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Contents

CONSERVATION OF TRADITIONAL SHOPPING PLACES AS A DEVICE FOR REGENERATION OF A TURKISH TOWN IN RECESSION

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Abstract

The history of shopping has been the history of communal life and of human settlements. Traditional shopping places were vibrant places utilised by all the parties of city. They set a stage for social interactions, and enhance communication. However, social harmony and unity observed in traditional societies have been transformed with socio-economic changes particularly after the Western influences. Consequently, today's shopping places are dislocated towards the outskirts of cities. Thus, town centres are neglected causing them to lose their value as traditional spaces enhancing public interactions, and to dilapidate.

Thus, morphological characteristics that maintain the unity between shopping activity and social fabric in traditional shopping space should urgently be clarified. Then, policies and strategies should be developed to acquire deserved grandeur and authenticity of this heritage. In this study, morphological characteristics required for revitalising traditional shopping spaces of Balıkesir are analysed. Besides, it is aimed to develop contemporary restoration and urban conservation/renewal proposals for rehabilitating the impairment of the unity among *urban space-shopping place-social fabric*. Balıkesir, an important town of Western Anatolia, which was the flagship of industrialisation, modernisation, westernisation and thus regional economic development at the time, is deliberately selected for this case study because it is gradually dissociated from the traditional qualities of 'shopping places with social attributes'. Furthermore, shopping activity and daily life in town centre, displays a chaotic state, which is a typical indicator of both the physical deterioration in urban form and that of the change in public life. Consequently, it is aimed to develop a new methodological basis for formulating cultural and spatial transformation of shopping spaces through time.

The research is conducted in three successive phases; firstly, survey, questionnaire & cognitive mapping, then analysis & evaluation, and finally development of regeneration and intervention proposals. The study is quite significant in the sense that a broad gap in the literature about the commercial centres of Ottoman Empire is filled with the survey and documentation of spatial characteristics in Balıkesir. Furthermore, the results of this study are intended to constitute the principles of future urban-architectural interventions which can bring vivacity to the urban life. Therefore, it is important to analyse the transformation of traditional shopping spaces, and derive coherent spatial and morphological characteristics in order to assert a civilized identity of the 21st century city. It is also significant to direct economic initiatives into appropriate channels as well as to increase public awareness about urban conservation in Balıkesir. Thus, this study is supported by the collaboration of civic institutions like Municipality, Departments of Culture and Public Works, Chamber of Commerce and Balıkesir University Department of Architecture.

Keywords:

Urban, Conservation, Traditional, Shopping Place, Urban-architectural, Morphology, Balikesir,

Introduction

Shopping spaces have always been the very hub of the public realm throughout the ages since the history of shopping has been the history of human settlements and of communal life. Therefore, traditional shopping places have usually been vibrant places, and been utilised by all the parties of city [1]. Shopping places of traditional town centres not only set a

stage for social interactions, but also support and enhance communication amongst the citizens of the city. Nevertheless, conditions and context of the current age displays a totally different character. This state is particularly crucial for traditional societies because they have neither fully appropriated nor benefited from the material conditions of this era yet [2]. Despite, they have to cope with its outcomes at the peril of their traditional values and humane assets. In fact, social harmony and unity once observed in these societies have been transformed with socio-economic changes particularly after the Western influences [3,4]. Consequently, today's shopping places have become quite dislocated towards the outskirts of cities, and thus, town centres have become extremely neglected [5,6,7,8]. Such a level of neglect has inevitably caused these traditional spaces to lose their value as spaces enhancing public interactions, and to dilapidate [9,10,11,12].

Thus, the establishment of morphological characteristics that retain the unity between shopping activity and social fabric in traditional shopping space seems to have gained significance for the professionals and experts in the field of conservation [13,14,15,16, 17,18]. These specialists should develop policies and strategies in order to return the deserved grandeur and authenticity back to this urban-architectural heritage [19,20,21,22,23,24,25]. In this study, morphological characteristics required for revitalising traditional shopping spaces of Balıkesir are analysed [26,27,28,29]. Besides, it is aimed to develop contemporary restoration and urban conservation/renewal proposals [30-42] for rehabilitating the impairment of the once-broken unity among *urban space-shopping place fabric* [43,44,45,46,47]. Balıkesir, that is an important town of Western Anatolia, which was the flagship of industrialisation, modernisation, westernisation and thus regional economic development at the time, is deliberately selected for this case study because it has gradually been dissociated from the traditional qualities of 'shopping places with social attributes'. Furthermore, shopping activity and daily life in the town centre, displays a chaotic state, which is a typical indicator of both the physical deterioration in urban form and that of the change in public life as well as transformation of shopping spaces [48].

It can easily be observed that retail activity has gradually declined in the shopping spaces in the town centre. It seems that this tendency will continue unless various measures are immediately taken. It is assumed that the major driving force behind this ongoing decline may stem from an urban architectural destruction process to a great extent in addition to the impacts of the ongoing economic recession since 1990s. Such a process against prevailing winds of conservation seems to have accelerated diminution of the value and significance of the spatial characteristics of "shopping place with social attributes" that once-existed in traditional shopping areas. Therefore it is intended to establish urban-architectural features that could be required to (re)transform traditional shopping spaces of Balıkesir into active shopping places which can raise the shopping capacity by enhancing social interactions among individuals. Hence, physical and spatial characteristics of the transformation of traditional shopping spaces should be examined in detail.

Along this path, it is aimed to develop a new methodological basis for formulating cultural and spatial transformation of shopping spaces and buildings through time. Therefore, the research is conducted in three successive phases. In the first stage, the survey of existing physical fabric is made through drawings and photographs. In addition, a questionnaire is applied both to the shoppers and retailers, who use the study area, to reveal the impacts of physical transformation of these shopping spaces over their users with particular reference to their shopping preferences/habits and their social interactions throughout their shopping. This questionaire is completed in combination with studies of cognitive mapping and interviews to confirm the results of the questionaire. At the second stage, various townscape and morphological analyses are performed on the visual and written materials obtained from survey, questionaire and mapping phase of the study. Then, the results of these analyses are evaluated in the light of conservation

and townscape theories associated with shopping places and urban realm. At the third and final stage, regeneration and intervention proposals are developed based on the results obtained from these assessments. This paper concentrates on the first two stages of this ongoing study.

The study is quite significant in the sense that a broad gap in the literature about the commercial centres of Ottoman Empire is filled with the survey and documentation of spatial characteristics in Balıkesir. Moreover, this study aims to reveal the urban-architectural problems that are determined to be the reason of the ongoing decline in the shopping activity as well as the suggestions regarding the potential solutions of these problems. Furthermore, the results of this study are intended to constitute the principles of future urban-architectural interventions which can bring vivacity to the urban life and urban spaces.

Therefore, it is important to analyse the transformation of traditional shopping spaces, and derive coherent spatial and morphological characteristics in order to assert civilized character and identity of the 21st century city. It is also significant to direct economic initiatives into appropriate channels as well as to increase public awareness about urban conservation in Balıkesir. Thus, this study is supported by the collaboration of civic institutions like Municipality, Departments of Culture and Public Works, Chamber of Commerce and Balıkesir University Department of Architecture. It is expected that the results and suggestions of this study would be implemented by Balikesir Chamber of Commerce as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) which has the capacity and power to realise the co-ordination of retailing institutions in the study area.

Current State of Shopping Places in Balikesir Town Centre

It is known that an additional factor, as much as the economic one, which influences the capacity and quality of shopping, is the architectural characteristics of the shopping space. Architectural quality of the space immediately establishes an image of the retailer. Moreover, such a physical medium has the capacity for socialisation which has always been associated with shopping.

Today, however, shopping spaces have the tendency to move outside the city leaving the shopping spaces in the town centre with their own destiny. This development usually ends up with the dilapidation of shopping spaces in traditional town centres. These spaces gradually lose their social attributes under the pressure of *vehicular traffic* and *dense urbanisation*. The current state of the town centre in Balikesir can be summarised as below:
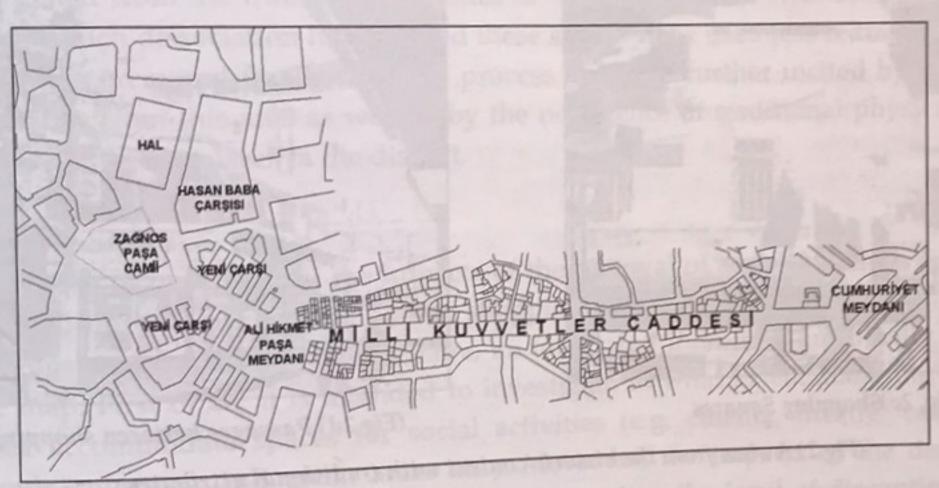
1. Town centre of Balıkesir seems to have become the central business district whose basic function being retail activity. Shopping activity in the town centre is realised in the building types such as multi-storey passages, *isham* or small shops.

2. There is not a building which can be categorised as "shopping centre" with its shops, department stores, and other social functions such as food courts, entertainment etc., although there are a few new initiatives which can be named as "supermarket" in Balikesir outside the town centre.

3. Daily life in the town centre exhibits a chaotic character with various commercial activities performed in buildings that are not pre-designed for specific functions. This chaotic state may be considered a clear indication of both the physical dilapidation of the morphology of the city and, thus, the transformation of citizens' social life.

4. While deterioration in the morphology of urban form manifests itself in form of the deficiency of social activity areas in urban space, the transformation (and depravation) in urban life can be summarised as the abandonment of traditional shopping behaviours and rituals as well as

the tendency of shopping spaces for an irregular spread with a radical break from their own traditionally interwoven web.

Briefly, one cannot fail to notice that shopping spaces in the town centre of Balikesir have been gradually deviating from spatial characteristics and social attributes traditional shopping places, and thus shopping capacity has been profoundly declining in these areas. However, one must also note that it is plausible to conserve and revitalise the public realm in the town while creating profitable shopping spaces at the same time. This can be achieved simply by the rehabilitation of the break in the *unity of urban space - shopping space*.

Definition of the Study Area

The study area is the one which retains the typical characteristics of the commercial district within the urban structure for the last five hundred years. Even, the limited sources point out the fact that there had been quite a vivid commercial activity, particularly during the period stretching from 17th to late-19th century. Today, this area still sustains its commercial function. This area is worth investigating mainly because traditional and contemporary shopping spaces take place together, yet traditional forms of shopping are partially retained. Another criterion for the selection of study area is the potential it carries for higher shopping capacity. Additionally, Milli Kuvvetler Street, which is located as an extension of this traditional district, is included in the study area because this street has been one of the most influential commercial axes since its opening in 1916 (Fig 1).

(Fig. 1) Study area

Study area is defined by Market Hall (hal) in the north, shopping axis in the north extending from Ali Hikmet Pasha Square, part of Anafartalar Street built up after 1950 in the south, and Aygoren Housing District in the west. Milli Kuvvetler Street and shopping units on its both sides constitute the other part of study area. The following commercial building complexes will be examined throughout this study;
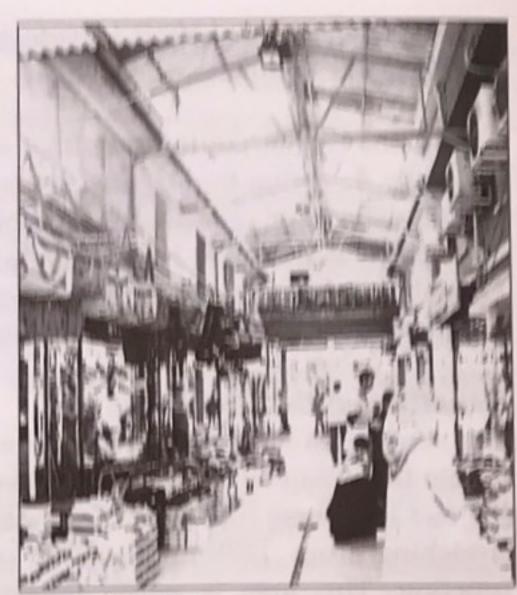
1. Yeni Çarsi (Shopping Arcade),

2. Hasan Baba Çarsısı (Shopping Hall),

3. Shops around these two complexes and those along Milli Kuvvetler Street.

Squares and streets as the components of the urban image of the district still seem to sustain the potential for being a "shopping place with social attributes" with their morphological characteristics (Fig 2), no matter how much their function and forms in the traditional tissue have become nearly unperceivable (Fig 3). Therefore, the measures to increase the commercial potential of these components appear to be essential for the revitalisation of the district.

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(Fig. 2a) Organic fabric of Traditional
Shopping District

(Fig. 2b) Traditional Ways of
Shopping the Streets

(Fig. 2c) Shopping Squares

(Fig 2d) Passages between shopping spaces

(Fig 2) A view from the historic context with traditional attributes

(Fig. 3a) Hasan Baba Building
dominating the historic sacle

(Fig. 3b) Historical Tomb is almost
invisible from the surroundings.

(Fig. 3c) Traditional houses are blocked
by the massive bus stops

(Fig. 3d) Traffic has wiped out
the traditional suare

(Fig. 3) A view from the dilapidated parts of the historic context

The Level of Deviation from the Salient Characteristics of Traditional "Shopping Places with Social Attributes" in the Study Area

It is assumed, in this study, firstly that shopping spaces in Balikesir town centre have gradually been dissociated from the traditional qualities of 'shopping places with social attributes'; and secondly that such dissociation have caused these spaces to be used less reducing the shopping capacity of this area; and finally that this process has been further incited by the removal of social functions from this area as well as by the negligence of traditional physical and spatial continuity of shopping places in the district.
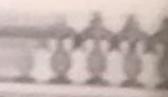
Phases of the Study

For the purpose of revealing; i) the impacts of the removal of social functions from shopping spaces and ii) impacts of discontinuity of shopping spaces, a series of surveys is conducted. This survey is composed of a questionnaire, an integrated interview, and finally drawing of a cognitive map. First of all, it is intended to investigate to what extent shopping spaces in the study area accommodate spaces for social activities (e.g. cinema, theatre, café, restaurant, playgrounds, mosques, and green areas etc.). Moreover, the impacts of the dense vehicular traffic to the shopping activity are examined for revealing the level of discontinuity amongst shopping spaces. It is aimed to put forward how different socio-economic groups perceive and utilise shopping spaces along the two axes of investigation. Therefore, the answers of different social groups (i.e. according to age, education, occupation, income, and reading and TV habits etc.) are cross- evaluated.
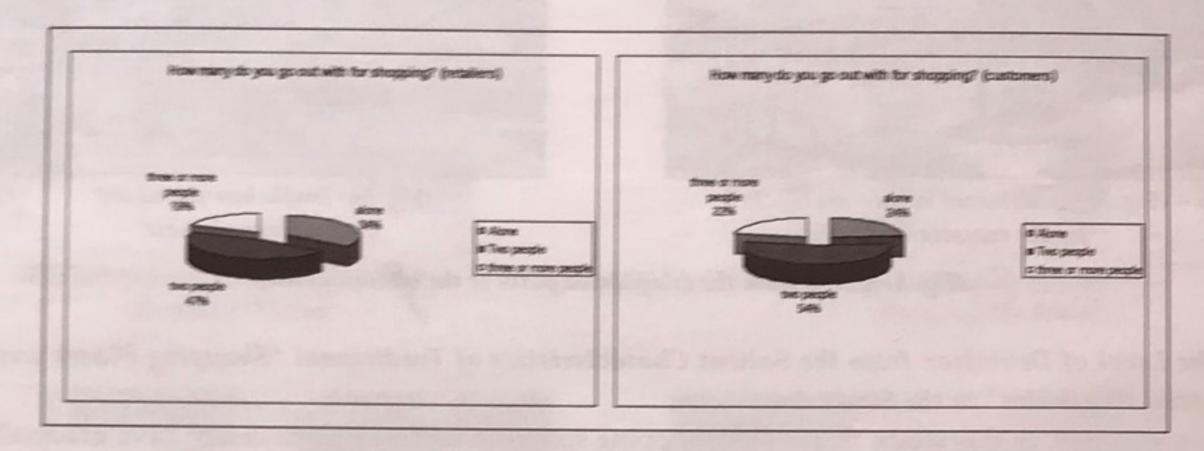
I. Survey, Questionnaire & Cognitive Mapping

As known, one of the most influential factors contributing to the commercial capacity of shopping places is the unity of shopping spaces with "non-shopping activities".

For instance, the question of "whether you have ever attended a social and cultural event through the notices at the shop windows around the area" is answered by a greater majority of the participants. 46 % of the retailers, who participated the questionnaire, have not attended an event through these notices at all, while 14 % have rarely attended such activities. Only, 40 % seem to have been informed about social and cultural facilities while shopping. The ratio of the customers who answer the same question as "no" is 44 %, and the ratio of those as "rarely" is 36 %, whereas only 20 % of the customers who shop around the area appear to benefit from the notices about
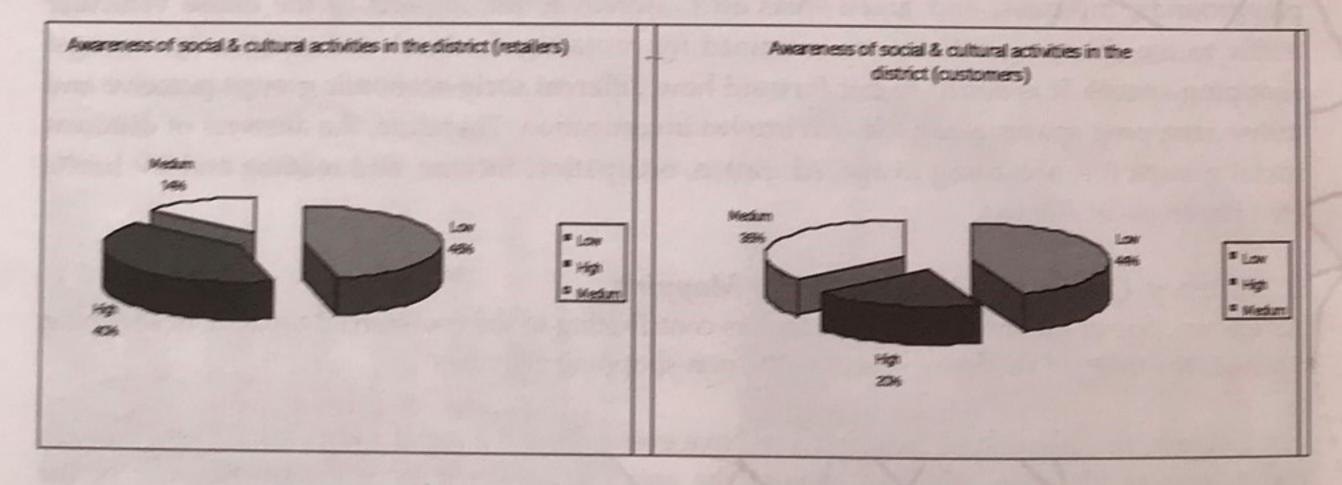
social and cultural activities in the vicinity (Fig 4). The results reveal that social and cultural spaces are not accommodated in the vicinity of shopping area to such an extent that even the notices about such activities do not take place. It can be concluded, as the result of questionnaires, that shopping spaces are distant from spaces for other social activities to a great extent. It is further supported by cognitive shopping maps and interviews. The results reveal that, currently, there is no genuine shopping place despite the capacity of the study area for enhancing social interactions amongst customers. Majority of the retailers state that shopping capacity would increase in the case that cafes, restaurants, patisserias are accomodated in and around the area.

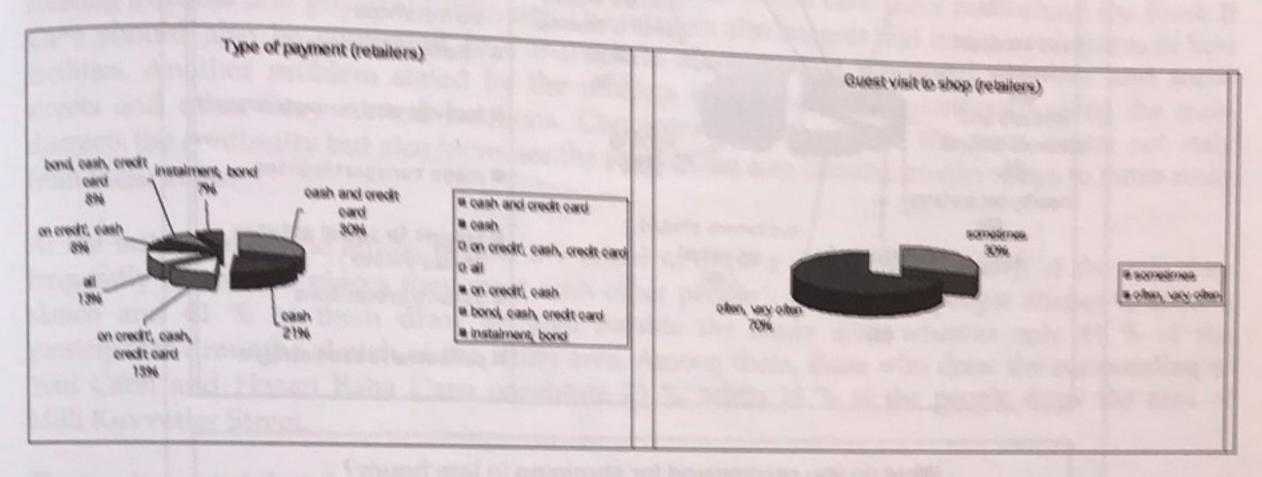(Fig. 4) Awareness of social & cultural activities in the area

One of the most essential indicators of the shopping capacity is the "density of users". In order to determine the density of users in the study area, people are asked "how many people they go out with for shopping". The answers show that 34% of the retailers do their shopping "alone" while 47% of the retailers go to shopping as a "couple", and 19% shop with "three or more" people. Amongst the customers, those who shop "alone" appears to constitute 24%, whereas those who go to shopping in "couples" are 54%, while only 22% of them do their shopping in groups of "three or more" (Fig. 5). As the results reveal that shopping is usually done either "alone" or with another person, it could be suggested that the density of customers in the study area does not suffice to constitute an active shopping area. The fact that social facilities do not exist in the shopping area may be the most influential factor in such an outcome.

(Fig. 5) Distribution of people who do shopping as a social activity

In the next stage, the retailers are asked about the qualities of their shops in order to understand whether they sustain traditional attributes. First question is about the "type of payment" which is a typical indicator of whether traditional manners of shopping continue. 30% of the retailers

accept "cash and credit cards", 21% only accept "cash", whereas 13% of the shop owners accept "on credit" in addition to cash and credit cards, 13% accept "all types of payment", 8 % accept "bond, cash and credit card", and 7 % accept "instalments and bonds" (Fig 6). The types of payment such as "on credit, instalment etc." are usually observed in traditional ways of shopping, thus the answers of the retailers reveal that traditional shopping activity is partially retained in the study area. Furthermore, the question of "whether your shop is visited by your guests" is answered as "quite often" by 70 % of the retailers, supporting our view that traditional way of shopping based on communication - a social behaviour (even in form of bargaining) - is still alive in the area (Fig 7)

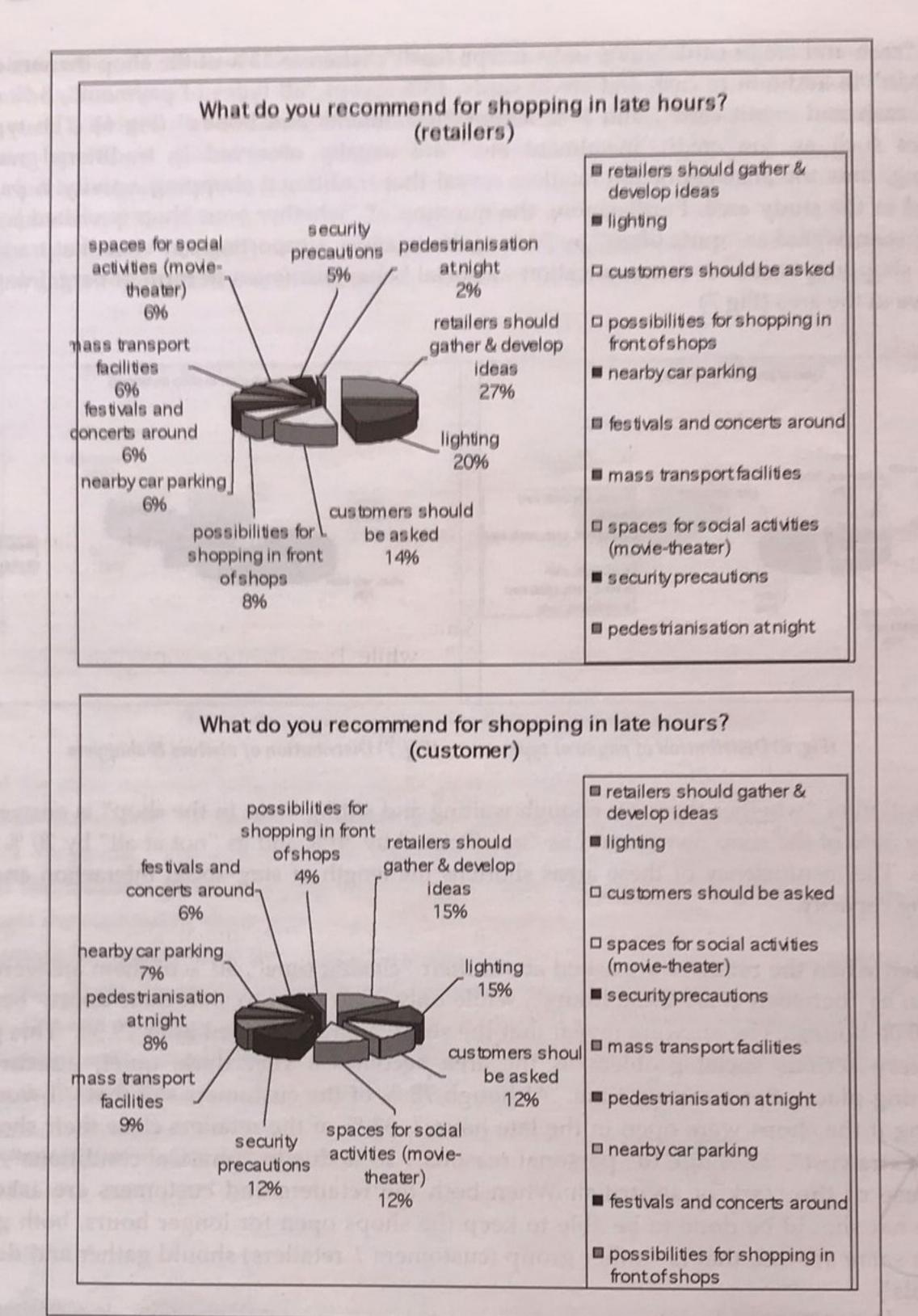(Fig. 6) Distribution of payment types   (Fig. 7) Distribution of visitors & shoppers

The question of "whether there are enough waiting and sitting areas in the shop" is answered as "yes" by 50% of the shop owners and as "insufficient" by 30%, and as "not at all" by 20 % of the retailers. The insufficiency of these areas shortens the length of stay, social interaction and thus shopping capacity.

Moreover, when the retailers are asked about their "closing time", 80 % of them answered the question as "between 17.00-19.30 hours", while only 20 % seem to shut their doors "between 20.00-00.00 hours". The answers reveal that the study area is not used after 19.30. This points out a very serious social problem as the area becomes a very dark, quiet, insecure and frightening place after a certain time. Although 78 % of the customers say that "I would go shopping if the shops were open in the late hours", 33 % of the retailers close their shop due to the "extra cost", 33 % due to "personal reasons", 30 % due to "physical conditions", and 4 % because of the "lack of security". When both the retailers and customers are asked are asked what should be done to be able to keep the shops open for longer hours, both groups give the same answer, that is " other group (customers / retailers) should gather and develop proposals".

It unfolds that there is a large communication gap between the two groups. Other suggestions in the descending order of votes are as follows; lighting (20 % of the retailers and 15 % of customers), movies and theatres around the area (12 % of customers), shop-front displaying (6 % of retailers, 4 % of customers), civilian security measures (12 % of customers, 5 % of retailers), nearby car-parking (6 % of retailers, 7 % of customers), pedestrianisation (8 % of customers, 2 % of retailers), festivals and concerts (6 % of customers) (Fig 8).

When the customers are asked "the reason of their preferences of certain shops", a great majority (14 % of retailers and 19 % of customers) chooses "proximity" of the shopping places either to their houses or to the public transportation facilities. This also indicates a tendency towards traditional manners of shopping.

What do you recommend for shopping in late hours?
(retailers)

spaces for social activities (movie-theater) 6%

security precautions 5%

pedestrianisation at night 2%

mass transport facilities 6%

festivals and concerts around 6%

nearby car parking 6%

retailers should gather & develop ideas 27%

lighting 20%

possibilities for shopping in front of shops 8%

customers should be asked 14%

- retailers should gather & develop ideas
- lighting
- customers should be asked
- possibilities for shopping in front of shops
- nearby car parking
- festivals and concerts around
- mass transport facilities
- spaces for social activities (movie-theater)
- security precautions
- pedestrianisation at night

What do you recommend for shopping in late hours?
(customer)

possibilities for shopping in front of shops 4%

festivals and concerts around 6%

nearby car parking 7%

pedestrianisation at night 8%

mass transport facilities 9%

security precautions 12%

spaces for social activities (movie-theater) 12%

retailers should gather & develop ideas 15%

lighting 15%

customers should be asked 12%

- retailers should gather & develop ideas
- lighting
- customers should be asked
- spaces for social activities (movie-theater)
- security precautions
- mass transport facilities
- pedestrianisation at night
- nearby car parking
- festivals and concerts around
- possibilities for shopping in front of shops

(Fig. 8) Recommendations for opening shops at later hours

Another significant factor which may reduce the shopping capacity in the area is the *lack of spatial and physical continuity in the shopping spaces*. In order to put forward that *spatial and physical continuity in the shopping spaces* are interrupted and the negative impacts of such interruption on shopping capacity, people are asked about their views on the "contribution of vehicular traffic in the study area". 69 % of the retailers and 73 % of the customers find the existing system of vehicular traffic as "negative". Additionally, people are asked about the "time spent during crossing the vehicular streets along their shopping paths" to show the interruption of the pedestrian continuity in the shopping area. It is seen that 63 % of the people wait more than one - minute at the crossings. Similarly, people are asked about the "frequency of crossing the vehicular streets along their shopping paths" to show the interruption of the

pedestrian continuity in the shopping area. 58 % of the retailers and 81 % of the customers answered this question as "very often".

Results of the interviews also support the results obtained from the questionnaires. Retailers state that shops in Block B of Yeni Çarsı have better capacity of shopping when compared to those in Block A, the reason being customers do not wish to change the path they use for shopping. This statement brings two issues forward: First, these two blocks are separated through a vehicular thoroughfare interrupting the physical continuity. Secondly, shops in Block B contain a variety of functions that can attract more customers such as cafes, patisseries, shoe shops, shops etc. Furthermore, Markethall, Hasan Baba Çarsı, and Vakif Ishani take place just behind the Block B creating a spatial and physical continuity. The retailers also suggest that under-used spaces in Yeni Çarsı should also be converted in a manner to accommodate functional diversity, and social facilities. Another problem stated by the retailers is that banks are positioned along the main streets and other very central locations. Concentration of banks in the town centre not only distracts the continuity but also increases the rents in the area causing smaller shops to move away from these areas.

At the last stage of the study, people are asked to draw a very simple "sketch of the area they frequently shop, and places they meet with other people". 18 % of the people refuses to draw a sketch and 41 % of them draw an area outside the study area, whereas only 41 % of the participants draw the sketch of the study area. Among them, those who draw the surrounding of Yeni Çarsı and Hasan Baba Çarsı constitute 23 %, while 18 % of the people draw the area of Milli Kuvvetler Street.

The results reveal that the study area does not have a significant place in the cognitive structures of the citizens, thus in the collective memory of the city. This may constitute one of the major reasons why the shopping capacity has gradually declined in that area. When these maps are analysed two distinct types of differentiation can be observed:

1) Differentiation between retailers and customers,
2) Differentiation between Yeni Çarsı-Hasan Baba District (traditional shopping zone) and Milli Kuvvetler Street (Contemporary / fashionable shopping street).

This differentiation can be explained as follows:
Significant deformations regarding the distances between shops in Milli Kuvvetler Street are observed in the drawings of retailers. The reason for that is the irregular width of shop windows, impairing the rhythm of customer movement. Therefore, the distances are perceived sometimes shorter than they are and vice versa. It is also understood that spatial definition is too strong and clear with particular reference to some drawing in which buildings along both sides of the street are perceived as continuous walls, simply because tall buildings are added one another for a very long distance.

In the drawings of Yeni Çarsı-Hasan Baba area, on the other hand, problems regarding spatial definition and customer orientation can be clearly seen. Zagnos Pasha Mosque and bus-stops are shown as landmarks, vehicular paths are dominant features, and three dimensional depiction of Zagnos Pasha Mosque are distinctive characteristics in almost all drawings (Fig 9). When these observations are evaluated in conjunction with the results of questionnaires, it is clearly seen that vehicular traffic harms shopping activity to a great extent. Ali Hikmet Pasha Square is displayed as a traffic junction in a great majority of drawings (Fig 10, 11, 12).
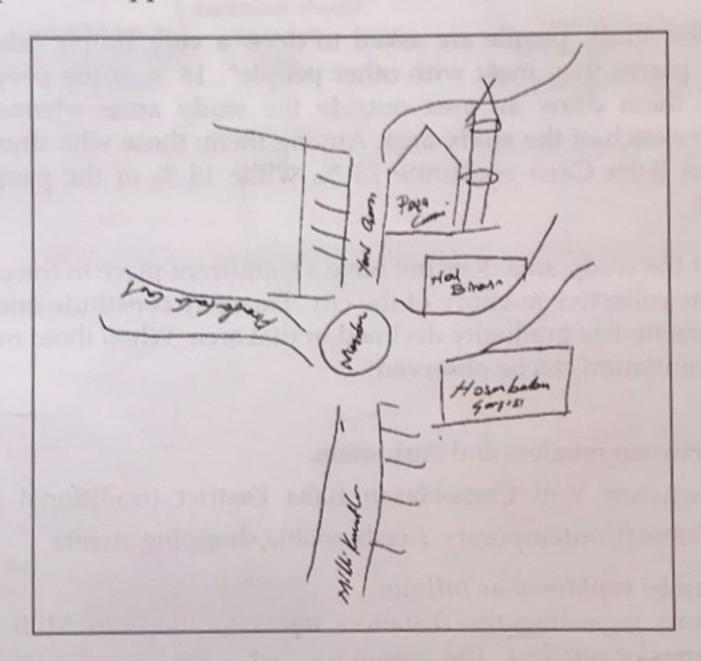
Yeni Çarsı-Hasan Baba area is expressed in a quite complex manner whereas Milli Kuvvetler Street is drawn in a very clear style. It can be said that such complexity stems from the residues of the organic fabric and this fabric is impaired to a great extent. The spatial and physical detachment between these two areas manifests itself in two different ways:

1) Lack of drawings in which these two areas are drawn together,
2) Depiction of the square between these two areas as a traffic junction.

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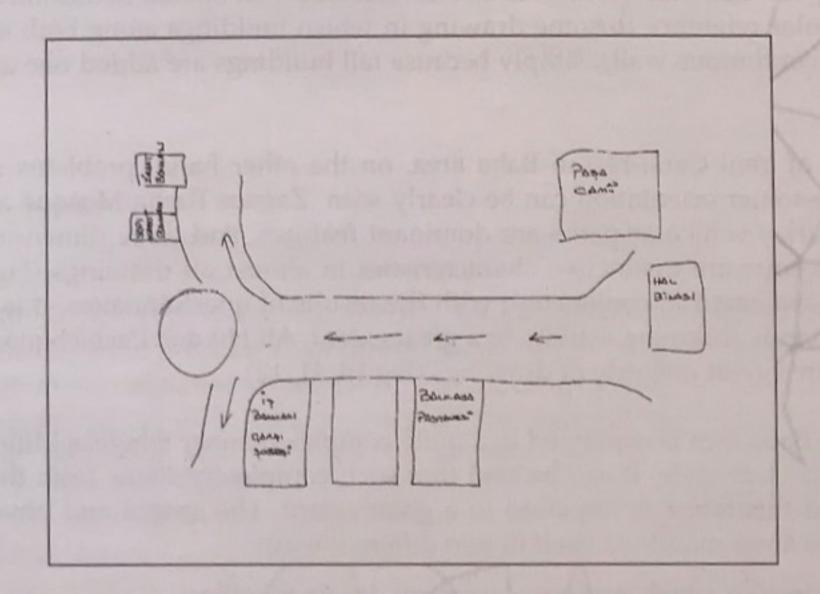Conservation
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3D depictions cannot be seen in drawings by customers. This can be interpreted as an indication of the fact that this area cannot be perceived as a place. Particularly, in Yeni Çarsı-Hasan Baba area, the distinction between vehicular roads and pedestrian sideways is clearly drawn by a line, whereas this cannot be seen in drawings of Milli Kuvvetler Street. It shows that main traffic in Milli Kuvvetler Street is totally conceived as vehicular traffic. Also, the illustration of sitting and resting places in open spaces is quite rare. It also supports the results of questionnaires regarding the customer expectations of sitting places and public spaces in the study area. Distance deformations are also repeated. It is observed that cafes, patisseries, cinema, town-hall etc. are also drawn in the sketches showing Milli Kuvvetler Street. It shows that social activity areas play a major role in the cognition of shopping spaces and urban environment. Although the wall effect in the drawings is repeated, the shops are drawn as separated from eachother. The major reason behind this type of expression may be the interruption of shopping continuity through banks and hotels which have quite large widths of windows.

Cognitive maps are useful devices to put forward the problems regarding the conception of space. These maps, here, appears to support the results obtained from questionnaires and interviews.

(Fig. 9) A sketch by an adult showing shopping area in relation to mosque

(Fig. 10) A sketch by an adult showing shopping area in relation to traffic

(Fig. 11) Dominance of traffic in the perception of shopping areas

(Fig. 12) Complexity of perception of the shopping area through traffic

II. Analysis & Evaluation

As it is claimed at the very beginning, traditional shopping places were vibrant places utilised by all the parties of city, setting a stage for social interactions and public communication. However, social harmony and unity observed in traditional societies have been transformed with socio-economic changes causing town centres to be neglected and to be dilapidated. In Balikesir, morphological characteristics that maintain the unity between shopping activity and social fabric in traditional shopping space seem to have gradually dissociated from the traditional qualities of 'shopping places with social attributes'. Questionnaires and mapping have clearly put forward that shopping activity and daily life in Balikesir town centre, displays a chaotic state, which is a typical indicator of both the physical deterioration in urban form and that of the change in public life.

As a matter of fact, the series of surveys conducted in this study, as explained above, seem to be coherent and consistent with each other. While interviews complete the views expressed in the

questionnaires, the cognitive maps serve to visualise what has been said or written both by customers and by retailers. This type of cross-evaluation also enable to illustrate whether or not there is any inconsistency in one (or more) of the three types of surveys. As it is already mentioned, the results of the surveys (questionnaire, interview, and map) support and enhance each other. All surveys seem to focus on the following points;

- Lack of spaces for social interaction associated with shopping activity within daily life in city.
- Interruption of the spatial continuity via vehicular traffic in the traditional town centre.
- Dilapidation of the morphological features of the traditional town centre.

However, all surveys also point out the hints of the capacity of the study area for revitalisation of the traditional shopping activity, and thus, civic and urban life.

Along this path, various regeneration and intervention proposals are developed, and these are established as the major principles of future urban-architectural interventions for the aim of revitalising the historic town centre of Balikesir.

III. Discussion & Suggestions

As the majority of the retailers, who were interviewed, emphasised, one of the most significant reason behind this evident decline of the shopping capacity in regard to the past is the long-lasting nationwide economic recession. Nevertheless, the loss of the salient urban-spatial and architectural features of the past also plays a major part in such a decline can be clearly seen from the results of questionnaires, interviews and cognitive maps. Henceforth, it is quite clear the urban-architectural interventions suggested for the study area could bring back the vivacity to this traditional shopping district. The principles of the future interventions should be established in regard to qualities and characteristics of traditional shopping spaces in Balikesir. Therefore, following measures could be suggested;

1. Diversity of the functions (i.e. in addition to shopping) should be increased in the study area. For this purpose, it would be appropriate to make arrangements for both open public spaces (i.e. sitting-resting places, open/semi-open cafes, kiosks, green areas etc.) and indoor spaces (such as spaces of cultural activities, i.e. theatre and concert halls, movie-theatres, etc.). These spaces would certainly lengthen the time of use in the vicinity by various parties. Thus, potential customers would stay longer in the area, increasing the capacity of shopping in the study area. However, it seems essential for the retailers in the area not only to come together and develop proposals about the matter, but also to make initiatives to realise these proposals.

2. Some of these new activities should be selected to bring vivacity to the area particularly in the evenings and at night. It is suggested that shopping capacity would proliferate as the period of staying and that of shopping increases. A visible increase in the shopping capacity would also help to overcome the "cost" factor which seems to prevent to keep the shops open in the evening hours. However, it is essential to provide attractive lighting to the area immediately for being able to save this district from being a quiet, desolate and creepy space.

3. "Taking the vehicular traffic below the ground level" could be considered as a measure in order to subdue the negative impacts of vehicular traffic to the shopping capacity. Although it can initially be appraised as a costly solution, one cannot fail to admit how significant and necessary it is for a long-term healthier, sustainable urban development, particularly when the positive influences of such a project (higher capacity of customer and thus shopping) are re-considered.

4. Another essential measure to be taken is the planning for decentralisation and spreading of the city in order to prevent excessive land prices, speculative urban rant and resulting inflation of real-estate rents.

5. Renovation and re-functioning of the existing historical building stock (i.e. un-used under-used buildings) rather than constructing new buildings for the activities proposed for the area, can be considered as an economical measure. For instance, basement floor of the Market-Hall, upper floors of Yeni Çarşı and Hasan Baba Çarşı, and under-used buildings along Milli Kuvvetler Street could be renovated for new urban functions such as cafes, restaurants, wedding halls, etc.

6. It is known that positioning of department stores or other group of spaces with high magnetic forces at either ends of customer circulation areas (malls) in shopping centres mainly stems from the requirement of increasing the movement, and thus, shopping capacity along these routes. Hence, the shopping capacity in the study area, too, is directly related to the physical and spatial continuity of shopping spaces. Appropriation of the approach, which once was derived from the logic of spatial organisation of traditional town centres, into this area would certainly contribute it to regain its once-lost salient spatial and architectural features, and thus to increase its own shopping capacity.

7. Another striking outcome of the results obtained from questionnaires is the conflict between the expectations of customers and preferences of retailers. Overcoming of this significant conflict would certainly raise the shopping capacity in the area. Along this purpose, customer expectations should be regularly, and in fact more often, surveyed with rational methods.

Consequently, it is established that the problem observed in the traditional shopping district is a problem of urban planning/architecture/conservation as much as it is an economic issue. Therefore, the solutions should also be developed along this line of thought. A series of initial steps taken in the fields of urban design, architecture, conservation and renewal would trigger successive economic changes, and thus, not only pave the way for a higher shopping capacity but further accelerate a vivid retail activity with social attributes.

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T.C. BALIKESIR UNIVERSITY FAC. OF ENG. & ARCHITECTURE DEPT. OF ARCHITECTURE RESTORATION DEPARTMENT RESEARCH PROJECT.

CONSERVATION OF TRADITIONAL SHOPPING PLACES AS A DEVICE FOR REGENERATION OF A TURKISH TOWN IN RECESSION.

EVALUATION OF SHOPPING - SOCIALISATION RELATIONSHIP IN THE STUDY AREA OF COMMERCIAL TOWN CENTRE QUESTIONNAIRE NO. 1
(CUSTOMERS)

Project Director: Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat ÇETIN

SHOPPING DISTRICT WHERE QUESTIONNAIRE IS CONDUCTED:

DEFINITION OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS USING THIS AREA

Age:	20 below	20 - 30	30 - 40	40 - 50	50 above
Education:	Primary	Secondary	High School	University	Master's/PhD
Occupation:					
Car Ownership:	Yes	No			
House Ownership:	Yes	No			
Rent: (Million/TL.)	100 below	100-200	200-300	300 above	
District / Neighboured of Residence:					
T.V. Channels Preferred					
Do you regularly buy daily Newspapers?	No	Yes	Which papers:		

INTERACTION OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS

Have you been informed about and participated to any social and/or cultural activity through notices around billboards or shop windows in this area?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
How many people do you shop with:	Alone	2	3	4	5 and above
Who do you shop with:	Alone	Family	Friends		

STATE OF EXISTING VEHICULAR & PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

Contribution of vehicular traffic to the area:	1 → Negative	2	3	4	5 Positive →
Average waiting Time while crossing streets	1 min. below	1-3 min.	3-5 min.	5-7 min.	7 min above
Facing parking problem in the area	1 ← I do not	2.	3	4	5 I do →
Time of arrival to the shopping places from public transportation stops:	1 min. below	1-5 min	5-10 min.	10-15 min.	15 min. above
Frequency of crossing streets while going to shopping places:	None	Rare	Average	Often	Very often

CHARACTERISTICS OF SHOPPING PLACE

Date of opening:					
Type of the products sold in the shop:	Basic consumption materials (Food, Stationary.....)				
	Durable materials (Textiles, Electrical devices,...)				
	Luxury consumption materials (Jewellary, cosmetics....)				
Type of payment:	On Credit	Installment	Bond	Cash	Credit Card
Use of barcode:	Yes	No			
Use of Air-Conditioning:	Yes	No			
Existence of waiting facilities either standing or sitting:	Exist., sufficient	Exist., insufficient	Not exist		
Working hours:					
Display of the product:	Shelf	Table	Wardrops	Hangers	
Frequency of your personal guests:	None	Rarely	On Average	Often	Very Often
Use of sidewalks for the display of goods	Yes	No			

REASONS OF THE CUSTOMER TO PREFER THE SHOP & THE SHOPPING AREA

The reasons of your customer to prefer your shop and the area for shopping

- Conversation
- Product diversity
- Appropriate prices
- Display of product (colour-smell-possibility of contact)
- Attractiveness of the display from outside (shopwindow)
- Physical comfort
- Possibility of bargaining
- Product reliability
- Security

Physical comfort
- air-condition ◇ lighting
- sitting, waiting facility

Proximity to
- home ◇ work ◇ carpark ◇ mosque
- green areas ◇ eating-drinking facilities
- ◇ public transport stops

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHOPPING DISTRICT

Are there resting - sitting facilities around the shopping district:	No	A few	Enough	Abundant
How secure do you feel around the shopping district and circulation areas?:	Not at all	A little	A lot	
When is the most intense time interval of shopping in your shop?	Early morning	After noon	Noon	
	Afternoon	Evening and later		
What is the average time a customer spends for shopping in your shop?	5 Min. below	5-10 min.	10-15 min.	
	15-20 min.	20 min. above		
What are the reasons for not opening your shop at later hours?	It is not secure	Personal reasons		
	Cost	Physical conditions		

What would you recommend to attract more customers to the shopping area amongst the options given below

- Lighting at night
- Nearby carpark
- Organisation of festivals and concerts
- Increased possibility of public transport
- Area closed to vehicular traffic at the late hours
- Retailer should gather and develop proposals
- Increased possibility of out-of-shop (open area) retailing
- Increased precautions for civil security
- Increased number of Cinema-THEATRES
- Customer views taken

Please draw a very simple schematic sketch of the area you often go for shopping, showing the places where your meet other people along this area as you remember in your mind. Please also write the names of places, squares, streets, buildings, shops, stores, districts, etc.

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EVALUATION OF SHOPPING - SOCIALISATION RELATIONSHIP IN THE STUDY AREA OF COMMERCIAL TOWN CENTRE QUESTIONNAIRE NO. 1
(RETAILERS)

Project Director: Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat ÇETIN

SHOPPING DISTRICT WHERE QUESTIONNAIRE IS CONDUCTED:

DEFINITION OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS USING THIS AREA

Age:	20 below	20 - 30	30 - 40	40 - 50	50 above
Education:	Primary	Secondary	High School	University	Master's/PhD
Occupation:					
Car Ownership:	Yes	No			
House Ownership:	Yes	No			
Rent: (Million/TL.)	100 below	100-200	200-300	300 above	
District / Neighboured of Residence:					
T.V. Channels Preferred					
Do you regularly buy daily Newspapers?	No		Yes	Which papers:	

INTERACTION OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS

Have you been informed about and participated to any social and/or cultural activity through notices around billboards or shop windows in this area?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes		Often	Very often
How many people do you shop with:	Alone	2	3	4	5 and above	
Who do you shop with:	Alone	Family	Friends			

STATE OF EXISTING VEHICULAR & PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

Contribution of vehicular traffic to the area:	1 → Negative	2	3	4	5 Positive →
Average waiting Time while crossing streets	1 min. below	1-3 min.	3-5 min.	5-7 min.	7 min above
Facing parking problem in the area	1 ← I do not	2.	3	4	5 I do →
Time of arrival to the shopping places from public transportation stops:	1min. below	1-5 min	5-10 min.	10-15 min.	15 min. above
Frequency of crossing streets while going to shopping places:	None	Rare	Average	Often	Very often

CHARACTERISTICS OF SHOPPING PLACE

Posibilty of examining the product:	Yes	No		
Way of examining the product:	Touching	Tasting	Trying	Other

REASONS OF THE CUSTOMER TO PREFER THE SHOP & THE SHOPPING AREA

The reasons of you to prefer the shop and the area for shopping among the others:

Conversation

Possibility of bargaining

Product diversity

Product reliability

Appropriate prices

Security

Display of product (colour-smell-possibility of contact)

Attractiveness of the display from outside (shopwindow)

Physical comfort   air-condition   ◇ lighting

sitting, waiting facility

Proximity to   home   ◇ work ◇ carpark ◇ mosque

green areas   ◇ eating-drinking facilities

◇ public transport stops

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHOPPING DISTRICT

Are there resting - sitting facilities around the shopping district:	No	A few	Enough	Abundant	
How secure do you feel around the shopping district and circulation areas?:	Not at all	A little	A lot		
How many shops do you visit at each time of shopping?:	1	2	3	4	5 and above

Which time interval do you prefer for shopping?

Early morning   Before noon   Noon

Afternoon   Evening and later

What is the average time you spend for shopping: in the area?

5 Min. below   5-10 min.   10-15 min.

15-20 min.   20 min. above

Would you prefer going to shopping at later hours if the shops were open?	Yes	No

What would you recommend to attract more customers to the shopping area amongst the options given below

Lighting at night   Increased precautions for civil security

Nearby carpark   Increased number of Cinema-THEATRES

Organisation of festivals and concerts   Customer views taken

Increased possibility of public transport

Area closed to vehicular traffic at the late hours

Retailer should gather and develop proposals

Increased possibility of out-of-shop (open area) retailing

Please draw a very simple schematic sketch of the area you often go for shopping, showing the places where your meet other people along this area as you remember in your mind. Please also write the names of places, squares, streets, buildings, shops, stores, districts, etc.