

URBAN IDENTITIES DISSOLVING INTO THE CHANGING CONSUMPTION CULTURE¹

KADRIYE (DENİZ) TOPÇU, PROF. DR. S. GUVEN BILSEL

Address: Selcuk Univ. Faculty of Eng&Architecture, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Campus, Konya/Turkey.
e-mail: denizk@selcuk.edu.tr, guvenbilisel@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In recent periods, urban projects which will improve the competitiveness of cities against the others in becoming a leading player and attracting international capital have been given priority. In these projects one of the main uses of space is shopping malls, places which guide the spatial development of cities, help the districts in which they are located become display areas and also aim to create an urban image. It has become difficult to define the spaces where these malls have built as distinctive, defined and meaningful spaces. In addition to this it can be said that shopping malls, which are small city models in themselves, have become so successful today that they have almost superseded the traditional and today's city markets as essential units of urban life and also become a part of the images (!) of the cities. These "new fashion habits", shopping malls, have caused the problem that traditional city markets, the important cores, which usually constitute the identity, personality of cities and sustain the "memory of the place" have started to lose their former importance, functions and become uncared and neglected areas. For developing alternative shopping spaces and preventing shopping mall flow some streets were pedestrianised. From this point of view the aim of the study is to perform a comparative evaluation of different kinds of shopping spaces (shopping malls, traditional city markets and pedestrianised shopping streets) in terms of social, functional and visual/aesthetic quality indicators and investigate the role of spatial quality in using these shopping spaces. According to this aim, Konya Traditional Market, Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street and Kulesite Shopping Mall located in the city of Konya were selected as the sampling areas and a total of 108 questionnaires were applied within the scope of this study. The results obtained from the questionnaires were evaluated by using the multivariate statistical analysis. In conclusion, some suggestions relating to sample areas were made to increase the success of these spaces.

INTRODUCTION

¹ This study includes the results of the pilot study of first author's Phd thesis which was conducted in 2010.

It is observed that, with the influence of globalization, competition is increasing day by day among the cities which struggle to maintain their existence in the race for being a world city. Several different characteristics, identities, personality and originality of cities are important values that increase their competitive power (Dündar, 2002). The concept of “space”, which can be defined as an area of social change and transformation or the “place” where beliefs, wishes and desires are focused on and social relations are shaped, gains different identities and images as the result of the changing demands in this competitive atmosphere of our day (Bilsel, 1999).

Together with the new developments in the process of capital accumulation, cities have transformed from being old places of production into being places of consumption in which the services sector has found a place for itself. The change and formalization of social relations has resulted in a change in the meaning of “place” in social life. The floating capital, in other words, “*urban entrepreneurship*” looking for a suitable place to settle in urban space has led to the emergence of concepts such as “*competing areas*” and selling the image of “place” for the purpose of “*visual consumption*” (Albrechts, 1991; Harvey, 1997; Bilsel, 1999). In recent periods, urban projects which will improve the competitiveness of cities against the others in becoming a leading player and attracting international capital have been given priority. In these projects one of the main uses of space is shopping malls, places which guide the spatial development of cities, help the districts in which they are located become display areas and also aim to create an urban image.

Shopping has been a social and urban activity, which has continually been the main socialisation device throughout the ages. Shopping places of traditional town centers not only set stage for social interactions, but also strengthen the communication among people, maintain their togetherness, meet their socio-cultural, economic and psychological needs and are the most significant parts of town centers because of various activities they accommodate, and they also created unique social environments (such as agora, forum, medieval square, covered bazaar, ‘khan’, ‘arasta’ and ‘bedesten’) (Birol, 2003). However, today, it is observed that traditional shopping places in town centres which usually constitute the identity, personality of cities and sustain the “*memory of the place*” have started to lose their former importance, functions, morphological features (Trancik, 1986) and become uncared and neglected areas by the reason of shopping malls usually. For developing alternative shopping spaces and preventing shopping mall flow some streets were pedestrianised.

Shopping spaces can be categorised in accordance with formation and development at three main title;

- Constant or temporary shopping districts in urban space that is formed and developed in the course of time (i.e. weekly or constant bazaars, ***traditional markets***, contemporary ***shopping streets with shops, department stores, etc.***)
- Organic articulated units with naturally formed and developed markets and/or additive units that has been the part of this whole (i.e. ‘khan’- ‘arasta’- ‘bedesten’, ***covered markets, passages***)

- Units in building scale that programmed and designed for shopping center (i.e. *big department stores, supermarkets, hipermarkets, multi-storey markets and shopping malls*).

Taking the problem defined above as a starting point, in this paper, the aim is to analyse different types of shopping spaces (*traditional markets, pedestrianised shopping street and shopping malls*) through the spatial quality indicators (*social, functional and visual-aesthetic*) comparatively. In this scope appropriate shopping spaces that fit these types in Konya/Turkey were selected as sample areas. These are *Konya traditional market, Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street and Kulesite Shopping Mall*. A total of 108 questionnaires were applied within the scope of the study to measure the quality levels.

CHANGING CONSUMPTION CULTURE AND SHOPPING SPACES

Shopping spaces have an approximately two thousand years of history. Shopping space is a form which encompasses social, economic and cultural knowledge; is shaped in parallel to the technologic and social changes and finally becomes an important component of the urban morphology (Batı 2007).

The first known shopping activities goes back to Egypt-Hittite period. In this period shopping activity had been made in open spaces around the temples which were the attraction places for society. The first planned shopping spaces began with the '*Agoras*' in Ancient Greek-Hellenistic period and the '*Forums*' in Roman era (Packer 1997; Batı 2007) and continued with the "*Trajan bazaars*" comprising 150 shops and a multi-storey architecture in Rome in 2.century B.C. In the Medieval Ages (5-15th century) and Renaissance-Baroque period (15-17.century) this concept has evolved into market areas in western cities. In this period, it was observed that in eastern cities there was a strong '*souk*' ('*çarşı*' in Turkish) impact supported with the formations such as '*khan*'-'*bedesten*'-'*arasta*', covered bazaar etc. In the Age of Enlightenment (18. and 19. centuries) small shops began to be replaced by large stores. Then the character of shopping spaces changed with the effects of display windows (*vitrines*) (Sennett, 1990; Dündar, 2002).

In 1950s and 1960s, after the excessive trend in the modern mass production firstly in the USA and then in Western Europe, global capitalism began to have a greater need for consumption activities. The activities to increase consumption gradually became systematic and professional and mass consumption entered into a significant development process (Bocock, 1997). In this period, shopping malls have been the leading consumption tool in mass consumption.

Since these centers reached a saturation point in terms of market capacity, force the investors to seek new markets. Being quite new in this process, Turkey has been a large market for domestic and foreign investors. The results of the neoliberal policies in 1980 and the reflections of liberation of foreign capital investments began to be observed in the early 1990s and after Galleria Shopping Mall was opened in Istanbul in 1988, there was a boost in construction of shopping malls in Turkey in the following 10 years particularly in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana, Antalya, Bursa and other cities.

URBAN TRANSFORMATION: Controversies, Contrasts and Challenges

The shopping mall is a part of the recent transformations of the Turkish urban lifestyle. The consumption habits of people were changed in the course of time. Increasing the quality of commodities with increasing population and earnings, increasing private transportation and inadequate mass transportation, credit card system, development of payment methods (installments), modernised advertisement opportunities, easy communication and increasing of demands are the evident reasons of the changing shopping phenomenon and spaces.

Together with the increase of shopping mall numbers after 1960s, alternative spaces for shopping streets came into being to cope with these centers. Hereupon, many shopping street were pedestrianised. Then the efforts to beautification of pedestrian axes, build up variety of functions and escape from monotony have been started (Dökmeci, 1990).

Konya began to experience the process of change and transformation through globalization from the 1990s. Shopping malls which were opened one after another brought important changes in the urban identity and spatial characteristics. After the opening of these centers, environmental transformation process in the environs of these centers gained impetus in the short term; residential areas began to be re-structured and these centers, in one sense, served as a catalyst accelerating the change and transformation process (Topçu et al. 2008).

In the last 10 years, a total of 5 shopping malls were opened in Konya city; Afra S.M.(Shopping Mall) (1998), Masera S.M. (2002), M1 Tepe Real S.M (2003), Kulesite S.M (2004) and Kipa S.M (2006). In addition to these centers Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street in Konya was pedestrianised in 2005.

Many of these shopping malls are discrete architectural solutions. However, their results affect the planning system/urban design processes and urban space quality directly. In addition to this, today, traditional shopping places of cities are losing their former historical importance and becoming dilapidated places mainly through the shopping malls. Therefore we believe that it is necessary to study these shopping spaces which have a great impact on city development in terms of space quality context.

URBAN SPACE QUALITY AND ITS INDICATORS

Urban space quality (USQ) concept, first of all, is related with whether the space meets the human basic needs or not. If the urban space meets the needs of the user, it can be said that space has more qualitative properties (Gülersoy et.al., 2005). USQ concept has a great importance in preserving and perpetuating the urban identity and meaning of the space.

Over the years, there has been a debate amongst urban designers over what constitutes urban space quality. While Cullen (1961) analysing spatial quality with *physical aspects*, Alexander (1979) and Lynch (1960) stressing the *psychology of place* and analysing spatial quality concept with psychological aspects such as *feeling safe, comfortable, vibrant, quiet or threatening* etc (Lynch, 1960; Alexander, 1979; Montgomery,1998). John Montgomery (1998) indicates that there are many physical elements which, if combined properly

with each other and with the psychology of place, produce urban quality. *Architectural form, scale, landmarks, vistas, meeting places, open spaces and greenings* are important quality indicators according to him. He classifies urban quality indicators in three dimensions (*social, psychological and cultural dimensions*) and indicates that successful urban places must combine quality in three essential elements: *physical space, the sensory experience and activity* (Montgomery, 1998). Jacobs (1961) emphasizes *activity* as an important factor which both produces and mirrors quality in the built environment. She identifies four essential determinants; *a mixture of primary use, intensity, permeability of the urban form and a mixture of building types, ages, sizes and conditions*. Mazumdar (2003) highlights the “*sense of place*” concept in his paper. He touches on the importance of local community culture, sense of community, space identity and thinking human and space together. According to him if people can bond with, feel attachment to, identify with, remember and miss the space, it can be said that the space has quality. Jacobs and Appleyard (1987) explain *liveability, identity and control, accessibility, authenticity, public life, urban self-reliance and environment for all* concepts in the context of urban quality. Tekeli (2004) cited the quality indicators as *liveability, appropriate to its function, easy legible, visual satisfaction, lay on meaning with connotative perception, equilibrium of private and public spaces and applicability*. Rapoport (1977) analyses environmental quality indicators with 2 title; physical indicators (*general view of the environment, architectural style, diversity, richness, symbolic qualities, identity, relation with nature, scenery, density, topography, level of noise, accessibility, repair and maintenance*) and social indicators (*variety and quality of services, criminality rates and security, social properties and composition, environmental prestigious, neighbourhood relations, social homogeneous*).

Gehl (2004) developed pedestrian-oriented approach to analyse the quality of public spaces. He cited relating quality indicators as prestigious, appropriate and not congested walking places, climate comfort, beautiful building frontage characteristics, appropriate conditions for disabled persons and humans with pushchair, good orientation and enlightenment, having urban equipments, social and cultural interactions, not disturbing environment (noise), vitality, security, usage at every time (daytime and night). Gür (1995) lists quality indicators as; safe, healthy, comfortable, useful, well-kept and meaningful. In addition to this, İnceoğlu (2007), in his doctorate thesis, lists the basic quality indicators to produce successful urban spaces in 6 title; comfort & safety for pedestrians and disabled persons, domination by functions (variety of functions), visual simplicity, utilies subordinate, fitting to character & activity (appropriate to local caharacter), ordered for access & storage (appropriate arrangements for accessibility and vehicles). The decisions of using high quality urban equipments, repair and maintenance are important factors for long term quality (Farbstein et.al. 1998).

These qualities cited above can be measured numerically by making inquiries and using various statistical analysis. Measurable physical properties of space and senses/thoughts/expectations of people who gain experiences from urban spaces are important for determining the level of space quality (Gülersoy et.al., 2005) and for making suggestions and developing proposed strategies.

URBAN TRANSFORMATION: Controversies, Contrasts and Challenges

In this context this paper uses some space quality indicators that come from the literature review to compare 3 different shopping spaces and determine the level of space quality of these. Final quality indicators that used in the study are given below (Table 1);

Table 1. Final quality Indicators used in the study

SOCIAL QUALITY INDICATORS	FUNCTIONAL QUALITY INDICATORS	VISUAL/AESTHETIC QUALITY INDICATORS
Environment for all users	Possibility to access	Having an identity, character and sense of "authentic place"
Space to communicate	Diversity of functions	Meaning of space, sense of place
Possibility of socialisation	Having relaxation and entertainment spaces	Belonging to space, place attachment
Vitality and dynamism of space	Level of comfort and being healthy	Historical value
Safety and security of space	Having open and green spaces, their usage and quality	Perceptible environment, openness-being not complicated and flexibility of space
Not including disturbing people	Having urban equipments, their usage and quality	Easy wayfinding, the image of the space
Prestige of space, Indicator of respectability and statute	Having parking lots	Human scale
Being prestigious in its district	Opening and closing hours of activities	Visual harmony, diversity (color, building material etc.)
Diversity of social activities	Easy access to desired things	relation with nature
Ideal space to walk	Possibility to walk and tour easily, having not obstacles Using the space on different times	Visual attraction and space atmosphere.
		Permeability and continuity of space
		Visual accessibility and linkaged spaces,
		Taking precautions from climate (such as sunlights, rain etc.)
		Having artistic objects

METHOD

A total of 108 questionnaire application and *non-parametric multivariate analysis* used as the methods of the study. Within the scope of the study questionnaires were applied to measure users' point of view relating to the satisfaction and qualities of selected areas. In each shopping space (*Konya traditional market, Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street and Kulesite Shopping Mall*) 36 questionnaire was applied. Questionnaire design includes *demographic informations* (gender, age, education, occupation, level of income, native place etc.) and *general questions about social, functional and visual-aesthetic quality* about these types of shopping spaces.

Final quality indicators mentioned above formed the questionnaire design and grading three spaces that selected as sample areas from 1 point to 5 in terms of these indicators gave the level of agreement of users (precisely not agree (1), not agree (2), indecision(3), agree (4) and precisely agree (5)). The datas come from the questionnaire application entered to SPSS 15 package programme. Then first of all we looked the datas whether they were in normal distribution or not. The result showed us that the datas were not in normal distribution. Therefore *non-parametric multivariate analysis* (correlations) was used.

We compared the shopping spaces in two directions. The first direction was the comparison of total social, functional and visual-aesthetic qualities between shopping spaces. And the second was the comparison of shopping spaces in terms of social, functional and visual-aesthetic quality indicator weights.

As a result of applying the correlation analysis, we found *mean values*. In first step, average value of social quality gradings of all of the users' gave us the general level of the social quality in total (108 person) and average value of social quality gradings of users' in each shopping space gave us the social quality level of that shopping space (36 person). This analysis was made not only for social quality group but also for functional and visual-aesthetic quality groups. Level of qualities were measured by the sum of each users' gradings (1 to 5 point) in each quality indicator groups at each shopping spaces and then each quality indicator groups compared with these quality levels both in total and in each shopping space (*i.e. social quality indicators compared with social quality level*). Finally we found the weights of indicators (gamma values) in its own group and in general on these levels. Weight of indicators are in direct proportion with the importance in increasing the quality level.

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Descripton of sample areas

The traditional '*bedesten*' district which located in a central position and majoring in economic activities in boundaries of Konya historical urban core was selected as the first sample area. It has many cultural heritage values that comes from the history and its spatial and functional texture was acquired a shape by these values.

Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street, chosen as the second research area, is located in the downtown of Konya in the west of Alaeddin Hill. It is at a walking distance to the historical district of the city. Having central commercial activities together in this shopping street is the most important factor for city population to use this space especially for shopping.

Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street, having negative environmental conditions like dense traffic complexities, noise pollution etc., is specified as one of the important axes proposed to be pedestrianised inside the Transportation Master Plan prepared for Konya City (Anonymous, 2001). The pedestrianisation decision of Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street in which dense pedestrian movements are found in the pavements and turned into shopping and excursion corridor was taken by Trasportation Coordinating Committee in 13th November 2004. This decision was applied in Summer 2005. Therefore public-private transportation of the area was changed (Topçu et.al., 2007).

And the third one is Kulesite Shopping Mall which selected as sample area. It includes food courts, department stores, hypermarket, cinema, amusement center and etc. same as the other shopping malls. It came into service in 2004 and it located in inner city of Konya (Figure 1).

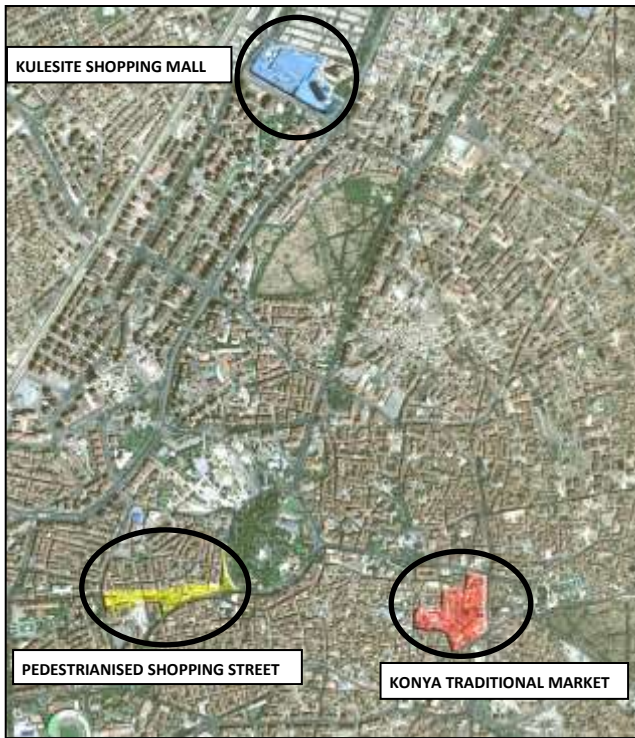


Figure 1. The boundaries of sample areas in Konya

Results of the Questionnaire

By applying the correlation analysis that represented in the method section, it was reached some findings. These findings are given below (Table 2);

Table 2. Comparison of quality levels between selected shopping spaces

Types of shopping spaces	Level of social quality (mean values)	Level of functional quality (mean values)	Level of visual-aesthetic quality (mean values)
Konya Traditional Market	31,55	32	80.94
Kazım Kar. Shopping Street	34,61	42.11	83.97
Kulesite Shopping Mall	35.94	35.08	79.61
Total	34.03	36.39	81.50

The table shows us the comparison of quality levels between shopping spaces. One can see from the table that users evaluated the highest level of social quality in *Kulesite Shopping Mall*, functional and visual/aesthetic quality in Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street in general. In these levels Konya Traditional Market is the worst one (*social quality; 31,55, functional quality; 32*). However, if we thought the level of visual-aesthetic quality Konya Traditional Market is the second one (80.94).

If we look the indicator weights in determining space qualities we can see that *possibility of socialisation (0.729)* is the most important indicator between social indicators. Between functional quality indicators *level of comfort and being healthy (0.803)* is the most important indicator and in visual-aesthetic

indicators, *easy wayfinding, the image of the space (0.701)* is the most important factor in general (Table 3).

When we compare the indicators between shopping spaces, it was seen that the social quality of traditional shopping space has lowest gradings when we compare with the others. Especially *having possibility of socialisation places (0.365)* and *being vital and dynamic space (0.388)* indicators have the lowest score among the others. Having inadequate social activities, being not safe and secure (especially in the evenings, because the shops are closing their shutters), having not enough spaces to communicate with the others (only communication is between shopper and seller), not offering an environment for all users (young people, mothers, children etc.), having not enough open and green spaces are the reasons of this result. However, it is interesting, Kulesite Shopping Mall has the highest scores in terms of social quality. Although it has been offering an artificial environment, the users prefer this space because of finding everything they want to do (shopping, cinema, bowling etc.).

In functional and visual-aesthetic quality group Kazım Karabekir shopping street has the highest gradings mostly. Pedestrianisation application and its urban design project caused this shopping space to be the best in terms of these indicators among the others. Thus it can be said that *design is a critical subject for the success of a place*. But possibility to access indicator in this shopping street has the lowest score (0.246). Vehicular traffic system is a big problem for this space. In visual and aesthetic group Kulesite Shopping Mall has the lowest gradings when we compare with the others. Majority of the users think that this complex has no identity, character, and sense of place (0.129), historical value (0.317) and do not feel any belonging (attachment) (0.283) to this complex. People are going this complex only for activities and shopping (brand stores and hypermarket) because they have no alternative. In according to this, from the results that come from the questionnaire application, the users want to shop firstly in pedestrianised shopping streets, secondly in traditional markets and the last one is shopping malls. The comparisons and indicator weights can be seen in detail at the table below (Table 3).

CONCLUSION

In this paper three different types of shopping spaces in Konya/Turkey were compared in terms of urban space quality (USQ) levels and indicators with the users' point of view. The first one is traditional markets, the most important urban space of cities, have always had a very significant impact on urban structure and townscape, usually constitute the identity, personality of cities and sustain the "*memory of the place*", accommodate many social activities for people to interact with each other. The second one is pedestrianised shopping streets and the third one is shopping malls that guide the spatial development of cities, help the districts in which they are located become display areas and affect the urban planning system and urban space quality also.

The results of the study show that we neglected the traditional market of Konya city substantially. An approach to neglect and ignore the traditional also means to disclaim the past. People and societies exist with their histories. Traditional

markets are the parts of our urban identities. Therefore conserving and sustaining the historical spaces, adapting them to new usage and producing successful shopping spaces are important approaches to understand the city and contact with it. It helps to contribute meanings to our urban life. If the important quality indicators, especially the social and functional cited in the table, improved in this shopping space the people will use that space more and it can be perpetuated (Table 3).

When we look developed Western cities, especially European cities, which attach importance to historical background and culture, we can see many successful shopping spaces. They have many well-conserved and integrated traditional markets. Therefore these cities are generally on the top level of the liveable cities of the world lists. Thus it is important to conserve, vitalize the traditional markets, spaces of communal memory, and benefit from them again.

As can be seen from the study, design is a critical subject for producing urban space quality in shopping spaces (example of Kazım Karabekir shopping street). But this shopping street needs to be improved by social quality indicators to be more successful. In addition, Kulesite Shopping Mall has the lowest gradings in visual-aesthetic quality group (i.e. identity/character or sense of place), when compared with the other shopping spaces. If we still continue to build new shopping malls in Konya city, the city will lose its identity.

In conclusion the shopping spaces are important parts of the cities. They affect the life styles of people, urban planning systems and etc. Thus planners, designers and authorised people have to consider this subject in detail.

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Table 3. Urban Space Quality Indicator weights in shopping spaces

		RESULTS OF THE CORRELATION ANALYSIS (gamma values)			
		Konya Traditional Market	Kazım Karabekir Shopping Street	Kulesite Shopping Mall	GENERAL
SOCIAL QUALITY INDICATORS	Environment for all users	0,297	0,536	0.625	0,482
	Space to communicate	0,404	0.784	0,726	0,636
	Possibility of socialisation	0,365	0,817	0.870	0.729
	Vitality and dynamism of space	0,388	0,531	0.772	0,644
	Safety and security of space	0,513	0,539	0.766	0,670
	Not including disturbing people	0,442	0,264	0.714	0,465
	Prestige of space, Indicator of respectability and statute	0,569	0,632	0.687	0,665
	Being prestigious in its district	0,532	0.738	0,701	0,680
	Diversity of social activities	0,408	0,525	0.717	0,570
	Ideal space to walk	0,680	0,611	0.724	0,698
FUNCTIONAL QUALITY INDICATORS	Possibility to access	0,513	0,246	0.617	0,448
	Diversity of functions	0,578	0,684	0.729	0,697
	Having relaxation and entertainment spaces	0,478	0.592	0,576	0,719
	Level of comfort and being healthy	0,645	0.786	0,413	0.803
	Having open and green spaces, their usage and quality	0,223	0,561	0.682	0,584
	Having urban equipments, their usage and quality	0,438	0.840	0,783	0,754
	Having parking lots	0,538	0.666	0,618	0,707
	Opening-closing hours of activities	0,545	0,652	0.725	0,677
	Easy access to desired things	0,739	0.742	0,692	0,733
	Possibility to walk and tour easily, having not obstacles	0,601	0,527	0.621	0,689
VISUAL-AESTHETIC QUALITY INDICATORS	Having an identity, character and sense of "authentic place"	0.644	0,584	0,129	0,389
	Meaning of space, sense of place	0,479	0.715	0,404	0,512
	Belonging to space	0,324	0.567	0,283	0,330
	Historical value	0.510	0,480	0,317	0,392
	Perceptible environment, openness-being not complicated and flexibility of space	0,467	0.705	0,529	0,554
	Easy wayfinding, the image of the space	0,779	0.819	0,506	0.701
	Easy access to desired spaces	0,652	0.767	0,357	0,622
	Human scale	0.562	0,511	0,413	0,464
	Visual harmony, architectural diversity	0,518	0.628	0,441	0,528
	Relations with nature	0,489	0.568	0,373	0,456
	Aesthetic and attraction	0,501	0.856	0,466	0,659
	Taking precautions from climate (such as sunlights, rain etc.)	0.191	-0,467	-0,266	-0,246
	Having artistic objects	0,055	0.241	0,079	0,143

