



THE ROAD TO A VIBRANT, ATTRACTIVE SHOPPING MALL

for major cities in the Netherlands

Delft University of Technology

Research plan for MSc Architecture

Studio
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Adapting 20th Century Heritage

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ABSTRACT

This research plan is part of the Master's graduation studio Heritage & Architecture Adapting 20th Century Heritage on the Delft University of Technology. This research plan aims at developing a toolbox/design guidelines which can then be applied in the redesign proposal of a shopping mall in the Netherlands. This research plan consists of an introduction including the problem statement and relevance. Next, the main- and sub-questions are stated. Finally, a theoretical framework and methodology are described.

Keywords: shopping mall, attractiveness, atmosphere, funshopping, redesign, heritage

Why? What?
problem time-frame

How? Who?
redesign product target group

How can vacant post-war shopping malls be made more attractive for funshoppers
in the major cities of the Netherlands?

Where?
location

1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Some people go to an amusement park as a day out, others head towards a shopping mall to go funshopping. Funshopping is recreational shopping. There doesn't have to be a purchase objective here, yet it is quite possible that one may buy something. Here, consumers are not concerned with targeted shopping but with the experience. This contrasts with targeted shopping ('runshopping'). The consumers increasingly do this at home, online via mobile, tablet or laptop. However, the experience of online shopping cannot match a day out. As shops come under pressure from the rise of online shopping, funshopping is therefore still seen by retail companies as competing with online shopping (Online Marketing Agency, 2021).

Shopping malls, large and usually covered shopping area for pedestrians only (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022b), in the Netherlands' largest cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Groningen, Tilburg, Almere, Breda, and Nijmegen) are nevertheless under pressure due to the corona pandemic. The corona pandemic has made people more aware of what they do in their leisure time. As a result, shopping also has to compete with other ways of pastimes. Consumers' desire while shopping has therefore changed during this period. Shopping malls have to respond to these desires in order to continue to attract consumers. If this is not done, consumers may stay away, resulting in a drop in sales and ultimately resulting in empty shops. Vacancy makes it less attractive to visitors, as a result, more vacancy is created.

1.1 Problem statement

Funshopping has changed in the past five years. Among other things, the advance of online shopping has seen a big growth in the Netherlands. This has had a negative impact on shopping malls in the Netherlands (Admiraal, 2022).

In fact, consumers are more likely to choose an online shop because of its convenience, speed and price. Physical shops are more likely to be preferred when consumers want to try something out or get advice. According to Henk Hofstede, retail sector banker, being able to take the item with them immediately is also considered more important than the experience; "Apparently, consumers have a greater need for efficient shopping and 'funshopping' is losing popularity" (RetailTrends, 2020).

One of the consequences of this is vacancy. This simultaneously makes a shopping mall less attractive for funshopping and, according to Martijn Exterkate, this will further affect the other shops in the shopping mall "Shops benefit from shops next to them, bringing in more visitors, like a kind of ecosystem that reinforces each other. Vacancy makes it less attractive to visitors and so you get even more vacancy." (NOS, 2022).

So, to keep shopping malls attractive to

funshoppers, some changes will have to be made to ensure that existing shopping malls do not fall into disrepair by falling behind consumer desire.

Therefore, this problem focuses on the shopping malls that no longer meet the current needs of funshoppers where vacancy may result and could be a problem for the future existence of the shopping mall.

1.2 Relevance

Even though online shopping is on the rise, physical shops are still very important. Shops are their most important marketing tool, an indispensable link to offer your customers both experience and convenience (RetailSonar, 2022). This is especially important after the corona pandemic.

A research by DirectResearch has found that the corona pandemic has significantly changed consumer behaviour in the Netherlands. More than one in three people now spend their leisure time differently than before the pandemic. Over half said they felt more the need to meet physically with others. One of the popular places to do this is the mall. 71% of respondents said they experienced shopping as relaxing. In addition, dining and lunch also came high on the list as a pastime. They are also increasingly combined in the 18-37 age group (CustomerFirst, 2022).

This can also be seen in the figures of shops that focus on consumer experience. This means making shopping as enjoyable and innovative as possible. Since March 2020, funshopping has been on 'on hold'. Shops that scored high on 'experience' scored only 6% better than shops that did not or focused on this in 2020. By 2021, this percentage had already risen to 17% and is expected to grow slightly further in the future (RetailSonar, 2022a).

1.3 Research questions

Taking into consideration the shift in the ways people shop since the pandemic, and the importance of funshopping, the main research question is: "How can vacant post-war shopping malls be made more attractive for funshoppers in the major cities of the Netherlands?"

Five subquestions will allow me to find an answer to the main question:

[Subquestion 1] What are the reasons vacancy rates in shopping malls have increased in recent years?

[Subquestion 2] How have shopping malls in the major cities of the Netherlands changed spatially between 1945 and now?

[Subquestion 3] According to the existing literature, what attraction factors determine the attractiveness of shopping centres in the present?

[Subquestion 4] How do people value these attractiveness factors in shopping malls for funshopping in the major cities of the Netherlands?

[Subquestion 5] How do these determining attractiveness factors translate into architectural interventions to improve shopping malls for funshoppers?

By answering these questions a design guidelines/toolbox will be created to support the redesign process of an attractive shopping mall for funshoppers in the next years.

2. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This research focuses on attractiveness factors (needs and preferences) for funshoppers for a modern shopping mall. This research is supported by a theoretical framework that will serve as the fundamental basis for the methodology, in particular, an online survey. The values that consumers consider most important are linked afterwards to the values framework by Pereira Roders (2007). Together with this framework, the design guidelines/toolbox will serve as the foundations in the redesign

In *figure 1. Structure of the research** all 5 subquestions are illustrated with their individual subquestions and the methods used to collect, process, analyse and visualise the data in order to answer the subquestions. These results provide the basis for the development of the (re)design toolbox.

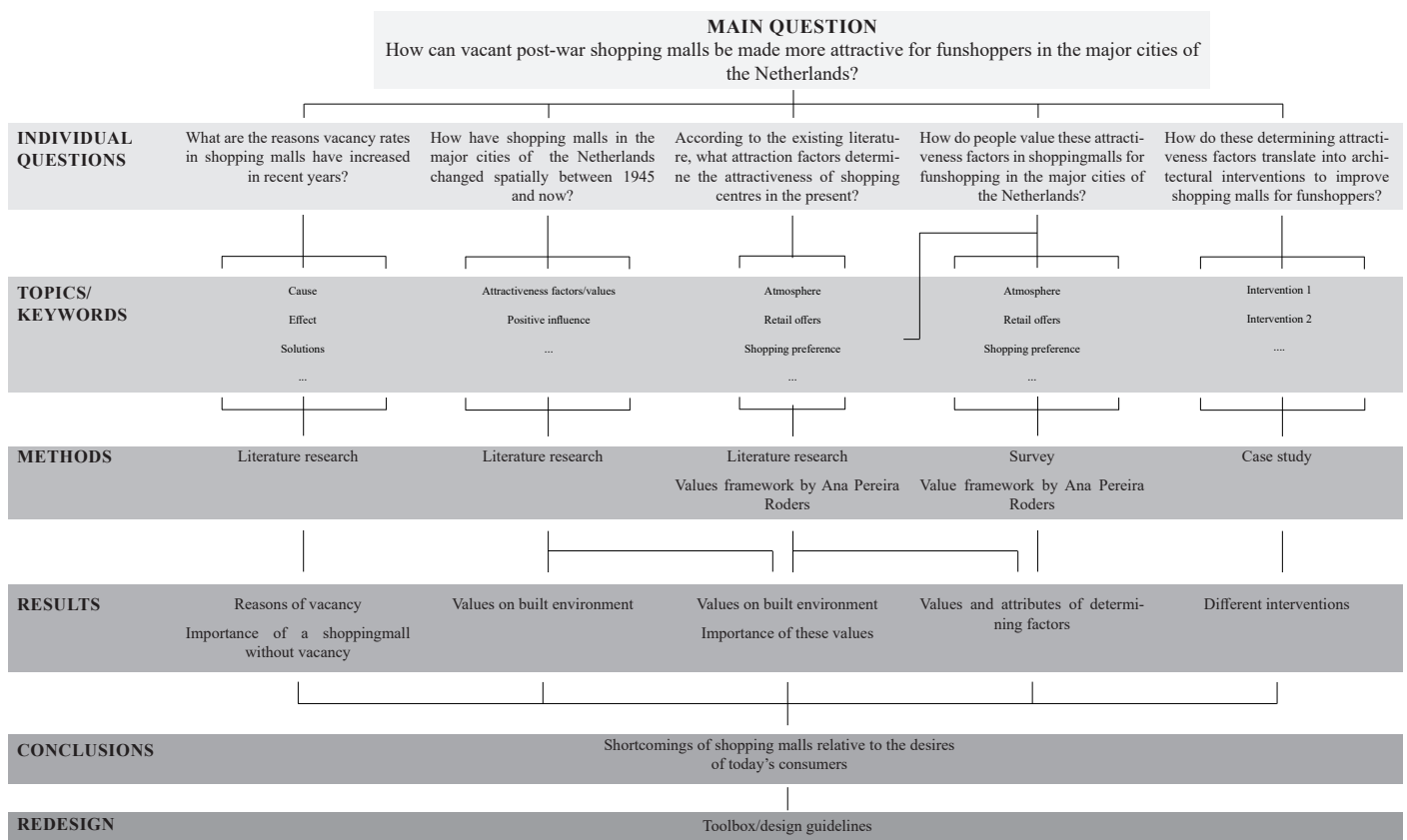


Figure 1. Structure of the research

The subquestions provide the framework for the study. This research investigates the cause and effect of vacancy on the attractiveness of the shopping mall to the visitor. In order not to make the research too broad for the limited time frame of this studio, various aspects were not included in the study. However, these excluded aspects could contribute to the attractiveness of the shopping centre for consumers. This excludes several aspects such as safety, hygiene, accessibility for the disabled, and the layout of individual shops. The aspects that will be focused on include human behavior in funshopping, the desired functions and shops in a shopping mall, the layout of the entire shopping mall, the interior design (atmosphere), and the typologies of shopping malls.

The survey will have to validate the literature research of subquestion 3. This is important because several studies (as described in *1.2 relevance*) show that consumer shopping behavior changed after the corona pandemic.

Also, it will be able to confirm why some shopping malls no longer work as they were intended to at the time of design. A draft of this survey can be found in *Appendix 5.1 Draft of the online survey*.

Expressing the outcomes in terms of value and linking them to Pereira Roders' (2007) Value Framework will distinguish those of positive impact from those of negative impact. This will form the basis for subquestion 5 in which the positive value will be linked to reference cases. These reference cases will look at the interventions that were made to meet the visitor's desire again and thus form the basis for the toolbox / design guidelines.

Through this way of exploring, the main question will be able to be answered and form a solid foundation for the design assignment.

*Figure 1. Structure of the research can be found in a larger scale in the appendix.

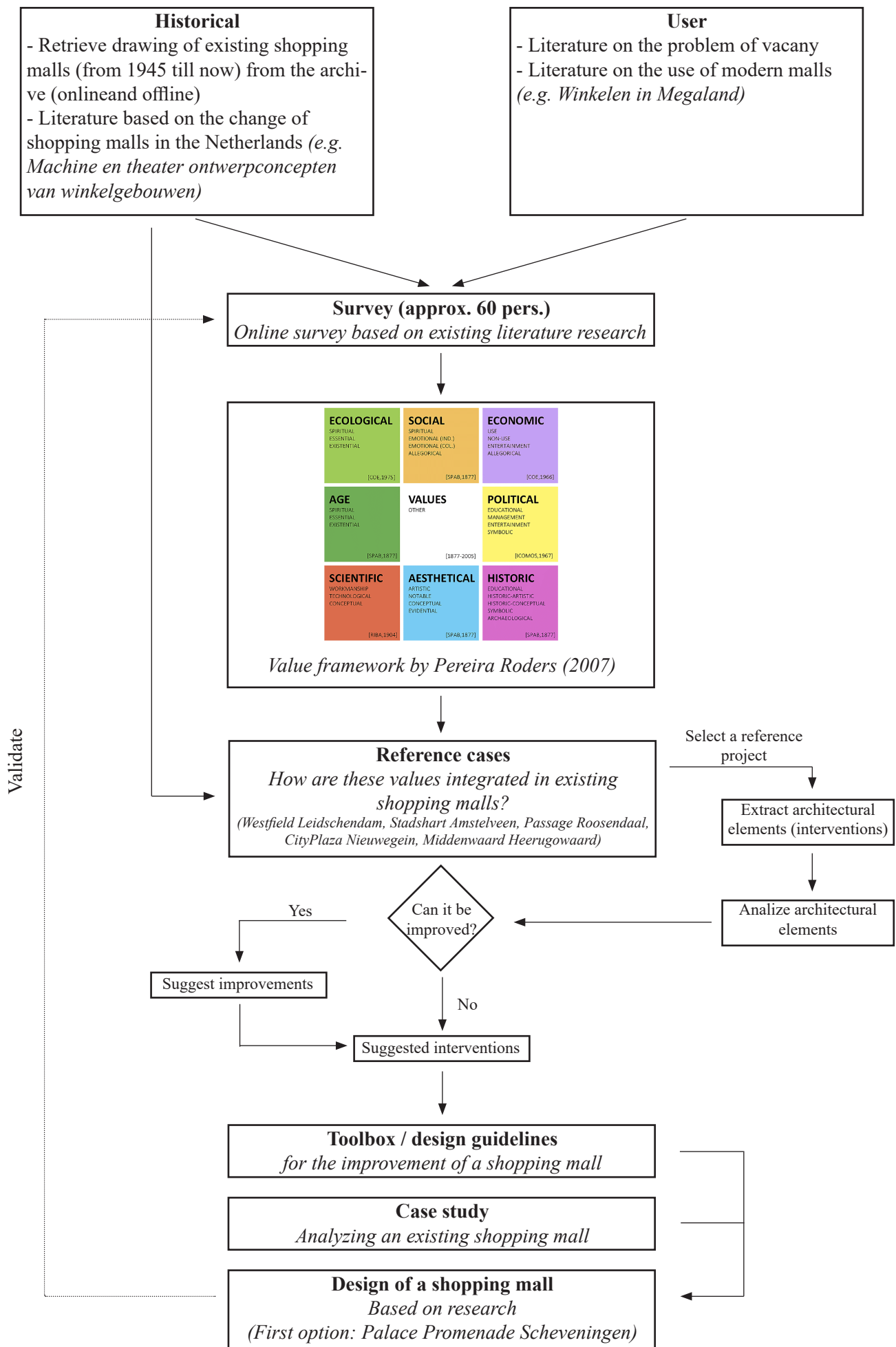


Figure 2. Data analysis proces

3. METHODOLOGY

In the next few months, four different research methods will be used in this study. Information will be gathered through the use of literature research. This information will form the base of an online survey that will be conducted among consumers of funshopping. The values of these answers of the research will result in a toolbox that will serve as a handle for the (re)design of a shopping mall.

3.1 Literature research

With the help of recent literature from newspapers and scientific researches the first sub-question will be answered. The literature will focus on vacancy rates in the major cities of the Netherlands and the effect on the attractiveness of shopping malls. Books such as 'Machine en theater - ontwerpconcepten van winkelgebouw' by Dion Kooijman and 'Winkelen in Megaland' by Nai Uitgevers will be used to answer the second subquestion. With this, the problem of vacancy and the history of shopping malls, becomes clear. Also, the good practices in redesign and attractiveness factors will help with forming the online survey.

3.2 Online survey

By means of a survey among consumers living in or near the major cities in the Netherlands, research is conducted into what consumers find important while funshopping in a shopping mall. The questions in this survey will occur from the literature research. The questions from the survey will be a combination of multiple choice where one or more than one answer can be chosen. The result of this survey will be coded into values.

3.3 Value framework

The values framework of Pereira Roders (2007) will be used in this research. This framework was chosen because of the broad diversity of values connected to architecture. The most important values of the literature research as well as the survey will be linked to the value framework of Pereira Roders. These values will then be the starting point for the analysis of case studies.

3.4 Reference cases

The values framework forms the base for the analysis of the reference cases. The following malls will be used as reference cases; Westfield in Leidschendam (1971), Stads-hart Amstelveen (1960), Passage Roosendaal (1985), CityPlaza in Nieuwegein (1985), and Middenwaard in Heerhugowaard (1975). Interventions and renovations have taken place at all these malls to once again meet the needs of visitors. These five reference studies are in line with the research on post-war shopping centres because they were also built during this period. These case studies must have undergone interventions that had a positive impact on the mall. The analysis will translate these interventions into a (re)design toolbox. The five reference cases can also help study the problems of existing mall which will be redesigned.

3.5 Research to design

The research will continue throughout the year including a design case. The design case is required to have a problem linked to the topic of the research. In the redesign, multiple toolbox proposals will be integrated in order to ensure attractiveness factors of funshoppers were considered..

3.6 Human research ethics

Should the coronavirus situation change in the near future, this will not affect the survey. It can be sent and answered online. This will not break the guidelines previously established by the RIVM (COVID-19 En Richtlijnen En Adviezen, n.d.). Some of these guidelines are physical contact, physical proximity, and transport.

During this survey, therefore, there will be minimal risks to participants. In the survey no sensitive questions will be made and any personal participant information collected will be kept anonymous.

To further ensure participant safety, the first question of the survey will be; "Do you agree that the answers you completed in the survey will be used in my research?". In case the participant answers 'no', they choose not to continue with the survey.

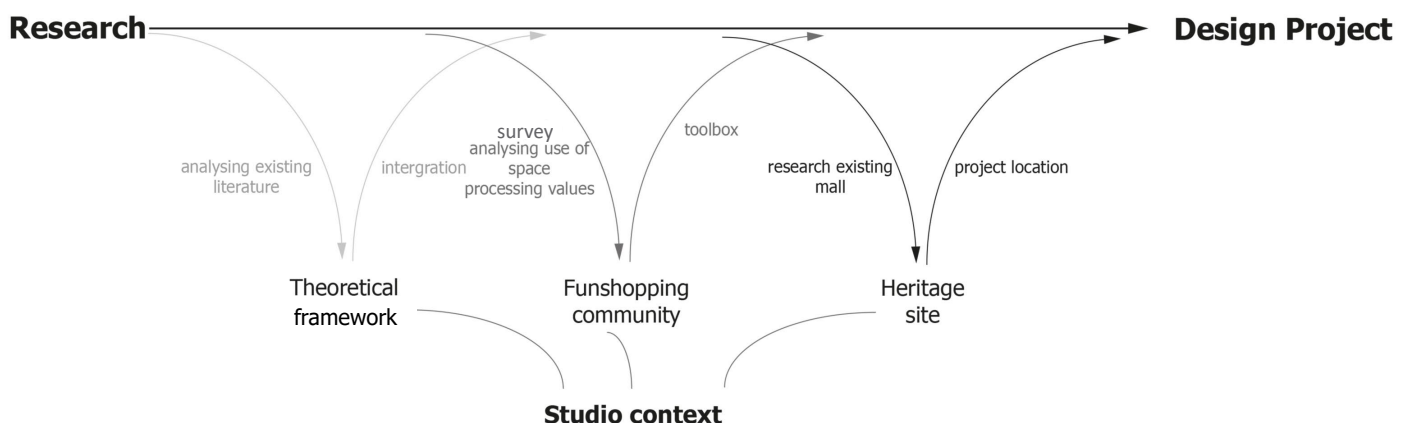


Figure 3. Research to design

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5. APPENDIX

5.1 Draft of the online survey

Exclusion of the research: Safety in a mall, accessibility, hygiene,...

Do you agree that the answers you completed in the survey will be used in my research? - Yes/No

General information (Select one answer)

1. Gender – male, female, other
2. Age – below 20, 21-40, 41-60, 61-80, 81 or higher
3. Living situation – Single Household, Living with parent(s) / caregivers(s), Group accommodation (e.g. student accommodation), Married or cohabiting without child(ren), Married or cohabiting with child(ren), single-parent household (single with child(ren)), other
4. Employment status – Unemployed, Student, employed (full-time), employed (part-time), other

The following statements address your shopping behaviour. Please indicate what applies to you (form completely disagree to completely agree)

1. I enjoy shopping
2. I like to make shopping a 'day trip'.
3. When I go shopping, I like to combine eating and drinking at the mall.
4. I sometimes visit a shopping mall without intending to buy anything.
5. I prefer to go shopping with someone rather than alone.
6. When I go shopping, I like to take my time.

The following statements address your shopping behaviour. Please indicate what applies to you (form completely unimportant to completely important)

Retail offers in a mall

1. My favourite shop(s) are present.
2. There are many clothes shops present.
3. Shops for children are also present. (clothes, toys, etc.)
4. There is an opportunity to have something to eat/drink somewhere.
5. There is a diversity of shops with different price range.
6. There is a diversity of items for sale.
7. Temporary shops (pop-up shops) can be found in the mall.
8. A cinema/game hall is available in the mall.
9. There are playgrounds for children in the mall,

Atmosphere

1. The overall appearance of the mall.
2. The background music in the mall.
3. The use of plants in the public space in a mall.
4. Special events can be organised in the mall (art, fashion show, holidays relativised).
5. There is the possibility of walking around in a roundabout way.

The following statements address your shopping preference *. Please indicate what applies to you. (multiple answers are possible).

1. Neighborhood center
2. Community Center
3. Regional Center
4. Super-Regional Center
5. Fashion Center
6. Power Center
7. Festival Center
8. Outlet Center
9. Other, namely....

* Definition of the different types of shopping centres are described at 5.3 - definitions

MAIN QUESTION
 How can vacant post-war shopping malls be made more attractive for funshoppers in the major cities of the Netherlands?

INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS What is the reason vacancy rates in shoppingmalls have increased in recent years? How have shopping malls in the major cities of the Netherlands changed spatially between 1945 and now? According to the existing literature, what attraction factors determine the attractiveness of shopping centres in the present? How do people value these attractiveness factors in shoppingmalls for funshopping in the major cities of the Netherlands? How do these determining attractiveness factors translate into architectural interventions to improve shopping malls for funshoppers?

TOPICS/KEYWORDS Cause Effect Solutions ... Attractiveness factors/values Positive influence ... Atmosphere Retail offers Shopping preference ... Atmosphere Retail offers Shopping preference ... Intervention 1 Intervention 2 ...

METHODS Literature research Literature research Literature research Values framework by Ana Pereira Roders Values framework by Ana Pereira Roders Survey Case study

RESULTS Reasons of vacancy Importance of a shoppingmall without vacancy Values on built environment Values on built environment Values and attributes of determining factors Different interventions

CONCLUSIONS Shortcomings of shopping malls relative to the desires of today's consumers

REDESIGN Toolbox/design guidelines

5.3 Definitions

1. Neighborhood Center

A neighborhood center is your smallest kind of shopping center. Stores are centered around a supermarket, usually in a line or L-shape. These stores may be drug stores, small restaurants or take-outs, or personal-need stores like a dry cleaner or a spa. The types of stores here are designed to make shopping for food plus other day-to-day needs a breeze for a particular neighborhood.

2. Community Center

Also known as “community hall,” this type of shopping mall has at least two anchor stores. Its configuration can vary, but generally take on a more rounded shape. This mall contains more clothing stores, large discount stores, and restaurants.

3. Regional Center

The best example of a regional center is your typical mall. These of course are large, enclosed, and surrounded by parking lots. They have more than two anchor stores, and more variety in types of stores, but mostly contain clothing stores.

4. Super-Regional Center

A super-regional center is what one might expect, in light of what a regional center is. It has larger square footage, usually more levels, and more anchor stores.

5. Fashion Center

A fashion center, by contrast, is centered in areas with more well-to-do customers. These centers have higher-end stores, boutiques, and artisan shops featuring high quality and unique products. The architecture and landscaping of this kind of center are exceptional.

6. Power Center

A power center is a center dominated by several unconnected, giant anchors. These include discount department stores, warehouses, and “category killers,” which house an abundance of products within one category.

7. Festival Center

Such centers draw streams of tourists for their historical location, architecture, entertainment, and restaurants. Festival centers are also called “theme centers,” as their location, appearance, and perhaps even their merchandise share a common theme.

8. Outlet Center

Lastly, the outlet center is an unconnected store that sells discounted items of their own products which are usually non-returnable. They are more likely to be found in a rural or suburban area. Some outlet stores, however, form a village-like shopping mall. (Enterprises, 2019)