

GRAVITATIONAL THEORY: A CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Gravitational theory has long been used as a basis for developing location models that specify where shopping centres, shops, industry and public services should be located to appeal to potential consumers who will gravitate to destinations dependent upon the size or mass of the destinations and consumers' distances from them. The theory has been applied in a macro sense to ascertain where segments of consumers and suppliers are most likely to meet and exchange products and services. However, the theory can equally be applied to model the behaviour of individuals in very local contexts, so it has predictive value for ascertaining where a person may journey to perform a task at home, at their workplace or shopping. The author's exploratory research showed that in a controlled research setting with no extraneous variables, gravity alone plausibly affects an individual's choice of destination. If the research can be replicated in various environments and applied to society it could have implications for retailing, urban planning and workplace and home design.