Interplay between gentrification, retail and urban space: a systematic literature review

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Cite as:

BRANDAO MARCELO, Guedes Thiago, Sarcinelli Arthur (2025), Interplay between gentrification, retail and urban space: a systematic literature review. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (125987)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



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Abstract: The distribution and agglomeration of retail outlets is an important factor in the relationship between processes of socioeconomic change and cultural resilience in an urban space. Recent studies on the subject diverge on the order of influence of retail performance in gentrification processes. On the one hand, gentrified neighborhoods increase the number of retail establishments. On the other hand, the growth of retail distribution in an urban space is the starting point for increasing the attractiveness of new resources to the locality. Thus, this controversy makes the understanding of the phenomenon in the management of urban space even more complex. A bibliometric analysis based on 275 articles published in the last years indicates that specific themes such as urban renaissance, ethnic retail, urban economic resilience, urban amenities, and the relationship between urban planning and public policies are the subjects on the future research agenda.

Keywords: Gentrification, Retail, Urban Space

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management

1. Introduction

Classic retail point-of-sale distribution strategies consider the customer's daily life a factor in deciding their geographical location. This presence of physical retail in people's daily lives is seen as beneficial because it contributes to strengthening brand positioning (Kamran-Disfani et al., 2017), increasing customer satisfaction (Moukrim et al., 2024), and creating an identity of belonging to the neighborhood in which it is located (Wilson & Hodges, 2022). However, the use of these strategies can lead to the gentrification of urban space (i.e. changing the socio-economic and cultural character of an urban region with the migration of people and investment; Bolzoni, 2023), demonstrating that retail agglomerations (i.e. concentration of stores in the same geographical point; Teller & Elms, 2010) are important factors in the relationship between urban space and gentrification processes (Smith, 2006).

The literature on gentrification processes indicates that there has been a global application of this public replacement process since the 1990s (Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Guimarães, 2021). However, the relationship with retail formats remains inconclusive. On the one hand, gentrified neighborhoods increase the number of retail establishments (Glaeser et al., 2023; Glaeser, Luca, & Moszkowski, 2020). On the other hand, the growth of retail distribution in an urban space is the starting point for increasing the attractiveness of new resources to the locality (Yoon, 2018; De Los Santos et al., 2021; Behrens et al., 2024; Ellen & O'Regan, 2011).

Thus, investigating the interconnected relationship between gentrification, retail and spatial processes is the main objective of this manuscript. A bibliometric approach was adopted to map current knowledge on the phenomenon, indicating the main gaps and research trends for the future.

2. Method

A bibliometric approach was adopted due to its ability to synthesize current knowledge in a given area in a structured way, as well as facilitating the survey of seminal articles and avenues for future research (Zupic & Cater, 2015). Thus, the SPAR4-SLR (Paul et al., 2021) protocol was used as a guide to develop all the stages of the bibliometric procedure. The Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases were chosen for their reputation as scientific repositories (Pranckutė, 2021). In addition, the following search query was used for the initial extraction of articles:

(gentrification OR "State-led Gentrification" OR "Urban Renewal" OR "Urban Restructuring" OR "Urban revitalization" OR "Urban regeneration" OR "Housing developments" OR "New construction" OR "Residential development" OR "Incumbent upgrading" OR gentrifier* OR "Middle class" OR "Affluent migrant" OR "Affluent household" OR "Incoming migrant" OR "Incoming household") AND (retail* OR "Territorial marketing" OR

"Retail location*" OR "Retail agglomeration*" OR "Urban Economics" OR "neigh* attractiveness" OR "urban econometric" OR "spatial regression" OR "urban place brand*" OR "place brand* augmentation" OR geomarketing OR "spatial marketing" OR "spatial model*" OR "geographic marketing" OR "gravitational model*" OR "gravity model*" OR "spatial analysis" OR "business opportunity identification" OR "business opportunit*" OR "entrepreneurial opportunit*" OR "opportunity discovery" OR "business opportunity identification")

The terms chosen to compose the query cover the theme of gentrification, retail and spatial elements. Initial search resulted in 411 articles (i.e., 217 in Web of Science and 194 in Scopus), which after a checking stage (e.g., removal of duplicates, documents that are not scientific articles, and articles without metadata) resulted in a final sample of 275 documents. The bibliometric data was analyzed and the research agenda was built using the bibliometrix tool (Derviş, 2019).

3. Results

There is a positive relationship in the amount of productivity during the period surveyed (i.e. since 2019) evidenced by the growth rate of at least 45 new articles each year, meaning that there is a growing interest in understanding how retail and gentrification are interconnected. In addition, the main sources on the subject are journals focused on urban planning and retail studies (e.g., Cities, Journal of Retailing and Customer Services).

The most relevant articles in terms of number of citations are detailed next. Slach et al. (2020) investigates the links retail and gentrification by examining how these transformations can alter local socio-economic dynamics, contributing to a wider debate on the appropriateness of retail regeneration initiatives in cities experiencing population decline. Tuttle et al. (2020) examining how the arrival of new commercial establishments modifies community dynamics, bringing benefits such as a greater sense of security and new services, but also contributing to a loss of belonging and control among the original residents, reinforcing socio-spatial tensions in these areas. Loda et al. (2020) connects retail and gentrification by addressing how this functional specialization modifies the socio-spatial dynamics of urban centers and discusses the need for public interventions to regulate the impacts of touristification and foodification in these areas. Kickert (2020) identifies that agglomeration is the most determining factor for business survival, followed by centrality and connectivity. The text interweaves retail and gentrification by highlighting how socio-spatial and economic transformations, especially in cities marked by urban renewal and socio-economic decline, impact store closure patterns and the dynamics of commerce in urban core areas. Zhang (2020) discussing how spatial organization and economic development influence the socio-economic dynamics of central areas, offering a new

perspective for understanding urban transformations and planning cities undergoing expansion or renewal.

In addition, the word co-occurrence network (Figure 1) was examined, as it provides an overview of the contexts, areas and related topics that may have been most searched and visually explains the groupings obtained. This led to the conclusion that there were three significant discussion groups.

The subjects grouped together are shown in three clusters: red (left), blue (right) and green (below). The cluster on the left has the term "gentrification" as the most prominent, and also contains terms such as "neighborhood" and "location". The cluster on the right has "retailing", "urban area" and "urban planning" as its main terms. The cluster below them has the main term "urban renewal", and also contains the terms "cities" and "city planning". The analysis of the three clusters reveals thematic segmentation around urban processes, with the left cluster focusing on gentrification and its territorial implications, the right cluster on retail dynamics and urban planning, and the lower cluster on urban renewal and the reconfiguration of cities. This distribution indicates a multidisciplinary approach that integrates social, economic and planning aspects in the study of urban phenomena.

Figure 1 - Word Co-occurrence Network

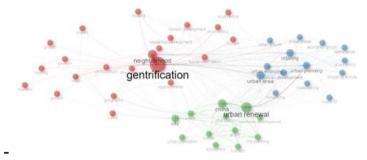
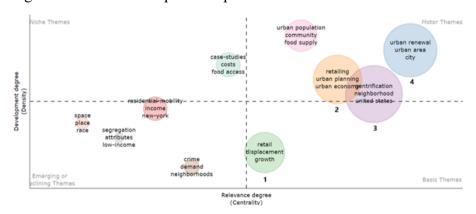


Figure 2 shows the thematic map which enables analysis of the production and collaboration of themes during the study period. In the illustration, the main productions of the period are illustrated by clusters.

Figure 3 - Thematic map for the period 2020-2024



The thematic map, one of the main visual analysis tools (Cobo et al., 2011), was obtained directly from Biblioshiny to carry out the thematic analysis. Understanding that these four clusters are connected to the themes at the heart of this review, the articles that make them up were selected for an in-depth and wide-ranging analysis of the field. A total of 41 articles are present in cluster 1, while cluster 2 has 25 articles. Cluster 3 has 71 documents. Finally, 17 articles are present in cluster 4. Therefore, considering the number to be high for an in-depth analysis of all the articles, the choice for analysis was to analyze the first five articles with the highest number of citations in each cluster, i.e. the most relevant articles by number of citations in each cluster described above. In the second stage of selection, a panel of judges (researchers on the themes of retail agglomeration and its implications for local attractiveness and neighborhood impacts) was applied, based on the titles, keywords and abstracts to define the final sample. Based on reading the content of the final articles selected after analysis by the judges, it was possible to highlight the theoretical bases, research designs, main variables and main results of the articles. Thus, the analysis of the main articles associated with the interaction between retail agglomeration, gentrification and spatial aspects of urban renewal allowed for the presentation of a research agenda. The content of the in-depth analysis is summarized in APPENDIX 1. (APPENDIX 1)

4. Conclusion

The analysis of the articles presented reveals a significant interconnection between retail, gentrification and urban renaissance, highlighting how these phenomena shape social and economic dynamics in contemporary cities. Firstly, the relationship between ethnic retail and gentrification is a recurring theme, where ethnic retail not only contributes to local economic vitality, but also faces threats due to urban renewal policies that can lead to the displacement of communities. Research on ethnic retail in Helsinki, for example, illustrates how gentrification can impact community diversity and innovation, while highlighting the importance of social capital and the creative use of abandoned spaces to create vibrant community centers. In addition, gentrification is a crucial factor influencing urban renaissance, especially in central areas of cities. The study on urban renaissance in America emphasizes the role of young people with higher education as agents of change, whose preferences for high services and amenities contribute to rising property values and the transformation of neighborhoods. This dynamic is reinforced by an analysis of how changes in retail amenities affect residential location choices, showing that gentrification is not only an economic process, but also a social one that alters the demographic and cultural composition of urban areas.

Thus, there are groups of subjects that can be identified from the analysis of the articles: (1) retail and gentrification: relationship between ethnic retail and gentrification, impact of retail on community diversity, threats to retail due to urban renewal policies; (2) urban renaissance: role of college-educated youth in urban renaissance, preferences for high services and amenities. (3) changes in retail amenities: influence of retail amenities on residential location choices, effects of changes in density and diversity of amenities; (4) urban economic resilience: factors influencing economic recovery in crisis contexts; (5) social and spatial dynamics: effects of gentrification on social interactions and demographic composition, spatial changes and their impact on local economic development; (6) public policies and urban planning: need to consider food access and retail location in urban planning, implications of public policies for urban retail retention and growth.

These groups of subjects reflect the complex interactions between retail, gentrification and urban development, offering a comprehensive view of contemporary dynamics in cities. The interdependence between these elements suggests that transformations in urban space do not occur in isolation, but are influenced by a range of social, economic and cultural factors.

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APPENDIX 1 - FRAME 1 - Final analysis articles

Cluster	Artigo	Implications and connection with the study themes	Methods used	Variables used
1	Urban Revival in America (2020)	- The study identifies young, college-educated individuals who drive urban renaissance; Non-retail services are crucial to understanding urban renaissance trends; Rising amenity values contribute significantly to downtown gentrification; Changes in retail amenities influence residential location choices; Urban renaissance correlates with reduced urban crime rates; The study highlights spatial changes in amenity density and diversity.	 The study uses inverse Herfindahl indices for amenity diversity. Market shares are calculated within a 50-mile radius. CES weights are applied to restaurant and retail prices. Transportation costs are based on a value of \$12 per hour. Robustness checks are carried out for different specifications. 	- The article focuses on variables that contribute to urban renaissance, specifically those that young graduates prefer and are prevalent in the city center It emphasizes the importance of positive regression coefficients for young university students and negative downtown gradients for these variables.
1	History to eat. The foodification of the historic centre of Florence (2020)	 The study highlights the role of foodification in urban transformation. Food leads to the gentrification of retail in historic centers. This results in the displacement of local businesses. Central areas become focused on consumption, neglecting the needs of residents. The retail landscape becomes standardized towards food-oriented activities. Policies are needed to manage the negative impacts of tourism. Food exacerbates socio-spatial segregation in urban areas. 	 - Empirical research carried out between 2016 and 2018. - Mapped outdoor eating spaces and catering activities. - Sample survey of 237 catering companies using a standard questionnaire. - Data analyzed to obtain quantitative and qualitative insights. 	- The article identifies three main characteristics of food: the expansion of restaurant activities, the replacement of pre-existing retail businesses and the targeting of food-related activities to meet various types of tourist demand It also discusses the impact of tourism on the commercial fabric and transformation of Florence's historic center, highlighting the relationship between the gentrification of tourism and the restaurant sector.
1	Spatial Evolution and Critical Factors of Urban Innovation: Evidence from Shanghai, China (2020)	 The study highlights the spatial concentration patterns of urban innovation. This suggests that innovation influences urban development and economic resilience. Gentrification can arise from increased innovation and investment in areas. Retail dynamics can change due to economic changes driven by innovation. Spatial changes reflect the evolving needs of innovative activities. Understanding these factors aids urban planning and policymaking. 	 Geocoding patent data using Baidu's map geocoding API. Hot spot analysis with Getis-Ord (Gi) statistics. Calculation of the Gini coefficient to measure spatial concentration. Log-linear least squares regression for growth rate analysis. 	 The dependent variables include the innovation output of companies, individuals, universities and authorities, measured by the total number of patents. The independent variables consist of resident population, migrants, public budget expenditure, gross industrial production, green space area and technology funding from ST commissions and local authorities.
1	Places of Phygital Shopping Experiences? The New Supply Frontier of Business Improvement Districts in the Digital Age (2021)	 The study highlights the role of BIDs in urban revitalization efforts. BIDs adapt strategies to meet the challenges of gentrification and retail. They improve local governance through community-based decision-making. BIDs influence spatial changes in commercial districts and urban landscapes. The results suggest the need for inclusive urban planning practices. 	 The exploratory sequential research project was implemented. A qualitative thematic analysis of the business plans of 72 BIDs was carried out. The hybrid coding approach was used for data analysis. MaxQDA2020 software was used to organize and analyze data. Peer debriefing meetings ensured data validation and curation. 	- The article identifies several key variables, including digital presence and marketing, lobbying, advocacy and business support, marketing and branding to consumers and locals, capital improvements, security and cleanliness, maintenance and environmental sustainability These variables reflect the key placemaking services provided by former UK BIDs over time.

2	Spatial dynamics of long- term urban retail decline in three transatlantic cities (2020)	-The study highlights the spatial patterns of retail decline in urban areasIt informs public policy on urban retail retention and growthRetail closures are related to socio-economic change and urban renewalGentrification can exacerbate retail decline in vulnerable neighborhoods.	-Self-constructed dataset of store locations and closures over a century. Statistical analysis using simple line regression and panel regression. Spatial autoregressive probit models for closure probability analysis. Centrality, connectivity and agglomeration metrics calculated for stores. Angular analysis for street segment connectivity and choice values.	-The article uses three main variables: centrality (distance from the retail center of gravity), connectivity (street connectivity value) and agglomeration (number of neighboring stores within 50 m)In addition, it incorporates categorical variables to differentiate between various types of retail business.
2	Which commercial sectors coagglomerate with the accommodation industry? Evidence from Barcelona (2021)	-The study identifies commercial sectors around lodging establishmentsIt highlights the impact of tourism on local commercial structuresThe findings can inform policies to preserve neighborhood identitiesIt connects tourism development with retail gentrification processesThe research assists in monitoring tourism-led commercial changesIt suggests a census for urban commercial structuresThe results can predict touristification in residential areas.	-The study applied the Ellison and Glaeser coagglomeration indexThe analysis used data from the Barcelona Commercial Census for empirical identificationBootstrap methods assessed the statistical significance of the coagglomeration estimates.	-The article identifies the commercial sectors as the primary variable, focusing specifically on those that cluster with the lodging industryIt also considers residents' perceptions of tourist activity and its impacts as a significant variable.
2	In the blind spot: ethnic retailing in Helsinki and the spontaneous placemaking of abandoned spaces (2021)	-The study highlights the role of ethnic retail in creating urban placesGentrification threatens ethnic retail and community diversity. Urban renewal policies can lead to the displacement of ethnic businessesEthnic retail contributes to local economic vitality and innovation. The decline of small retail affects public life and livabilityThe spontaneous development of ethnic retail contrasts with planned urban renewal effortsRent differentials create opportunities for ethnic retail in vacant spaces.	-Reviewed Helsinki city planning documentsConducted semi-structured interviews with ethnic developers and plannersEngaged in casual discussions with clientsConducted field observations in shopping centers.	-The article discusses variables related to ethnic retail, including the clustering of intercultural entrepreneurship and the role of the use of space in the creation of placesIt also highlights the importance of spontaneity, social capital and the transformation of abandoned spaces into vibrant community centers.
2	Transitional Spatial Structure with Development of Economic Clusters: The Case of Beijing (2020)	-The study highlights urban restructuring in transition economiesEconomic clusters influence spatial distribution and urban dynamicsGentrification can arise from the growth of the service economy and spatial changesRetail development is linked to emerging economic clusters and urban centersSpatial planning affects local economies and community interactions.	mappingInput-output (I-O) data was analyzed for industrial linkagesEmployment data was aggregated to explore spatial patternsExploratory factor analysis (EFA) measured intersectoral relationships.	industrial restructuring and urban spatial transformation in Beijing, focusing on economic clusters and their contributions to the local economyEmployment data, industrial linkages and percentages of economic output were also key
3	Housing, urban growth and inequalities: The limits to deregulation and upzoning in reducing economic and spatial inequality (2020)	-The study criticizes the impact of housing deregulation on gentrificationUpzoning generally displaces low-income families in desirable areasGentrification leads to higher rents for poorer residentsHousing policies reinforce income inequality rather than alleviating itChanges in retail reflect changes in demographics due to gentrificationChanges in space result from competition for central urban locations.	-The research criticizes the "housing as opportunity" school of thoughtIt analyzes the relationship between housing regulation and economic factorsThe study examines urban productivity and the influences of income on migration. The study highlights urban restructuring in economies in transitionEconomic clusters influence spatial distribution and urban dynamicsGentrification can arise from the growth of the service economy and spatial changes.	-The article discusses variables related to housing regulation, economic growth, population mobility and income inequalityIt emphasizes the relationship between city size, urban population growth and economic performance, while considering the geography of employment and the dynamics of housing supply.

		-Lower-skilled workers face longer commutes and higher transportation costsGentrification alters neighborhood dynamics and local business scenes.	-Retail development is linked to emerging economic clusters and urban centers.	
3	Gentrification and the Increasing Significance of Racial Transition in New York City 1970–2010 (2020)	-The study highlights the spatial manifestation of economic inequality through gentrificationChanges in racial composition correlate with the pace of gentrification over timeThe decline of black and Latino residents signals a change in the character of the neighborhoodRetail dynamics change as gentrification progresses in neighborhoodsGentrification affects housing ownership structures, increasing owner-occupancy rates.	-It used a balanced panel of census and retail dataDeveloped a gentrification construct for analysisConducted difference of means tests for the significance of racial transitionEmployed regression analysis to evaluate the effects of racial transition.	-The article uses three variables to construct the gentrification index: the share of residents with higher education, the share of newcomers to the neighborhood and the share of owner-occupied housing units. -These variables represent the social, economic and spatial dimensions of gentrification processes.
4	Mega-retail-led regeneration in the shrinking city: Panacea or placebo? (2020)	-The study highlights the double impact of mega-retail on urban environmentsIt links changes in retail to gentrification in smaller and smaller citiesRetail diversification can occur due to new social classesUrban regeneration can lead to functional polarization in citiesNegative side effects include the displacement of local businessesEvidence of impacts at micro-spatial levels is limitedThe study emphasizes the need for detailed empirical evaluations.	-The main method used was household observation researchData was collected in 2006, 2011 and 2016The retail units were mapped for analysis.	-The article identifies variables related to retail structure, including the variety of retail services, the total number of retail units, displacement effects, commercial detour effects and the transformation of retail units into gastronomy. -It also assesses changes in retail viability and the coupling effect between the NKSC and neighboring areas.
4	Research on the relationship between Urban economic development level and urban spatial structure—A case study of two Chinese cities (2020)	-The study informs urban planning and construction strategiesIt highlights the importance of urban spatial structure in developmentUrban centers drive economic growth and attract activityGentrification can arise from the increased attractiveness of the urban centerRetail dynamics change with changes in urban spatial structureSpatial changes influence local economic development and community interactions.	-The structure for identifying points of interest (POI) was builtGeographically weighted regression (GWR) analysis was conductedUrban spatial structure identified using point density mapsDensity differences determine urban centers based on specific boundariesSpatial statistical analysis methods were used to assess correlation.	-The study identifies urban spatial structure and explores the spatial connection between spatial structure and the level of development of the urban economy as its main variables. - It uses GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as a basic indicator of macroeconomic development to assess urban economic levels.
4	The work of foodification: an analysis of food gentrification in Turin, Italy (2021)	-The study highlights the role of food in the dynamics of retail gentrification. Food creates an 'atmosphere of displacement' in urban spaces. Retail spaces are crucial in urban transformation processes. Gentrification leads to the erosion of social networks between long-time residents. Distinction through food influences consumer behavior and urban identity. Emerging food spatialities contribute to neighborhood displacement pressures.	 The article analyzes the gentrification of food through three elements: discourse, materialities and practices. The empirical data is drawn from Porta Palazzo, Turin's historic market. The study examines the spatialities of food consumption and its impacts. It explores the relationship between food spaces and urban transformations. 	-The article identifies three constitutive elements of 'food work': discourse, materialities and practicesThese elements contribute to the analysis of the dynamics of food gentrification in the context of Turin's retail scene.

Source: Own authors (2024)