated with the appropriate factor in Table 3.6 and 3.7.

For Westmount Place retailers, factor one shows high positive loadings on the criteria of variety of products, comparative shopping, proximity to home and advertising. This factor is composed of diverse criteria.

It can be labelled the Primary Factor. Factor two is composed of: type of customer and sales personnel. It can be labelled the people attractiveness factor. The remaining factors can be labelled: factor three (physical attractiveness), factor four (institutional factor), factor five (outward attractiveness) and factor six (accessibility).

Conestoga Mall retailers' factor one was composed of: quality of stores, advertising, proximity to home and availability of parking. The Primary Factor is composed of convenience, promotion and atmosphere attributes. This suggests that the retailers' shopping center image of Conestoga Mall is not composed of distinct specific elements. This is composed of interrelated and intertwined components.

Factor two consists of the variables: variety of stores, friendly sales personnel and variety of products. Recent research studies are confirmed. Researchers assert that the

Table 3.6a

Retailer Factor Analysis Results for Westmount Place

	<u>Variance Explained</u>	<u>Cumulative Proportions</u>
Factor 1	3.524	.207
2	2.471	.353
3	1.883	.463
4	1.391	.545
5	1.327	.623
6	1.181	.693

Table 3.6b

Factor Loadings of Retailers for Westmount Place

Primary Factor (Factor One)

Variety of Products	.785
Comparative Shopping	.754
Proximity to Home	.638
Advertising	.584

People Attractiveness (Factor Two)

Friendly Sales Personnel	-.846
Type of Customer	.776

Physical Attractiveness (Factor Three)

Building and Landscape	.742
Mall Hours	-.629
Value for Price	.625

Institutional Factor (Factor Four)

Reputation of Stores	.867
Quality of Stores	.826

Outward Attractiveness (Factor Five)

Cleanliness of Stores	.765
Availability of Parking	.739
Prices	.594

Accessibility (Factor Six)

Traffic Congestion	.833
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Table 3.7a

Retailer Factor Analysis Results for Conestoga Mall

	<u>Variance Explained</u>	<u>Cumulative Proportions</u>
Factor 1	3.455	.203
2	2.696	.362
3	1.784	.467
4	1.518	.556
5	1.212	.627
6	1.022	.687

Table 3.7b

Factor Loadings of Retailers for Conestoga Mall

Primary Factor (Factor One)	
Quality of Stores	.865
Advertising	.763
Proximity to Home	.638
Availability of Parking	.553
Merchandise/Staff (Factor Two)	
Variety of Stores	.771
Friendly Sales Personnel	.660
Variety of Products	.579
Service Atmosphere (Factor Three)	
Mall Hours	.873
Reputation of Stores	.834
Physical Attractiveness (Factor Four)	
Comparative Shopping	.750
Traffic Congestion	.676
Building and Landscape	.636
Clientele and Management (Factor Five)	
Prices	.758
Type of Customer	.730
Physical Layout (Factor Six)	
Value for Price	.768
Cleanliness of Stores	.500

retailer is concerned about merchandise selection and assortment.⁹⁹
 Retailers also want a knowledgeable sales staff.

The remaining factors were labelled as follows: Factor three (service and atmosphere), Factor four (physical attractiveness), Factor five (clientele and merchandise) and Factor six (physical layout and merchandise). Conestoga Mall retailers' factors consist of many diverse criteria. It would be worthwhile to compare these various factors obtained by consumers and by the retailers at each center and also to compare the two shopping centers.

C) The Results of the Rotational Technique

Retailers and consumers for both shopping centers appear to have different criteria in their composition of factors. Table 3.8, which gives the results for Conestoga Mall, and Table 3.9, which gives the results for Westmount Place, illustrate the diversity in some of the factors.¹⁰⁰

Before forming the matrix of cosines, the researcher determined that the first three factor scores would only be used. The reasons, for the decision, are due to the lack of explanation and the ease of determining the variation. The use of the last three factors would not aid in the final explanation. The composition of them was so diverse. This variation could be determined without using the rotational technique.

In the matrix of cosines (Tables 3.8 and 3.9) the larger variation of the off elements suggests the greater difference between the corresponding factors.¹⁰¹ The criteria composition of

Table 3.8

Comparison of Conestoga Mall Retailers and Consumers

		'Consumers'		
		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
'Retailers'	Factor 1	.0471	-.0111	-.1358
	Factor 2	.0352	.6712	-.0061
	Factor 3	.3011	-.0574	.0315

Comparison of Westmount Place Retailers and Consumers

		'Consumers'		
		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
'Retailers'	Factor 1	.1881	.7123	.1965
	Factor 2	.3789	-.2154	.8167
	Factor 3	.9581	.1367	-.4981

Table 3.9

Comparison of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall Consumers

		'Westmount Place Consumers'		
		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
'Conestoga Mall Consumers'	Factor 1	.4157	-.5114	-.0501
	Factor 2	-.2146	-.0910	.5752
	Factor 3	-.0711	.0341	-.0011

Comparison of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall Retailers

		'Westmount Place Retailers'		
		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
'Conestoga Mall Retailers'	Factor 1	-.0614	-.1803	-.0215
	Factor 2	.3615	.4955	.0012
	Factor 3	.0918	-.0219	.1351

each factor differs for Conestoga Mall consumers and retailers. Table 3.8 indicates Westmount's retailers and consumers identify the same factor structure but assign a different importance to the factors. If one refers to Table 3.4b and Table 3.8, it is evident that Westmount consumers feel that the number of one factor is the primary factor while retailers feel it is third. While consumers feel that the merchandise dimension is factor two, retailers select it as their primary factor. Whereas consumers feel that people is the second factor or dimension of image, retailers feel it is third in importance.

It would also be beneficial to compare the identical groups for each shopping center. Using the rotational technique named Relate, the matrix of cosines are again formed (see Table 3.9). The results suggest there is a great difference between the factors chosen by consumers at Westmount Place and by consumers at Conestoga Mall. A great difference occurs between the factors chosen by retailers at Westmount Place and by retailers at Conestoga Mall. Thus, it appears that the image components differ according to shopping centers. Each shopping center has its own image.

To determine which factor (both consumer and retailers) for each mall are salient, step-wise multiple regression was employed.

D) Step-Wise Multiple Regression Results

Using individual factor scores as the independent variables and the overall shopping center preference as the dependent variable (criteria no. XVII), step-wise multiple regression was

employed to calculate a multiple regression equation. This technique did not use criteria no. XVII (overall attitude) in its calculation. It will separate the most important variables from those that may not be necessary at all. Step-wise multiple regression searches out the greatest contributors to the total variance and effectively rank orders them.

The results, for the consumer respondents at Westmount Place and at Conestoga Mall, are shown in Table 4.0. The retailers' results at Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall are shown in Table 4.1. Interaction for step-wise procedure was continued until no more entering variables possessed coefficients significantly different from zero (by t-test at the .01 level of significance). In the tables, predictor variables whose incremental contribution was greater than .01 are shown and are listed in order of contribution to R^2 .

Primary Factor (1), the variable from consumers at Westmount Place, ranked first in importance in explaining the saliency of shopping center image components. This factor is the greatest contributor to the total variance explaining 43.00 percent. Thus, this diverse factor consisting of advertising, quality of stores, availability of parking, building and landscape and reputation of stores, is related significantly to the consumers' overall attitude of the shopping center. It is a combination of intangible and tangible attributes.

Factor two, which is labelled merchandise, is ranked second in importance, for it was the next variable that was entered in the equation. Merchandise with the diverse Factor One, explains

Table 3.10

Results of Regression Analysis for Consumers At
Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall

<u>Westmount Consumers</u>	R	R ²
Primary Factor (1)	.6558	.4300
Merchandise (2)	.7041	.4953
People (3)	.7349	.5400
Convenience (4)	.7712	.5948
<u>Conestoga Consumers</u>	R	R ²
Primary Factor (1)	.5322	.2832
Customer Service (2)	.6309	.3980
Physical Attractiveness (3)	.6551	.4292
Convenience (4)	.6728	.4527

Table 3.11

Results of Regression Analysis for Retailers At
Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall

<u>Westmount Retailers</u>	R	R ²
Primary Factor (1)	.5972	.3567
People Attractiveness (2)	.7616	.5800
Physical Attractiveness (3)	.7940	.6304
<u>Conestoga Retailers</u>	R	R ²
Primary Factor (1)	.5745	.3300
Personnel/Merchandise (2)	.7629	.5820

49.5 percent of the total variance. Thus, the attribute of merchandise selection is related significantly to the consumers' overall attitude of Westmount Place. People (Factor Three) and Convenience (Factor Four) were also entered into the equation. These factors, along with 'Merchandise' and Factor One, explains 59.48 percent of the total variance. Variables such as Customer Service or Cleanliness were not entered into the regression equation. They are, therefore, not salient or significant in the composition of shopping center images.

Westmount Place retailers' Primary Factor was also ranked first in importance in explaining saliency of shopping center image components. This factor is the greatest contributor to the total variance explaining 35.67 percent. This diversely-composed factor (consisting of Variety of Products, Comparative Shopping, Proximity to Home and Advertising), is related significantly to the retailers' overall attitude towards Westmount Place. The retailers' Factor Two, named 'People Attractiveness', is ranked second in importance, for it was the next variable that was entered into the regression equation. 'People Attractiveness', along with the variable of Factor One, explains 58.00 percent of the total variance. 'Physical Attractiveness' was the other variable entered into the regression equation. This factor, along with 'People Attractiveness' and Factor one, explains 63.04 percent of the total variance. Variables such as institutional and accessibility were not entered into the regression equation. They are, therefore, not salient or significant in the composition of shopping center images.

Primary Factor (One), the variable from consumers at Conestoga Mall, ranked first in importance in explaining the saliency of shopping center image components. This factor was the greatest contributor to the total variance. It explained 28.32 percent. Thus, this Primary Factor, consisting of a Variety of Products, Variety of Stores, Advertising and Reputation, is related significantly to the consumers' overall attitude towards the center. Customer Service or Factor Two, is ranked second in importance for it was the next variable that was entered into the equation. This factor, along with the diverse Factor One, explains 39.80 percent of the total variance. Thus, the attribute of customer selection is related significantly to the consumer's overall attitude towards Conestoga Mall. Physical Attractiveness (Factor III) and Convenience (Factor IV), along with the two factors, explain 45.27 percent of the variances.

Conestoga Mall's retailers' primary factor (One) was also ranked first in importance in explaining saliency of shopping center image components. This factor is the greatest contributor to the total variance, explaining 33 percent. The Primary factor was composed of Quality of Stores, Proximity, Advertising and Availability of Parking. It is related significantly to the consumer's overall attitude towards Conestoga Mall. The retailer's factor two (composed of Personnel and Merchandise Selection) is ranked second in importance for it was the next variable to enter the regression equation. It, combined with Factor one, explains 58.2 percent of the total variance. Other variables

were not entered into the regression equation. They are, therefore, not salient or significant in the retailer's composition of shopping center images.

Thus, the saliency of the image components vary according to the group surveyed. Consumers and retailers attach different importance to image components. This is true for Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall. It could also be suggested that Westmount Place's image for consumer and retailers is more precise because of the higher explanation values. It would be useful to discuss the interviews of the individual consumers, retailers and mall management to see if these findings are corroborated.

E) Discussion of Interviews

The group difference, in the images of Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall were very evident in the interviews of consumers, retailers and mall management.

Consumers who were interviewed at Westmount Place felt it was "a carbon copy of the other malls in Kitchener-Waterloo". They felt the same tenants (see Table 1.1) could be found in Kitchener-Waterloo's other centers. Many consumers stated that there were "too many chain type stores and that there was a need for local or area vendors". Tenants like Smart Set, Town and Country, etc., could be found in most shopping centers in Canada.

Comments about the open-air section (see Figure 1.7) of the center, ranged from "consists of over-priced specialty stores" to "contains many good quality, highly fashionable stores". In this section of the center, Lashbrook Shoes, Ladies' wear stores

(Fashion Shop) and the men's wear stores (Ray Delions and Sauder's) are located. These stores were obviously liked or disliked by the consumers.

Many consumers felt that Westmount Place catered to a limited clientele, "the Beechwood crowd". This term refers to a residential area in Waterloo. It is located between Westmount Road, University Avenue and Columbia Road. The average cost of a home is over \$120,000.00.¹⁰² The average income in the section is approximately \$35,000.00.¹⁰³ This area has considerable expenditure power.

Consumers were upset over the lack of parking and the "inability to get out easily and in easily on Westmount Road". The shopping center does have space for 900 automobiles. Many parking spaces, however, are located at the back or side of the center. These spaces are not visible from the front of the center. Westmount Road is the street in front of Westmount Place and has a very high volume of traffic.¹⁰⁴ The high volume creates problems of accessibility.

Consumers frequently stated that Westmount Place "lacked a good restaurant and a big name store". Three restaurants are tenants and Eaton's is located there. (see Table 1.1) Smitty's Restaurant, the Dairy Queen and El Patio have been ignored by the consumer at Westmount Place. When it was mentioned that Eaton's could be considered a "big name", the consumer invariably responded that Eaton's lacked a full line of merchandise. They mentioned the quality of merchandise was poor, and that personnel

"was either non-existent or difficult to locate".

Consumers mentioned that the Dominion Store could also have a better selection of merchandise and they did not like its physical layout. Prices were too high. This was always mentioned in the interview.

The management of Westmount Place believed that image was a result of the "architecture, lot size, cosmetic appearance, anchor tenants and the satellite store". Their aim was to maintain their own identity and to reach the potential of Westmount Place's market. This potential was the ability of the shopping center to attract ninety percent of the population (shopping at Westmount) within one mile of the center. This would increase their gross profit by ten percent. However, Westmount Place had an identity problem of what consumer group to appeal to--high fashion or students. These two groups are located or reside very near to Westmount Place. Beachwood residential area, contains the "high fashion crowd". The University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University are located within a two mile radius of the center, and a great number of students reside near or close to these schools. The retailers and mall management feel that these two groups are their market area populations. Stores like Smart Set, Town and Country, and Record Market, attempt to appeal to the student population. Fashion Stop, The Port Hole, Lashbrook Shoes, Sauders, and Ray Delions, attempt to appeal to Beechwood area residents. These retailers felt their consumers were executives who had the

attitude that "they had made it". They felt, then, their strongest image component was the quality and reputation of the stores at Westmount Place. They believed their stores were "a cut above all the shopping center stores". It is interesting to note that these stores (Fashion Stop, Ray Delions, Sauders, and Lashbrook Shoes) are locally owned.

Retailers did not want volume of consumers but emphasized the amount (in dollars) of the purchases by a select group of consumers. This fact, along with the inclusion of locally owned stores, emphasized to the mall management and the retailers that they were not an imitation of Fairview Park Mall (Kitchener). Fairview Park Mall, it was suggested, relied on volume of customers and nationally-owned chain stores. Westmount Place, instead, "was a unique center".

Retailers, like Lashbrook Shoes, Fashion Stop, Sauders, etc., in the open-air section, were upset over the management's attempt to attract the student market population. They also felt that the management's only purpose was "to siphon off all profits" and "as soon as we make a few more cents, we lose it to Marathon".

The retailers generated a negative feeling towards Marathon Realty (the mall management). This lack of harmony is suggested in frequency count routine. There was a difference between mall management and retailers' of Westmount individual criteria scores. The mall management consistently rated the individual criteria higher than the retailers.

Consumers at Conestoga Mall also felt Conestoga Mall "was identical to other shopping centers in the Kitchener-Waterloo region". (see Table 1.2) However, they felt that Conestoga Mall lacked the "pizzaz that Fairview Park Mall (Kitchener) has", or "it was nothing compared to Fairview". "It strikes me as a dull place", was a comment frequently mentioned. They also complained about the lack of a good anchor store. Consumers like the "spacious", "bright", "clean" atmosphere of Conestoga Mall. They liked especially the ease of parking.

Conestoga Mall's management felt that their image could be described as "a people-place with a unique design". They felt it was a "truly unique and exciting retail opportunity". They offered exotic plants and trees, sun or skylights, excellent customer access, and "something for everyone".

The management at Conestoga Mall believed that volume is significant. They have attempted to attract large crowds by offering flea markets, car shows, and other displays. They emphasized advertising (especially radio-oriented) and promotions.

Their image is also generated by the type of anchor store. Mall management categorize anchor stores according to three classifications: AAA the "best type of anchor stores to have"; AA the "second best type of anchor tenant"; and A the "last type of anchor tenant to have in a center". An AAA tenant is Sear's, Simpson's, Eaton's and the Bay. These department stores "generate the most traffic". The AA anchor tenants include K-Mart, Robinson's and Woolco. Lastly, the A tenants are Sayvette and

Towers. Unfortunately, Conestoga Mall attracted only or leased to the AA type of tenant--Robinson's and K-Mart. The management felt that Robinson's will become an AAA anchor tenant. Conestoga management will not emphasize the anchor tenant or the other tenants. "The focus is the entire shopping center."

Retailers at Conestoga Mall are national chain stores (see Table 1.2). Many retailers had no idea of the type of market population they are appealing to. "We appeal to every consumer", frequently was stated by Conestoga retailers. They were concerned about Fairview Park Mall (Kitchener). Fairview Park Mall is considered competition, for it too is a regional mall. It contains three anchor tenants: Sears, Simpson's and Woolco. Due to this competition, the retailers wanted more promotion and advertising. The retailers were, however, pleased with Oxford's management of the center. They felt that they could talk to Ray Scott (the Manager) at any time.

The retailers felt that they were just beginning to be known (since Conestoga has only been open one year). Sales, it was predicted, would get better as "Kitchener-Waterloo" got to know us (Conestoga Mall). These retailers generated a nationwide chain store attitude (ie. policy follows rest of chain) and they were harmonious with the management's attitudes.

In conclusion, Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall consumers view or perceive these centers differently from the interviewed retailers and mall management. The retailers and mall management of Westmount Place viewed their own image differently. Conestoga

Mall's retailers and management agreed on their center's image. This suggests a more harmonious relationship at Conestoga Mall than at Westmount Place. The conclusion from the statistical tests were similar.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

It is possible that the conclusions derived from this study may have a practical implication for the mall management and retailers of shopping centers. They must realize that their image of their centers is different from the consumer's and retailers' image of their center. This image variation might affect the success of a shopping center. The analysis of data, as described in the preceding chapters, provided information and new insights about shopping center images. The findings have answered several questions: What components of shopping center images are selected by consumers, retailers and the mall management? What components or dimensions of images are important? Is there a significant difference in the shopping center image (within one center) between the three groups, and do shopping centers have identical image dimensions?

We may conclude the following about Westmount Place's and Conestoga Mall's shopping center image:

- 1(a) Mall management consistently rate image components at their center more positively than retailers and consumers.
 - (b) The retailers' responses were between the consumers' responses and mall management's response to the shopping center image components. They could be more responsive to the opinions and attitudes of consumers and mall management.
 - (c) Consumers always rank the image components lower than the retailers and the mall management.
-
- 2(a) The consumers' image components are different from Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall. Consumers at Westmount Place stressed the intangible attributes of store quality and reputation of stores. Conestoga Mall consumers

emphasized the tangible attributes of the building and landscape, and the availability of parking.

(b) The retailers' image components are different for Westmount Place and Conestoga Mall. Retailers at Westmount Place emphasized quality of stores, prices, and reputation of stores. Conestoga Mall retailers stressed the building and landscape, comparative shopping and traffic congestion.

3(a) Conestoga Mall consumers and retailers emphasized different image dimensions when describing the center. Consumers at Conestoga Mall selected merchandise selection, customer service, physical attractiveness and convenience as their image dimensions. Conestoga Mall retailers chose, however, the primary factor (quality of stores, advertising, proximity to home and availability of parking), merchandise and staff, service atmosphere and physical attractiveness.

(b) Westmount Place consumers and retailers do agree on the image dimensions. The priority of the image dimensions are different. Westmount Place consumers selected the primary factor (advertising, quality of stores, parking, building and landscape and reputation of stores), merchandise, people, and convenience. Retailers at Westmount Place selected these dimensions. They, however, felt that the consumers' factor one was third, two was first, and the consumer factor three was second.

4(a) Conestoga Mall's retailers and mall management agree on many of the image attributes.

(b) Westmount Place's retailers and mall management disagreed on several image components. They disagreed on traffic congestion, advertising, friendly sales personnel, and availability of parking.

(c) Consumers and mall management, at Conestoga Mall and Westmount Place, did not agree on the components of shopping center image.

5 Westmount Place's image is more precise or defined than Conestoga Mall's image in the consumers' minds. The total variance explained was greater for Westmount Place than for Conestoga Mall. Greater frequency of consumer use or Westmount Place's maturity might explain the difference in the total variance.

The image factors, in this study, are identical to the attributes mentioned in Lindquist's and Pacione's research.

Merchandise selection, physical attractiveness and people are these image dimensions. This study partly reinforces recent geographical and market research studies. However, local conditions might have affected the images held by Westmount Place's and Conestoga Mall's consumers, retailers, and mall management. These local conditions might account for the absence of the Lindquist's and Pacione's other attributes. It would be useful if this study could be replicated in a different area to see if similarities between the studies occur.

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I am a Master's student at Wilfrid Laurier University and would appreciate greatly your time to fill out this questionnaire. This survey is to determine what people like/dislike about a shopping center. Your help will aid me in finding out why consumers come to shopping centers. Thank you very much.

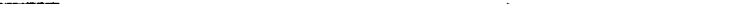
Please place an X in the box that you feel describes your attitude/feelings on that particular shopping center characteristic.

The Arctic temperature in the winter is:

[illegible]

Extremely Quite Slightly Neutral Slightly Quite Extremely

CLOSE [] [] [] [] [] [] FAR

(A)  BAD

BAD □ □ □ □ □ □ □ **GOOD**

BAD (A.11)

(c)  BAD

LITTL [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] MUCH

[illegible]

Extremely Quite Slightly Neutral Slightly Quite Extremely

Buildings and Landscape:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

Mall Hours:

BAD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ GOOD

Advertising:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

Quality of Stores:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

Variety of Stores:

BAD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ GOOD

Comparative Shopping:

BAD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ GOOD

Reputation of Stores:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

Type of Customers:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

Value for Price:

LOW ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ HIGH

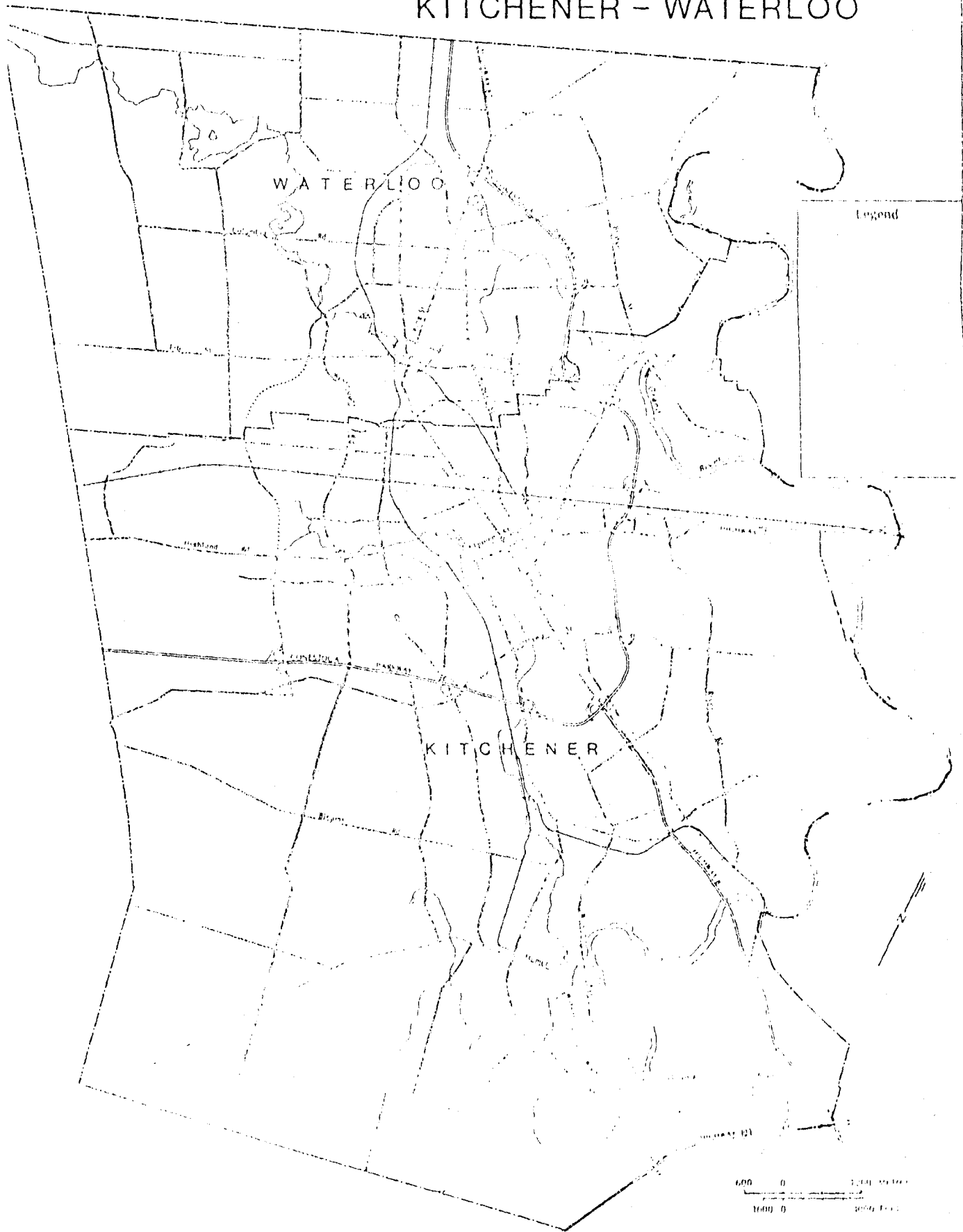
Overall Attitude/Feeling towards Mall:

GOOD ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ BAD

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU WISH TO ADD _____

PLEASE MARK ON THE MAP(the next page) WHERE YOU LIVE. IF YOU CANNOT DO SO, PLEASE WRITE THE NAME OF THE CITY IN THE FOLLOWING SPACE. _____

THE CITIES OF KITCHENER - WATERLOO



Relative to the number of shopping trips that you make, how frequently do you shop at Conestoga Mall.

VERY
FREQUENT ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ VERY
INFREQUENT

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND TROUBLE! I GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS.