

IMPACT OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS ON PARAMETERS OF SAFETY PERCEPTION IN KADIKOY

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Abstract: *In the last decade, propelled by state support, urban transformation initiatives have gained momentum in specific areas of Istanbul in response to the challenges posed by population growth and irregular urbanization trends. These endeavors have led to diverse social, economic, and cultural shifts within these regions. However, despite the impact of changing living arrangements with urban transformation on some social perceptions, the number of studies focusing on individuals' evaluations of security, which is a basic criterion in determining living space, is quite low. Furthermore, while a comprehensive examination of the region concerning aspects such as health and education facilities, parks and green space regulations is crucial for the effective implementation of urban transformation, studies addressing these facets remain insufficient. According to the findings, the urban transformation zones within the Kadiköy district, wherein security, health, education, recreational spaces, and traffic regulations were predominantly characterized as 'completely insufficient' or 'insufficient' prior to the urban transformation, exhibited a shift towards being perceived as 'completely sufficient' or 'sufficient' following the urban transformation. Nevertheless, it is recommended that subsequent studies, encompassing diverse regions and larger sample sizes, should be routinely conducted post on-site transformation projects. This practice is essential to ensure the alignment of the expectations of residents in the evolving region after urban transformation with the actual conditions in their residing area. Such studies can unveil latent factors that warrant prioritization in future projects and contribute to mitigating the economic and social burdens associated with transformation.*

Keywords: *urban transformation, Kadikoy, Istanbul, security, urbanization*

1. INTRODUCTION

When urban transformation theory is examined in terms of its limitations, comprehensiveness and holistic approach, it is seen that an emphasis is placed on an integrated framework in which the physical, social and economic dimensions of urban transformation are at the forefront. This framework also includes the environmental dimension, which is becoming increasingly critical. However, it is not known whether these dimensions mentioned in the inclusivity of urban transformation in theory are comprehensive enough in practice. This inclusive approach not only expands the theoretical boundaries of urban transformation but also enhances its practical utility in addressing contemporary urban challenges, thus promoting more sustainable and resilient urban development practices (Turk, Tarakci and Gürsoy 2016; Bülbül Akin and Türkün 2019).

In the last decade, urban transformation projects have accelerated with state support in response to population growth and irregular urbanization trends in certain regions of Istanbul. These projects have caused various social, economic, and cultural changes in these regions. Significantly, public participation in government-led initiatives has been limited, compelling residents to adapt their living spaces to the outcomes of these efforts (Gün, Pak and Demir 2021; Haksever and Çitak 2019).

However, despite the impact of changing living arrangements with urban transformation on some social perceptions, the number of studies focusing on individuals' evaluations of security, which is a basic criterion in determining living space, is quite low. In addition, while examining the area in terms of health, education, green areas and traffic regulations with the focus of urban transformation is very essential for the healthy execution of the transformation, studies are insufficient in this regard.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study investigates the correlation between the urban transformation process, driven by evolving demands and requirements, and the social security framework in Kadıköy, Istanbul. Kadıköy Fikirtepe, prominently featured in recent urban transformation projects, is situated within the administrative boundaries of the Kadıköy district on the Anatolian side of Istanbul. The northern part of this area is intersected by the prominent D-100 (E5) State Highway and holds a strategically significant position due to its proximity to the Bosphorus Bridge on the Anatolian Side.

Consequently, its vicinity to workplaces attracts individuals, leading to irregular settlement patterns in the region. Furthermore, the elevated crime rate in Fikirtepe presents an opportunity to examine the shift in security perceptions resulting from urban transformation.

In this research, a survey was conducted on a sample of 60 individuals, representing diverse demographic attributes such as gender, age, education level, marital status, and monthly income, within the Kadıköy district. Participants were queried about their perspectives on the enhancement of security, health, education, green spaces resources perception following urban transformation in Kadıköy, utilizing a five-point evaluative scale (ranging from 'completely inadequate' to 'completely adequate'). The distribution of responses for each parameter was statistically analyzed using GraphPad Prism 9.

3. RESULTS

According to the findings, the urban transformation zones within the Kadıköy district, wherein security, health, education, recreational spaces, and traffic regulations were predominantly characterized as 'completely insufficient' or 'insufficient' prior to the urban transformation, exhibited a shift towards being perceived as 'completely sufficient' or 'sufficient' following the urban transformation.

3.1. Demographics

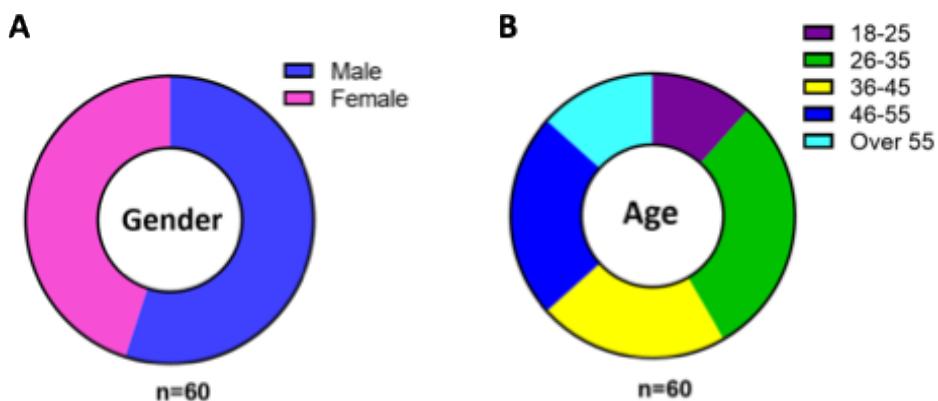


Fig. 1. Demographic breakdown of survey respondents by gender (A) and age (B)



Fig. 2. Demographic breakdown of survey respondents by marital status (C) and education (D)

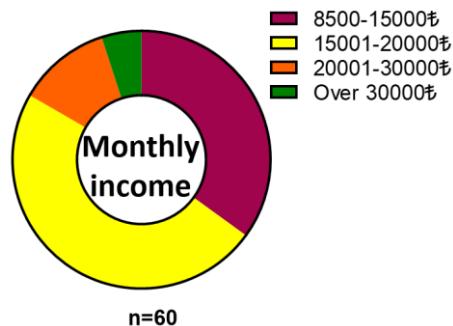


Fig. 3. Demographic breakdown of survey respondents by monthly income

3.2. Times of being in the area

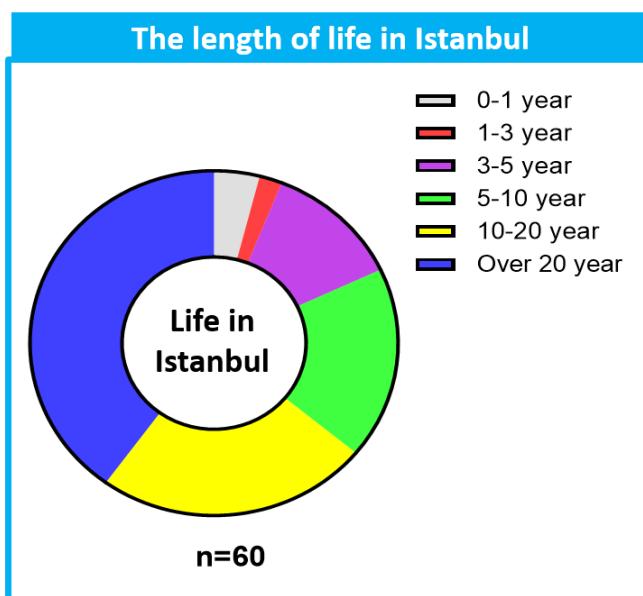


Fig. 4. Length of Life for Survey Respondents in Istanbul.

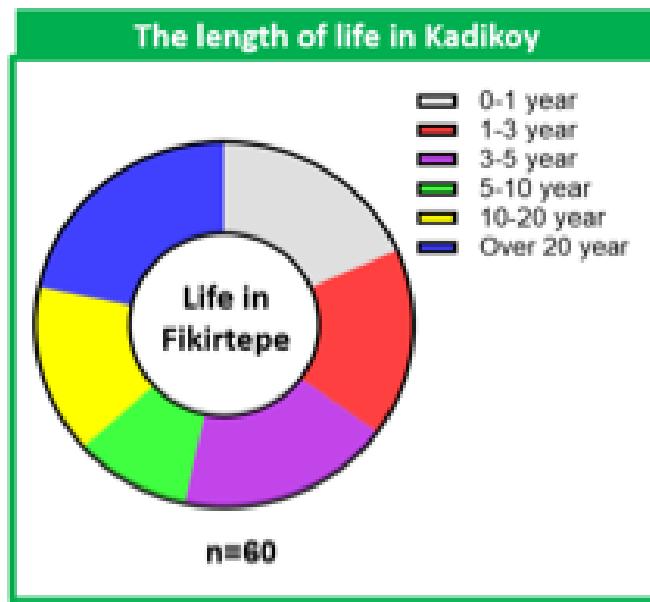


Fig. 5. Length of Life for Survey Respondents in Kadikoy

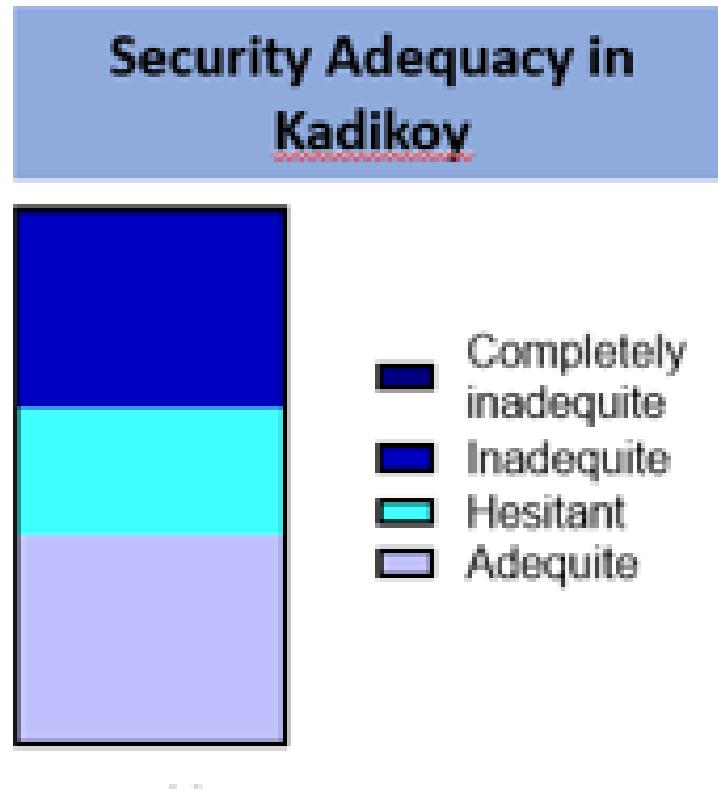


Fig. 6. Security adequacy in Kadikoy

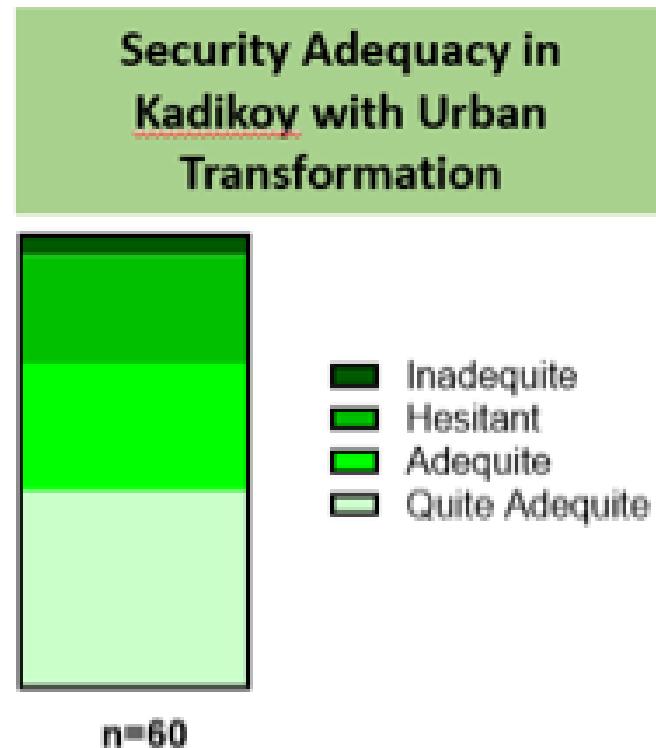


Fig. 7. Security adequacy in Kadikoy with urban transformation

According to the findings, Kadikoy district, where security was evaluated as 'inadequate' (35.59%) or 'hesitant' (23.73%) before urban transformation, was evaluated as 'adequate' (28.26%) or 'completely adequate' (43.48%) after urban transformation.

4. DISCUSSION

The examination of urban transformation theory reveals a comprehensive and holistic approach that emphasizes an integrated framework, giving precedence to the physical, social, economic, and increasingly critical environmental dimensions (Turk, Tarakci and Gürsoy 2016; Bülbül Akin and Türkün 2019). This inclusive perspective aims to broaden the theoretical boundaries of urban transformation and enhance its practical utility in addressing contemporary urban challenges. However, the application of these dimensions in practice remains a question, as their comprehensive implementation is not clearly demonstrated.

Over the last decade, Istanbul has witnessed a surge in urban transformation initiatives, spurred by state support to address population growth and irregular urbanization trends. These projects have brought about significant social, economic, and cultural changes in specific regions, notably Kadıköy. Public participation in these government-led endeavors has been limited,

necessitating residents to adapt their living spaces to the outcomes (Altan and Abuawad 2016; Haksever and Çitak 2019; Gün, Pak and Demir 2021).

Despite the transformative effects of urban projects on living arrangements and social dynamics, there is a noticeable scarcity of studies focusing on individuals' evaluations of security. Security, a fundamental criterion in determining living space, has not received sufficient attention. Additionally, broader examinations related to health, education, green spaces, and traffic regulations within the scope of urban transformation are deemed essential for the healthy execution of projects. However, existing studies in this realm are insufficient.

This study delves into the correlation between the urban transformation process and the social security framework in Kadıköy, specifically focusing on the Fikirtepe region. Fikirtepe, a significant area in recent urban transformation projects, has strategic importance due to its proximity to major highways and the Bosphorus Bridge. The region's appeal for settlements, coupled with a heightened crime rate, offers a unique context to examine shifts in security perceptions resulting from urban transformation.

The survey results indicate a positive transformation in security perceptions following urban initiatives in Kadıköy. Areas previously characterized as 'insufficient' in terms of security, health, education, recreational spaces, and traffic regulations exhibited a notable shift towards being perceived as 'sufficient' or 'completely sufficient' post-urban transformation.

While acknowledging the positive impact observed, it is recommended that future studies adopt a broader scope, encompassing diverse regions and larger sample sizes. These studies are crucial to ensuring that resident expectations align with the actual conditions post-urban transformation. Such comprehensive investigations can uncover latent factors requiring prioritization in future projects, contributing to the alleviation of economic and social burdens associated with transformations.

In conclusion, the findings from this study shed light on the transformative effects of urban initiatives in Kadıköy, underscoring the need for continued research to better understand the multifaceted impacts of urban transformations on societal perceptions and well-being.

5. CONCLUSION

Consequently, it has been ascertained that the perception of security underwent a positive transformation in Kadıköy with the implementation of urban initiatives. Nevertheless, it is recommended that subsequent studies, encompassing diverse regions and larger sample sizes,

should be routinely conducted after the transformation projects. This practice is essential to ensure the alignment of the expectations of residents in the evolving region after urban transformation with the actual conditions in their residing area. Such studies can unveil latent factors that warrant prioritization in future projects and contribute to mitigating the economic and social burdens associated with transformation.

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