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Strategic quality planning in urban environment

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to discuss the diverse factors on the provision of environmental quality and to put forward a strategic approach for quality planning in degraded and/or decaying urban areas where historical and architectural values of the environment have to be sustained. The paper explores the concept of urban quality within the context of total quality management through the evaluation of urban design practices from Turkey and abroad. In addition, it clarifies the various components and their interrelations to build the basis for the strategic framework in which community has a significant role, is encouraged to participate to the process. As a result, a conceptual model is presented for future urban design practices in Turkey providing satisfaction for all levels of participants, emphasizing correlated systems, developing partnership mechanisms and balancing common interests through a sustainable structure.

Keywords*: Quality, planning, strategic planning, urban environment, urban quality*

Introduction

The rapid growth in the world's population, globalization trends and their impacts on population mobility necessitate a vital consideration on environmental quality in urban areas. The socio-economic implications are of great importance in quality discussion that is directly related to the physical qualifications of cities. The primary aim of design practices in urban environment is rehabilitating the life quality, where the focal point is human beings. Answers of the question "what makes a place quality or successful?" can be very different for anybody. A place can be alive and attractive; secure and controlled; and also easy to access. The objective qualities of the same place can be perceived in different ways by its inhabitants and visitors according to their personal characteristics, such as age, gender, education, profession, status in the society, previous spatial experiences and expectations and so on.

The Habitat Istanbul Summit, held in 1996, is a milestone for the dissemination of the quality concept of urban environment in Turkey. Emerging discussions around this concept have created an urban agenda pinpointing the necessity for a crucial consideration on environmental quality in the design of urban areas where unplanned urban growth problems threatens the life quality. In such cases, the growth stems from rapid growth and changes related to socio-economical conditions. These have also introduced the need for strategic planning approaches on total quality management. However in Turkey, it is difficult to say that urban environmental quality management frameworks are able to adapt to urbanization and the management of urbanism. When historical environment is considered, there are important initiatives to reverse the ongoing process, yet they are not efficient.

Within these circumstances, the purpose of this paper is to discuss diverse factors in the provision of environmental quality and to put forward a strategic approach for quality planning in decaying urban areas that are rich in historical and architectural values in Turkey. The paper is based on the research project entitled as "Environmental Quality Improvement in Urban Fabric: Strategic Quality Planning Model*"* (Gülersoy-Zeren et al. 2005) which was conducted within the context of Istanbul Technical University Research Fund in 2005. It explores the concept of urban quality within the context of total quality management. In addition, it clarifies the various components and their interrelations to build the basis for strategic framework in which the community that is affected by the design is encouraged to participate to the planning process. As a result, a conceptual model is presented for future urban design practices in Turkey, providing satisfaction for all levels of participants, emphasizing correlated systems, developing partnership mechanisms and balancing common interests through a sustainable structure.

Quality in Urban Environment

Quality is a complex concept that embarks diverse meanings with regard to different occasions and conditions. The reason for this complexity is that the experts of different disciplines handle and conceive quality problem in different manner and context (such as product designers or construction managers, or behavioral researchers), where other reason directly depends on the variety of definitions considering the levels of quality (Özsoy and Esin, 2003). According to Juran (1988), quality is "fitness for use". Gitlow and Gitlow (1989), on the other hand, define quality as "to do the right business in a right way in all times". A latter definition of quality is "the efficiency of an object or a service towards the needs" (Anon, 1984).

Human beings have always been in need of high quality goods and service. But the quality understanding and the process itself has undergone many changes. The root of the modern concept of quality (for a brief overview, see Gülersoy-Zeren, 2003) dates back to the 1920s when Walter A. Shewhart developed "Plan – Do – Check - Act" cycle as one of the basic scientific research methods. "Plan – Do – Check – Act" cycle provides high performance level through a continuous improvement and monitoring system (Carr and Littmann, 1991). It also acts as a baseline methodology for strategic planning which will be discussed in the next section. "European Foundation for Quality Management" (EFQM, 2003) and "KALDER Model of Excellence" in Turkey are examples. The logic behind this model is to prevent problems before they appear. George Edwards, W. Edwards

Deming, Armand Feigenbaum and Joseph Juran are other researches that have had vital accomplishments and contributions to modern quality concept (for an overview, see Deming, 1986; Carr and Littman, 1991; Gitlow and Gitlow, 1987; Gitlow et al. 1989; Juran Institute, 1992).

Three types of quality are integral to improvement of the extended process. These are design / redesign, conformance and performance. According to Carr and Littman (1991), the three types of quality, the relationship between quality and productivity and the benefits of improving quality have to be understood for quality management.

Until recently, quality in architectural and or urban environment was utilized under performance studies. The dictionary definition of term “performance” refers to a process (since its root comes from the verb perform), a task, and positive result achieved. The word gains professional meaning in the terminology of building industry as “behavior related to use”, and these two interrelated concepts -performance and quality- are used together. The quality of the product is the sign of its performance, or the performance of the product is the sign of its quality. Agreed on definitions do exist in the quality terminology of building industry. Product quality is defined as “conformance of use”. Physical environment is composed of various sub-products, and so quality of each sub-product can also be mentioned as if it is the product quality. There are unique quality characteristics in architecture, which are very different than a single product. These are (i) a complex decision structure of the environment, (ii) unique production that is designed and built in special time and space, (iii) the existence of value systems, which give way to attitudes, preferences, and decisions towards physical environment (Özsoy et al. 1996). Whatever the scale is, performance is directly related to the quality of physical environment. The “performance” and the “quality” of an environment depend on physical elements that they are made up of, to the people who produce and use them, and actions occur during the design-built-use processes. Performance is a factor that has a direct effect on spatial satisfaction of users. As Lang (1994) states performance is the degree that the product responds to user needs. However, this makes quality a relative and subjective concept (Blachere, 1993; Baird et al. 1996). The user needs are described as the physical, psychological and sociological conditions that help users to perform activities efficiently.

Architecture and urban planning disciplines put forward a different perspective of quality through product and process. Quality, according to this statement, is the ability to be sufficient for a specific product or service (Anon, 1984). According to Özsoy and Esin (2003: 24), there are two discrete meanings of quality. The first meaning is the characteristic of a person or a thing that relate it with nature or define quality among a special category such as sort and kind. The second meaning relates to the context of physical quality level such as condition, value, rank, grade, measurement, calibration and excellence.

There are different perspectives on the formation of urban environmental quality. According to Lynch (1981), the components of good city form and desirable qualities of successful urban place are vitality (healthy environment), sense (sense of place and identity), fit (spatial adaptation),

accessibility (accessibility to people, activities, knowledge) and control. Jacobs and Appleyard (1987) mentions livability, identity and control, access to opportunities, authenticity and meaning, community and public life, urban self-reliance and an environment for all as essential goals for the future of a good environment. In addition, Carmona et al. (2003) acknowledge the importance of permeability, diversity, clearness and flexibility. In summary, the quality of urban environment should respond to livability, individuality, character, aesthetics, connection, continuity, accessibility, visibility and diversity.

The extensive literature review of this field demonstrates that the quality notions of urban environment, such as livability, quality-of-life, sustainability, draw from a diverse range of academic disciplines (psychology, sociology, environmental sciences, economics), and professional areas (planning, architecture, engineering, health, public policy) (Van Kamp et al. 2003). Smith et al. (1997) has developed a list of quality and need principles (livability, character, connection, mobility, personal freedom, diversity), and a list of physical form criteria from the literature. It was developed through a literature review on relevant findings from various fields of thought (community psychology, environmental psychology, urban design, sense of place theories, design professional publications, human behavioral research studies) and through the development of a matrix which links quality to physical form.

Bonaiuto et al (2003), combines the instruments of 11 scales measuring perceived environmental qualities of urban neighborhoods and one scale measuring neighborhood attachment. These instruments are spatial aspects (i.e. architectural / town-planning space, organization of accessibility and roads, green areas), human aspects (i.e. people and social relations), functional aspects (i.e. welfare, recreational, commercial, transport services), contextual aspects (i.e. pace of life, environmental health, upkeep and care), and neighborhood attachment.

In the 1950s, it is thought that the physical and technical standards were important, however today the concepts such as personification and individualism are more important. This means that quality is related to not only physical and technical needs but also it is bounded to social and psychological needs of users (Blachere, 1993; Marans, 2003).

Earlier studies have shown that qualities of a place can be defined with both objective and subjective indicators. Objective indicators generally relate to physical attributes including air pollution, noise, level of crime, availability of open space. Subjective indicators, on the other hand, relate to psychological and socio-cultural dimension of environment. They were inherited from human sciences and include behavior, human needs, well-being and satisfaction studies (see Andrews, 2001; Marans, 2003). Design guidelines are developed to enhance quality of environment by using diversity of measures. Performance specifications of building materials are improved for contemporary and complex set of human needs for built processes. Thus, post-occupancy evaluation studies enhance our understanding of specific use of unique physical environments (Özsoy et al. 1996). The fulfillment of expectations on the subjects as the quality of life, product, material or design and the rehabilitation of environmental quality are due to the contribution of conscious users who demands for higher quality in the process. As the quality concept itself, there are diverse definitions for satisfaction. The

objective qualities of the same place can be perceived in different ways by its inhabitants and visitors according to their personal characteristics, such as age, gender, education, profession, status in the society, previous spatial experiences and expectations and so on. A place can be alive and attractive; secure and controlled; and also easy to access. However, all attributes at the end will be perceived by individuals according to their personal characteristics. These factors make more difficult to understand the concept of quality and to design better solutions for the improvement of urban environment.

Strategic Quality Planning in Urban Environment

Quality should be part of strategic quality planning. Answers of the question "what makes a place quality or successful?" can be very different for everybody. But there is a common conclusion in the urban research that how quality can be achieved, is very much related to strategic planning models (Carmona and Burgess, 2001; Albrechts, 2001). The rapid growth in the world's population, globalization trends and their impacts on population mobility necessitate a vital consideration on strategic thinking, strategic planning and strategic decision-making in urban areas. While strategic planning was used in private sector organizations before the 1980s, today it has become as one of the fundamentals in urban management process.

Strategic planning basically defines the route between the point where the system is and the level where it wants to achieve. It focuses on results and outputs. It provides organization to define itself, to evaluate and check its service and products through a systematic method. It is a long-term approach and it can be adapted according to different needs of organizations. It is not only a document, but also it is a process to be implemented. As acknowledged by the State Planning Organization (SPO), strategic planning is the planning of results, the planning of change, a realistic drawing of future, a qualified management instrument, a participatory approach, and the responsibility of rendering of account (SPO, 2006). According to Juran's works (Juran, 1988), planning should start with the contents of vision, mission analysis, strategy deployment plan and expected results. Within this context, strategic planning brings definition for four conditions such as the present condition of an organization, the condition that the organization wants to achieve, the methods and tools that helps the organization achieve that condition, and finally the methods and tools that help the organization to monitor and to review its success.

Traditionally, organizations develop financial, technological, marketing and operational units when they set their strategies and plans. There are significant differences between traditional and strategic quality planning (see Figure 1). Traditional planning focuses on the components of environment, while the strategic quality planning attempts to describe the dynamics of the environment within the entire system (Carmona and Burgess, 2001; Albrechts, 2001; Strelitz et al. 1996).

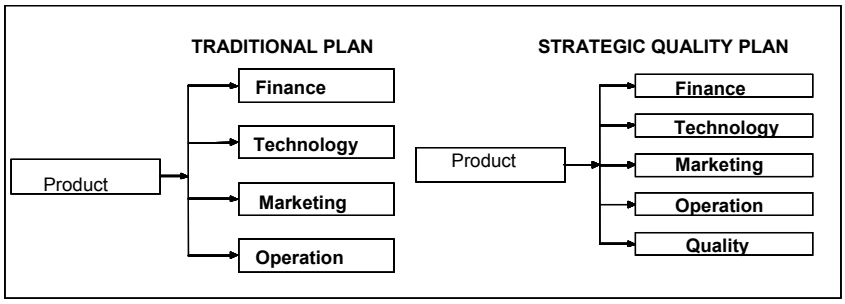

***Figure 1**. Traditional Plan and Strategic Quality Plan (Juran Institute, 1992)*

In the 21st century, strategic urban planning of cities should foster a long-term vision for the future development of urban areas, embracing the principles of sustainable growth. At the same time, it should focus on citizens, reflecting their needs in a rapidly changing world. All projects that are prepared and applied for the improvement of quality in urban environment should be evaluated within the framework of their national-wise conditions and should be integrated to current planning processes. The important feature of the subject is to aim for improvement and development of the living-environment by increasing awareness and quality of life in the space. It should keep in mind that, each application may need its unique method and application form according to its goal that is prepared in the provision of philosophy.

A Model of Strategic Quality Planning in Historic Urban Environment

The concept of quality in the urban environment in Turkey was discussed comprehensively in the Habitat Istanbul Summit that was held in 1996. Emerging discussions around this concept have created an urban agenda (see, Altas Esin, 1994; Özsoy and Esin, 2003; Özsoy et al. 1996; Dökmeci et al. 1995; Türkoğlu et al. 2007; Erkut and Ertekin, 2003) pinpointing the necessity for a crucial consideration on environmental quality in the design of urban areas which are threatened by urban growth problems stemming from the rapid population increase and changes in socio-economical conditions due to globalization and local level urbanization dynamics. Under the theme of "Awareness on Quality of Housing, Environment and Social Relations" in the National Action Plan (UN-HABITAT, 1996), the problems were described such that Turkey could not adapt to urbanization and to citizenship processes and the historic fabrics with their rich cultural and architectural values were assumed as the most effected settlements. These have also introduced the need for strategic planning approaches in other words on total quality management where participation at the community level is of the primary consideration. However, Turkey is still unable to adapt to urbanization and the management of being-urbanized population (citizenship process) to emphasize the quality in urban environment especially with rich historical and architectural values. There are important initiatives to reverse the ongoing process, however yet they are not sufficient.

When the historic environment is considered UNESCO guidelines (European Commission, 1996, p.217) confirm that "*man's cultural heritage is essential to his equilibrium and development, as it provides him with a framework that is suited to his lifestyle and enables him to stay in touch with nature and with*

the witness of earlier civilizations that have been left to him by past generations." As indicated by European Commission (1996), projects should be integrated to the notion of culture and heritage and city and its inhabitants, through a quality approach in order to achieve a more attractive city.

With regard to this condition, the "Strategic Quality Planning Model" (SQPM) aims at putting forward a strategic approach for quality planning in decaying urban areas that are rich in historical and architectural values. It is based on the research project entitled as "Environmental Quality Improvement in Urban Fabric: Strategic Quality Planning Model" (Gülersoy-Zeren et al. 2005) which was conducted within the context of Istanbul Technical University research fund in 2005. The model forms a strategic framework in order to provide satisfaction for all stakeholders, to enhance the system which is dependent and in relation to each other, to maximize participation, to develop partnerships, to provide social inclusion and to create sustainable development.

It basically responds to 5 key questions in 8 stages (See Figure 2)

- Who are we?: Setting of strategic planning team,
- Where are we?: Analysis of existing situation,
- Where do we want to be?: Identification of mission, identification of vision, identification of principles,
- How can we go there?: Establishment of strategic goals and objectives, preparation of plans and projects,
- How can we trace our success?: Monitoring and assessment.

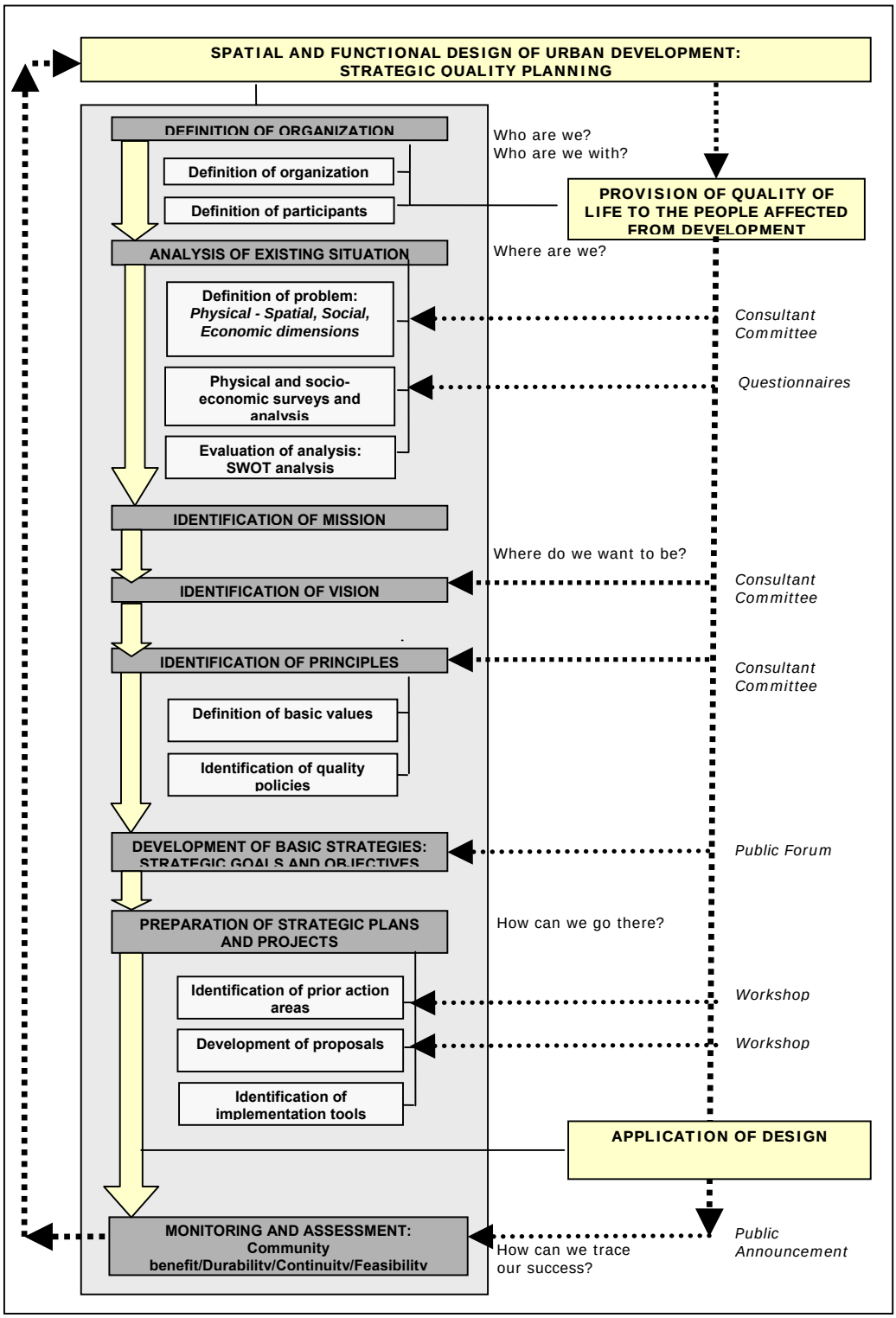

Figure 2. *Strategic Quality Planning Model*

Definition of Organization

At the beginning of SQPM process, the planning team who will take responsibility in all stages of the plan and all interested participants should be defined. The structure of organization is based on different units which work in strong coordination and self-control mechanism for a common goal. The basic units are quality group, communication group, decision-makers and implementers / operators (see Figure 3).

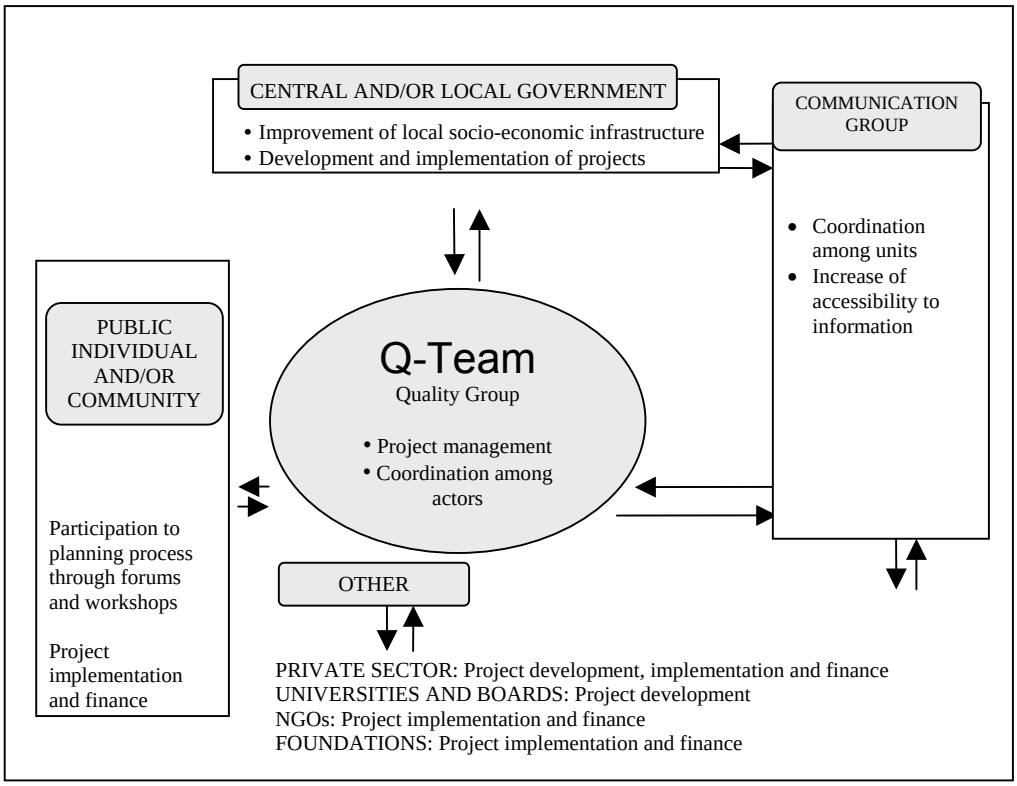

Figure 3. *Structure of Organization*

Quality group is responsible for project management, coordination among actors and resource management. Communication group is responsible for coordination among units and increase of accessibility to information. Central and local government bodies set the decision-maker group. They are responsible for the improvement of local socio-economic infrastructure and development and implementation of projects. When historic areas are considered, the representatives from central and local governments specifically deal with conservation issues. Public has a special responsibility in strategic quality planning. They can participate in the planning process through forums and workshops. They can contribute to the plan for project implementation and financing. Other actors are private sector contributors, universities, professional boards, NGOs and foundations. On the other hand, private sector may have significant responsibilities in project development,

implementation and financing. Universities and boards may take role in project development. NGOs and foundations can contribute for project implementation and financing.

In conservation-related issues, unfortunately the participation of the public who has influence and interest, is not enough. It is widely accepted that, the diversity in participation enriches the process. In the identification of planning organization, there are several factors to be considered. These are:

- Planning team should represent each unit of organization,
- Planning team should have necessary knowledge and skills about strategic quality planning,
- Planning team should have enough information about organization's target population,

Planning team should be comprised of people that can invest enough time and effort continuously.

Analyses of Existing Situation

In this stage, the settlement's inner structure, the characteristics of chosen project area and main problems and opportunities are defined. This builds up the main knowledge database.

Identification of problems and opportunities

Each settlement has its own problems and opportunities. The important thing is to accomplish detailed analysis of problems and opportunities within different dimensions and different scales. SWOT analysis is a useful technique in data collection and evaluation. The analysis of external and internal conditions helps to clarify different potentials and to overcome threats.

In general, the basic problems of historic environment are the decline of urban quality due to the abandonment of original inhabitants of the settlement, the settlement of lower income groups in the area, the insufficient usage of existing building stock, lack of interest of public authorities, insufficient infrastructure and lack of security and safety.

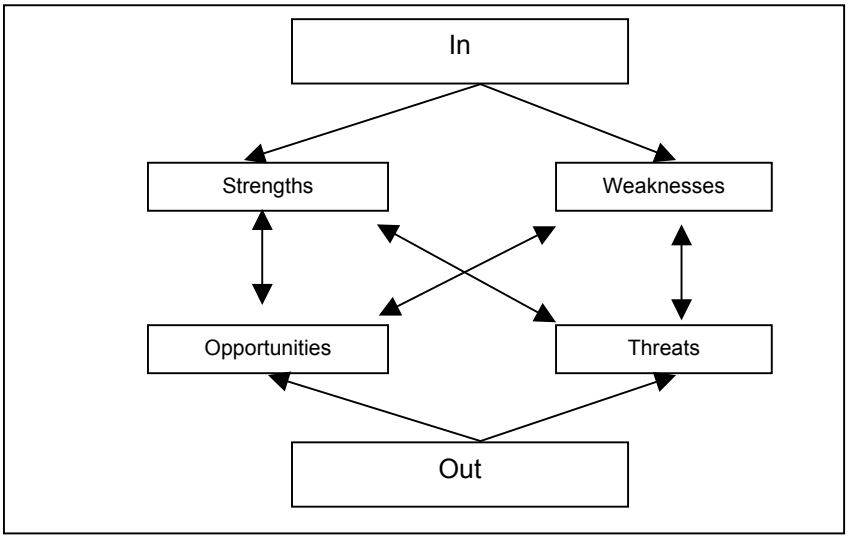

Figure 4. *Basic Relations in SWOT Analysis*

Table 1 shows an example for SWOT analysis for historic environments.

Tablo 1. *SWOT Analysis in Historic Environment*

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Spatial dimension	Historic identity Proximity to center Unused building stock	Urban decay Insufficient infrastructure Lack of green areas Insufficient accessibility Land ownership structure	Increasing accessibility to center	Natural disasters Upper scale plans that ignores cultural assets
Socio-cultural dimension	Sense of belonging Labor potential for newly developing sectors	Lack of security Changing community profile due to migration. Lack of community will and support Insufficient education level	Increase in public awareness Increase in life standards	Lack of skilled labor force Continuous migration
Functional and economic dimension	Economic value of cultural assets	Lack of mixed-use High maintenance cost Increase in land prices	Private sector incentives Tourism incentives	Lack of investment in historic areas
Structural dimension	Conservation laws	Lack of urban service	Powerful and decisive decision-makers. New laws and reforms (strategic pl.etc.)	Lack of control over development plans

Identification of Mission and Vision

Mission is defined by the team that orients the organization. It defines the reason and responsibility of the organization, but not the process. In historic environments, the mission is to provide the sustainability of historic environment by increasing quality of urban life.

Vision symbolizes the future of organization. It is the assertive, challenging and expressive definition of the point that the organization wants to achieve in the long run. For historic environments, a statement of vision can be to create a healthy, safe, diverse and sustainable urban environment and to integrate this with environment, culture, community and economy through the participation of different actors.

Definition of Principles and Values

Basic values are legal and administrative tools and standards that orient planning approach. Quality principles ensure the realization of the planning process under a common quality strategy. Basic values of SQPM are:

- To diminish threats through strong quality management and control mechanisms in order to protect environmental quality,
- To set measures to protect natural and cultural values and to create an accessible environment,
- To increase public awareness on urban quality,
- To reach high-level design in historic environment,
- To create a safe and attractive environment that in compatible with development densities and urban standards,
- To provide a spatial pattern that responds to different demands and that suits to economic use of public space,
- To perform efficient economic assessment of proposed design.

Development of Basic Strategies: Strategic Goals and Objectives

In the quality improvements, the actions that focus only on physical interventions are not efficient and sustainable. The policies for the improvement in urban quality should be accomplished and integrated with comprehensive plans. These plans should have long-lasting relevant and applicable objectives. Especially in historic environment, integrated action planning is essential to provide the sustainability and continuity of actions. Therefore, the SQPM puts forward an integrated framework in which spatial, functional, economic, social and structural dimensions work together (See Table 2).

Table 2. *Strategic Goals*

Strategy	**Strategic Goals**
Spatial dimension	To create a positive environment for architectural and urban quality. To provide a healthy and comfortable environment. To encourage optimum communication.
Functional and economic dimension	To maintain the historic environment functionally. To provide optimum cost and financial support. To guarantee flexibility and applicability.
Social dimension	To support participation. To provide social and cultural cohesion. To provide equal accessibility opportunity to community.
Structural dimension	To provide an integrated legal and administrative framework with planning and conservation processes. To encourage active quality management.

Preparation of Strategic Plans and Projects

Seventh stage is for preparing the design proposals according to identified strategies. In this stage, priority action areas are identified and proposals are developed to provide integrated design proposals and implementations in diverse action areas from urban fabric to building scale (See Table 3). The proposals are developed in order to respond to mission, vision, strategic goals and objectives. There appear several fundamentals in the development of proposals within the context of accessibility, effectiveness, comfort and socialization. These are:

- To design for increasing public security, decreasing crime and long-term safety,
- To increase and/or balance competitiveness,
- To increase mixed use and service variation,
- To provide reuse of existing building stock,
- To prevent unfair treatments of different income groups,
- To protect and improve quality of life,

- To support mixed use to enhance pedestrian-oriented development and settlement identity.

***Table 3**. Actions and Implementation Tools*

Scale	Actions	Participants	Implementation Tools
Urban	Urban morphology, planned development, linkages between functions, accessibility	Central government, local government, professional boards, universities, private sector, foundations, NGOs, community	Related ministry budget, municipality budget, public-private partnerships, private sector
Urban division	Defined boundaries, clear entrances, visual character, coordinated uses, transportation hierarchy, maintained environment, night-day use, architectural quality, personification.	Local government, professional boards, universities, private sector, foundations, NGOs, community	Municipality budget, public-private partnerships, private sector
Street / block	Pedestrianization, building-street relationship, aesthetics, natural edges, diversity in recreational areas, safe design, auto parks, squares	Local government, professional boards, universities, private sector, foundations, NGOs, community organizations, community	Municipality budget, public-private partnerships, private sector, expropriation
Building	Material, flexible building design, architectural diversity, balance in color and size, efficient energy use, building-use balance, rehabilitation of old structures, diversity in housing supply	Local government, professional boards, universities, private sector, foundations, NGOs, community organizations, community, property owners	Municipality budget, public-private partnerships, private sector, expropriation , urban regeneration funds, property owners

These fundamentals should be considered with three components of quality which are design / redesign, compatibility and performance. Central and local governments do not have sufficient capacity for the improvement efforts at urban scale, therefore, there is a need for the provision of collaborative mechanisms to realize urban actions at all levels. Public-private partnerships are helpful in allocation of financial resources and in management of urban actions. Especially in quality improvements at street and building scale, the contribution of private sector is essential. In partnership-oriented actions, there is not only a need for coordination of implementation tools, but also there is a need to develop an action schedule with priorities. The aim, here, is to define the actions and projects that are related to each other and to establish a right relation between budget and timing. The priorities are identified according to sustainability, efficiency, convenience / relevance and financial restrictions.

Monitoring and Assessment

The last stage in the SQPM is monitoring and assessment. Monitoring and assessment provide the control of integrated design proposals and implementation in diverse action areas from urban fabric to building scale. Strategic decisions and actions should continuously be traced and assessed within the perspective of community benefit, durability, continuity and feasibility. In particular, the following questions should be answered: What has been done? How can we understand success? How effective is the implementation? Is there anything missing? Regarding the results of this stage, if action plans and projects are realized as wanted, implementation can continue. If there are any unexpected situations, the plan is reconsidered, updated, approved and continued for its implementation.

Conclusion

The growing complexity of urban quality problems in historic environment necessitates strategic tools in urban planning that can respond to changing demands and conditions. The strategic approach can help decision-makers, professionals and community in developing long-term visions for the city, in formulating integrated urban policies and in monitoring the success of proposed actions. The Strategic Quality Planning Model, in that sense, provides a strategic approach for increasing environmental quality and quality of life in present historic urban fabric according to the demands of inhabitants by the cooperation of various actors. As a result, the expected impacts of the SQPM are:

- To develop a sustainable quality framework in historic urban environment while provide integration to current planning process,
- To protect natural and cultural landscapes by adapting them to contemporary demands.
- To enhance the aesthetic awareness among the community,
- To emphasize diversity and variety,
- To enhance participatory approaches while providing satisfaction to all interested parties and participation in the design process,
- To support partnership and cooperation while balancing common interests,
- To provide social cohesion.

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Kentsel çevrede stratejik kalite planlaması

Dünya kentsel nüfusundaki hızlı artış, küreselleşme eğilimi ve beraberinde getirdiği nüfus hareketliliği, kentsel alanlarda çevre kalitesi konularına giderek daha fazla önem verilmesini gerektirmektedir. Günümüzde, kentlerin fiziki nitelikleriyle doğrudan ilişkili olan çevre kalitesi kavramının sosyo-ekonomik geri yansımaları da büyük önem taşımaktadır. Son yıllarda tüm dünyada, toplam kalite yönetimi konularında üretim ve hizmete dayalı olarak geliştirilen stratejik planlama çalışmalarında, temel yöntem olarak müşteri/kullanıcı odaklı bir yaklaşım izlendiği ve kullanıcı katılımı ve işbirliğinin vurgulandığı bilinmektedir.

Genel anlamda toplam kalite yaklaşımı, kurum, kuruluş ve organizasyonların ürün niteliği ve performansıyla ilgili gibi algılansa da, bu konu mimari ve kentsel çevre ve yaşam kalitesi konularına doğrudan uyarlanabilir. Kalite anlayışının tek bir yapıdan başlayarak ülke ölçeğine kadar her düzeyde uygulanması mümkündür.

Kentsel çevrede tasarım uygulamalarının temelde insanın yaşam kalitesini yükseltmeye yönelik olduğu bilinmektedir. Kalite anlayışının odağında insan faktörü yer almaktadır. Yapısal çevrenin tasarlanmasında da tasarım etkinliğinin, insan gereksinmelerine cevap verebilecek kapsamlı bir modele dayandırılması gerekir. Gereksinmeler, kullanıcının eylemlerini en etkin bir biçimde yerine getirebilmesi için sağlanması gereken fizyolojik, psikolojik ve sosyolojik boyutlardaki koşulları tanımlamaktadır.

Mimari ve kentsel çevrede kalite olgusu, çevreyi oluşturan her bir elemanın ilişkiler bütününün ya da genel ifadesiyle ürünün niteliğine veya ürünün kullanıcı gereksinmelerine karşı gösterdiği performansa bağlı olarak

değerlendirilmektedir. Performans, kullanıcının mekansal tatmin düzeyini doğrudan etkileyen bir faktördür. Yaşam kalitesi, ürün ya da malzemede kalite, tasarım kalitesi gibi konularda beklentilerin sağlanabilmesi ve çevresel kalitenin yükseltilmesi, ancak daha üstün bir kaliteyi talep edebilen bilinçli kullanıcıların sürece katkısı ile mümkün olabilmektedir. Bu nedenle kentsel çevrede kalite iyileştirmelerine yönelik çalışmalarda da katılımcı bir yaklaşım izlenmesi gerekmektedir.

Türkiye'de "*kentsel çevrede kalite"* kavramı, geniş kapsamda İstanbul'da 1996 yılında gerçekleştirilen Habitat Zirvesi'nde tartışılmıştır. Bu konu, Zirve'nin Ulusal Eylem Planı'nda 13. öncelikli konu olan "*Konut, Çevre ve Toplumsal İlişkilerin Kalitesine Yönelik Duyarlılığın Artırılması ve Kalitenin Gerçekleştirilmesi"* başlığında değerlendirilmiştir. Burada sorunun, ekonomik faktörlerin yanında Türkiye'nin "*kentleşme" ve "kentlileşme"* sürecine uyum sağlayamamasından kaynaklandığı ve bundan en çok etkilenen yerleşmelerin tarihsel ve mimari niteliklerinin zengin olduğu eski kent dokuları olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Zirvede katılım*, "türlü aktörlerin işbirliği ile ilgili halkın yaşam kalitesini artırmaya yönelik aktiviteler"* olarak tanımlanmıştır.

Yukarıda sıralanan gelişmelerin ışığında, bu makalede tarihsel ve mimari değer açısından zengin, ancak zaman içinde çeşitli nedenlerle eskiyen ve kullanım standardı düşen kentsel dokularda, çevresel kalitenin stratejik planlama yoluyla yükseltilmesi yönünde planlama, tasarım, uygulama ve değerlendirme süreçlerinde uygulanabilecek bir çalışma sistematiği ortaya koymak amaçlanmıştır.

Makale, yazarların "İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi Araştırma Fonu" kapsamında 2005 yılında tamamlanan "Mevcut Kentsel Dokuda Çevresel Kalitenin İyileştirilmesi: Stratejik Kalite Planlaması Modeli" başlıklı araştırma raporuna dayanmaktadır. Makale kapsamında, öncelikle kalite kavramı ve ardından kentsel çevreye yansımaları kapsamlı olarak irdelenerek, katılımcı planlama yoluyla kentsel çevrede kalitenin iyileştirilmesine yönelik bir kavramsal model önerisi geliştirilmiştir.

Mevcut kentsel dokuda çevresel kalitenin iyileştirilmesine yönelik geliştirilen "*Stratejik Kalite Planlaması Modeli"*, tasarımdan etkilenen kesimin sürece katılımını öngören, konunun ilgili taraflarının işbirliği çerçevesinde yörede yaşayan halkın kendi istekleri doğrultusunda yaşam kalitesini artırmaya katkıda bulunan stratejik bir yaklaşım sunmaktadır. Model, mevcut durum analizi, misyon ve vizyonun belirlenmesi, stratejik amaç ve hedeflerin saptanması, etkinlik ve projelerin hazırlanması, yapılan çalışmaların izlenmesi, değerlendirme ve performans ölçümünün gerçekleştirilmesi aşamalarını içermektedir.

Önerilen modelde, ilgili bütün tarafların memnuniyetinin sağlandığı, birbirine bağımlı ve ilişkili sistemlerin vurgulandığı, katılımcıların katkılarının maksimize edildiği, sürekli öğrenme ve farklı görüş ve yeniliklere açıklığın sağlandığı, ortaklıkların ve işbirliğinin geliştirildiği, ortak çıkarların değerlendirildiği ve sosyal bütünleşmenin sağlandığı ve sürdürülebilir değer yaratan bir çerçeve sunulmaktadır.