

---

## Editorial

---

### Rajagopal

EGADE Business School,  
222, Calle del Puente, Col Ejidos de Huipulco,  
Tlalpan, Mexico DF 14380, Mexico  
E-mail: rajagopal@itesm.mx

**Biographical notes:** Rajagopal is a Professor of Marketing at the Graduate Business School (EGADE) of Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), Mexico City Campus, Mexico. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, a Fellow of the Institute of Operations Management and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He has been conferred as National Researcher Level 2 of the Mexican National System of Researchers.

---

Urban shopping environment exhibits new opportunities and challenges for commercial estate builders. Shopping malls in urban locations attempt to attract shoppers and gain high brand equity. In this way, both tenants of the mall and shoppers understand the dynamics of competitive advantages of shopping in a commercial complex. Built environment in urban commerce plays significant role in serving the markets, customers and other auxiliary players. A larger shopping centre can facilitate a greater variety of shops and create a more pleasant environment for the shoppers, thus enticing shoppers to visit and stay longer. The built environment of a shopping mall consists of internal and external ambience that helps in driving the arousal and merriment of consumers. Developing inside and outside ambience of shopping malls for enhancing the shopping experience has been a recent concept in retailing, and many pleasant ambient stimuli such as product videos, music and fragrance help consumers to make positive buying decisions. Consumers make holistic evaluation of shopping malls in view of the arousing quality of ambience stimuli for buying products and derive satisfaction on buying products and services (Rajagopal, 2009).

The globalisation has resulted in increasing the density of shopping malls in urban areas and a growing competition among the commercial real estate is emerging as a concern to the urban planners. The shopping complexes in urban areas are being rated on the built environment value index in reference to access, parking space, location, amenities, atmosphere, price and promotion, number of stores, cross-category assortment and within-category assortment in stores. A commercial estate can build its image as top of the mind brand by positioning itself in the minds of target shoppers enhancing mall patronage, and increasing positive word-of-mouth communication about the mall (Chebat et al., 2010). The most common configuration for shopping centres is linear. Parking and public conveniences are provided in the mall (Carter and Vendell, 2005).

Real estate developed for accommodating the commercial activities need to exhibit five essential qualities pertaining to aesthetic judgement, which include *interest*, *subjectivity*, *exclusivity*, *thoughtfulness* and *internality* to offer value to the different

market players. The quality of aesthetic judgement driven by internal aura and arousal in a shopping mall is exercised by the customers in association with the economic, cognitive, technological and relational determinants (Dobson, 2007). These factors associated with commercial real estate reflect the state of the society and act as agents of change. In emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, rising incomes and quality lifestyles are creating a wider scope of business for malls and commercial complexes among urban mass affluent. The shopping malls develop their market strategy focusing on segmentation of the market, and use differentiation and positioning to create sustainable advantage (Kuruvilla and Joshi, 2010; LeHew and Fairhurst, 2000). The growing commercial cities have faced reverse changes over time showing decline in the number of shops that sell space consuming goods in urban areas. However, the success of many shopping malls has emerged with the rise of small shops with improved ergonomics for accommodating less space consuming goods (Rajagopal, 2011).

The built environment for commerce in urban areas demonstrates architecture, facilities planning and construction design that influence marketers and consumers. Shopping centres and hypermarkets are important routes to market in the urban landscape, though lack of planning and vision in developing urban marketplaces lead to chaos and congestion of traffic affecting the growth retailers. The *Int. J. Built Environment and Asset Management (IJBEAM)* addresses the economics and management issues of commercial complexes, real estate, urban design and marketing in urban areas. We are delighted to present this inaugural issue of the journal with six quality research papers contributed in specific fields of the journal. The papers included in this issue exhibit conceptual and empirical studies on time sharing and brand affiliation, use of Six Sigma methodology in enhancing operational efficiency, loyalty programmes of retailing firms, influence of store brands, lender perspectives in hospitality industry and customer-centric management of entertainment parks.

We hope that the anthology of papers presented in this issue would be useful to academics, researchers and managers. Further research for this journal may be directed towards leisure properties such as management issues of commercial centres, recreational parks, holiday resorts, cine complexes, transport terminals and airport shopping zones. We are confident that *IJBEAM* would serve as a scholarly outlet for the research contributions on the above perspectives and would significantly contribute to the existing literature.

## References

- Carter, C.C. and Vendell, K.D. (2005) 'Store location in shopping centers: theory and estimates', *Journal of Real Estate Research*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp.237–265.
- Chebat, J.C., Sirgy, J.M. and Grzeskowiak, S. (2010) 'How can shopping mall management best capture mall image?', *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 63, No. 7, pp.735–740.
- Dobson, J. (2007) 'Aesthetics as a foundation for business activity', *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 72, No. 1, pp.41–46.
- Kuruvilla, S.J. and Joshi, N. (2010) 'Influence of demographics, psychographics, shopping orientation, mall shopping attitude and purchase patterns on mall patronage in India', *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp.259–269.

- LeHew, M.L.A. and Fairhurst, A.E. (2000) 'US shopping mall attributes: an exploratory investigation of their relationship to retail productivity', *Int. J. Retail and Distribution Management*, Vol. 28, No. 6, pp.261–272.
- Rajagopal (2009) 'Growing shopping malls and behavior of urban consumers', *Journal of Retail and Leisure Property*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp.99–118.
- Rajagopal (2011) 'Determinants of shopping behavior of urban consumers', *Int. J. Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp.83–104.