Low-Income Housing Problematic in the Central Areas of Istanbul and Sao Paulo: Threats, Challenges and Possibilities

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Abstract   The concepts of slums and squatters settlements represent the depressed areas or sections of the population of cities, which are not fully integrated, socially or economically, into the development process. There are differences in national attitudes, standards and definitions toward what constitutes a slum or squatter settlement. In this study we will define slums as areas of authorised, usually older housing, which are deteriorating or decaying in the sense that they are underserviced and overcrowded. Slums are usually located on the valuable land adjacent to the central business district. Squatter settlements on the other hand are dwellings erected without official permission.

The overcrowded slums in city centres and the rapid growth of squatter settlements in and around cities are evidence of the size of the housing problem for the low-income urban migrants in developing countries. In most developing country cities ,the city centre with its perceived concentration of job opportunities is the preferred location for the informal sector housing market.

The focus of this comparative research is on the physically and socially degraded districts in central areas of Istanbul and Sao Paulo. The main problematic of the research is around the concept of slum which has different meanings in different contexts. The aim of this presentation is to evaluate similarities and differences of Turkey and Brazil in terms of urbanisation, patterns of spontaneous settlements and the pattern of low-income housing located in the central areas in Istanbul and Sao Paulo in order to develop and apply urban housing rehabilitation policy for them.

Introduction   This paper is based on the comparative research which focuses upon the physically and socially degraded districts in central areas of Istanbul and Sao Paulo (Erkut, et.al. ,1999). The main problematic of the research is around the concept of slum which has different meanings in different national contexts. The concept of slum, represents the depressed areas of the city or parts of the urban population which are not fully integrated, socially or economically, into the development process. Slums are areas of authorized, usually older housing which are deteriorating or decaying in the sense that they are underserviced and overcrowded. Slums are usually located on valuable land adjacent to the central business district. As the

case in all developing countries, the city centre with its perceived concentration of job opportunities is the preferred location, but that area is incapable of assimilating the large numbers of migrants (Chapman,1997)

Therefore, people in the lowest social groups are displaced outwards just as many of the new immigrants who move to the fringes of the city and form the self-built squatter settlements there.

Physical and social deterioration in central areas is approached by the theory of filtering and neighborhood succession (Grigsby et.al.,1977). Filtering defined by Rattcliffe (1949) as a change in occupancy from a higher-income group to a lower one. While Fisher and Winnick (1961) defined it as a downward shift in the relative price (or rent) of a unit; Grigsby recast the issue as a question of the changing use of existing stock within the broader conceptualization of the housing market (Megbalugbe et.al, 1996).

The direction of this theoretical approach shifted from deterioration of housing to deterioration of neighborhoods and paralled the shift from sub-standard housing as the most significant policy issue to neighborhood deterioration and the spatial concentration of poverty. The forces that cause the separation of socio-economic and ethnic groups cause filtering to affect entire neighborhoods not scattered structures.

The filtering resulted from both "macro forces" and "micro" neighborhood forces. The macro forces are population change, income change, obsolescence and public actions. The micro forces include physical deterioration and social deterioration which is related to the number of families living in sub-standard housing. Most of the people think that the depreciation and natural physical decay of housing creates sub-standard housing and living conditions. It is argued that in most cases it is related to the active process of disinvestment in the standing stock, in addition it is pointed out that it is possible to extend the physical life of the stock almost indefinitely through maintenance and improvement. The availability of low-income housing depended on consumption behavior of higher income groups. Changes in social and economic variables cause households acting directly or through a system of housing suppliers and market intermediaries to make different decisions regarding level of maintenance, upgrading, conversion, whether to move, new construction, boarding-up and demolition, producing changes in dwelling and neighborhood characteristics.

The aim of this presentation is to evaluate similarities and differences of Turkey and Brazil in terms of urbanization, patterns of spontaneous settlements and the pattern of low-income housing located in the central areas in Istanbul and Sao Paulo in order to develop and apply urban housing rehabilitation policy for them. The purpose is to alert planners and public officials that an understanding of the operation of housing markets must precede policy prescriptions for housing problems

Comparative Analysis of Urbanization in Turkey and Brazil

Turkey, as a developing country, has been undergoing a migration process since the 1950s. Migration from rural to urban areas or from small towns to big cities has created many problems that the governments or local authorities had not faced before. The most severe problems have arisen in Istanbul since it is the most attractive city for all the citizens. Istanbul had been one of the most important capitals of the Mediterranean basin for almost sixteen centuries, starting from the foundation of Constantinople in the 4th century A.D. and ensuring up to the end of the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s. Istanbul has had to face three major transformations in its history because of its unique location (Sağlamer, 1996).

The basic structure and mechanism of urbanization process in Turkey started in relation to the migration process in 1950's and 1960's. The main reason for the existence of such structure and relations is to cope with the problems created by rapid urbanization which is a process resulted from mass migration from rural to urban areas.The basic institution facilitating the negative impact of migration is gecekondu; which existed firstly in 1945's and institutionalized in 1950's. The main characteristics of the first generation of the rural migrants are that they produced self- built irregular housing on public land. Squatter settlements contain makeshift dwellings erected without official permission. Squatter settlements go by various names in different countries. For example, gecekondu in Turkey, favelas in Brazil, bustees in India and bidonvilles in former French colonies such as Algeria and Morocco. The term "gecekondu" literally means "built overnight" has become the Turkish equivalent of squatter.

When we look at the case in Sao Paulo, as the case throughout much of Latin America, the municipal landscape is dominated by inner-city squatter settlements and extensive suburban areas consisting of self-constructed dwellings. The basic push factor was the availability of industrial jobs in Sao Paulo. Presently it has been estimated that as much as 70% of the municipality (which covers an area of over 1500 square kilometers -three times of Paris), contains some form or other of substandard housing.

Other than favelas, another major segment of urban poor resides in converted older homes and factories. In 1991, it was estimated that there were approximately 90,000 such dwellings in Sao Paulo, housing some three million people (known as cortiços).Generally speaking, conditions in these places are worse than those of the favelas. In many cases rent is high. As a result, whole families typically resort to inhabiting just one room within the larger structure.

As enabled by 1986 municipal law number 10.289- designed to promote mechanisms supporting urban renewal generally- the version of "density bonusing" eventually adopted in Sao Paulo work as follows. Developers who succesfully petition for zoning law exemptions offer in return a certain number of "social interest housing units"whose value in cash terms conforms to the average cost of providing basic shelter for families in need.

A brief look at the selected socio-economic indicators of Turkey and Brazil (Erkut, 2000) presented some similarities although there are basic cultural, historical and developmental differences between two countries.

The population figures concerning estimates and projections for size and growth of total population are compared. Total population of Brazil is almost two times more than the population of Turkey whereas the area of Brazil is comparatively very large. The annual growth rate of both countries are about 2%, and the projections for 2025-2050 period are nearly same in the sense that it will reduce to about 5%. The distribution of population by sex is compared and the percentage of males is found slightly higher in Turkey. Demographic indicators related to age structure and life expectancy at birth, for the years 1975-2025 are presented below. In order to compare these figures with developed countries Sweden is selected and the figures of Italy as it is another counterpart of the project. The findings indicate the similarity of Brazil and Turkey in age structure, both having fairly young population. The ageing of population is obvious in Sweden where in 1970-1975 people more than 60 years old forms 21% of the population. In Italy it is 17.4 percent, in Turkey it is 6.9% and in Brazil it is 5.8%.

Another indicator of a developmental level of a country is life expectancy at birth. Within 1970-1975 periods, figures for females is 77.5 for Sweden, it is 69.2 for Italy. The similarity of Brazil and Turkey are seen in those figures that are 62.2 for Brazil and 60.0 for Turkey. Dependent population are calculated by ages<15 and >65, as a percent of the potential labour force, ages 15 to 65. Annual growth rates of Turkey and Brazil are comparatively high with figures of 4.45% and 3.06% respectively for the years 1975-2000. It is 0.40% for Sweden and much less in Italy (0.22%). The projection for 1975-2010 periods indicates that annual growth rate of population is decreasing for each selected city.

Presentation of Istanbul Case Study

A brief history of the project organization is given below. The International Project started in February 1998, with the agreement signed between Istanbul Technical University, Sao Paulo University and Torino Polytechnic. Three meetings were held so far to develop the project. First workshop was held in February 1999 at Torino, Italy; second workshop was held in December 1999 at Sao Paulo, Brazil and the third and the last one was held on October 2000 in Istanbul, Turkey

The aim of the comparative research project is the development of an urban restructuring policy that considers the possibility to rehabilitate degraded areas in central areas of Istanbul and Sao Paulo. In this context, the socioeconomic characteristics of low-income population in central areas of cities and their use of urban space have to be analyzed.

After an extensive search of Beyoğlu central area district, three quarters have been selected as the case study namely Çukur, Kalyoncu Kulluğu, and Yahya Kahya both are located nearby Taksim area on the one side of Tarlabaşı street. General views of the main road (Tarlabaşı Street) adjoining the three areas are presented in figure 1.

Figure 6.1. General Views from Tarlabaşı Street

The first stage of the research covers social aspects which includes studies like profiling the community, describing its background, assessing its strengths and weaknesses and defining current issues and concerns. Physical aspects and site characteristics includes land use charecteristics, texture, density, land values and urban infrastructure Community profile are determined by a questionnaire and settlement characteristics are determined by the physical survey. Physical survey covers the following work:Land use of ground floor and first floor, physical conditions of building, number of storeys, building material, ownership pattern, occupancy of area and listed buildings. Socio-economic research is made by a survey with a sample size of 86 questionaires. Within the three districts there are 1399 buildings. Age, education, marital status, location of workplace, place of origin, length of residence, existence of social/kinship network in the area, savings, preference for the future residence, level of consolidation of the flat, use of external space, leisure activities are determined by a questionnaire. The findings of the research related to the evaluation of population dynamics and quality of housing and environment for each district are summarised below.

Çukur Sub-district   This area is the nearest district to the Taksim Square The photographs of the area presents the deterioration of the buildings and lack of maintanance (figure 2-3).

Çukur Sub-district has mostly young population as general figures of Turkey. 66% of the residents are less than 30 years old. 46% of the residents are living in this area less than five years. It means that this area is more dynamic than Yahya Kahya Sub-district. 23% of them are of İstanbul origin, though immigrants from Black Sea Region are 23% of the residents. Inner Anatolia and Eastern Anatolia Regions also have large proportion (19%-15%). This area shows a regional mosaic. Only 8% of the residents have come from sub-district-village and 80% of them have come from center of small or medium size cities.

The most important future expectations are better job, better income and social security, better house and having better opportunities for the children. It shows that the residents of Çukur have more economic expectations than Yahya Kahya Sub-district.

8% of the residents are unemployed. 67% of the employed household members are wage earners. Only 20% of them have another job to get more money. Most of them (81%) are working around Taksim and it shows a strong relationship between housing and work.

Most of the residents (77%) are tenants and 65% of the flats are less than 60 square meters. 92% of them do not have garden in their properties and 66% of them use the street for social interactions. Only 15% of the residents assume their living place as a home. 81% of them think that there is no building around worthy to be conserved.
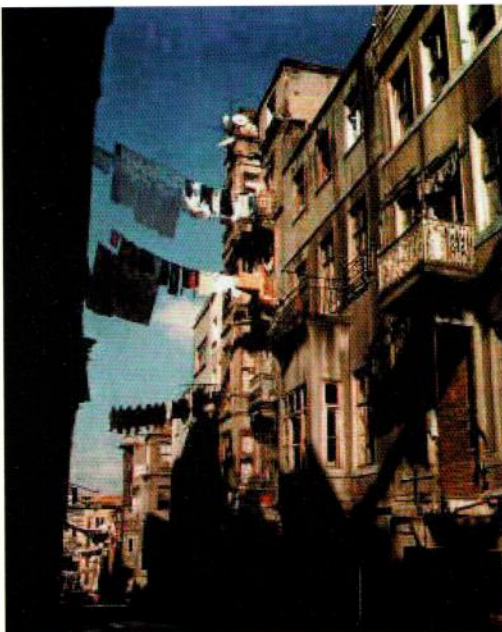

Figure 6.2. The main street in Çukur area

Figure 6.3. A Typical street of Çukur Area

Kalyoncu Kulluğu Sub-district

This area is located in between Çukur and Yahya Kahya districts. The photographs of the area presents the deterioration of the buildings as well as an example of an abandoned building (figures 4-5).

Kalyoncu Kulluğu Sub-district has mostly young population, 73% of the residents are less than 40 years old. 36% of the residents are living in this area more than 20 years, while 83% of them are living more than 5 years. It means that this area is more stable than other sample districts, but especially Çukur Sub-district. Place of origin shows that this area has taken immigration from whole regions of the country. Main immigrants are from Inner Anatolia (30%) and Eastern Anatolia (20%), while only 3% of the residents have İstanbul origin. 40% of the residents have come from sub-district-village.

Only 3% of the households are unemployed. Because most of the interviewees are housewife (57%). 43% of the employed household members are wage earners. On the other hand, 38% of them are self-employed and population of this area seems to take more initiative. Only 6% of them have another job to get more money. Most of them (81%) are working around Taksim. 60% of the residents are tenants and 74% of the flats are less than 60 square meters. Only 3% them have garden in their properties and 77% of them use the street for social interactions. 77% of the residents do not assume their living place as a home. 63% of them think that there is no building around worthy to be conserved.
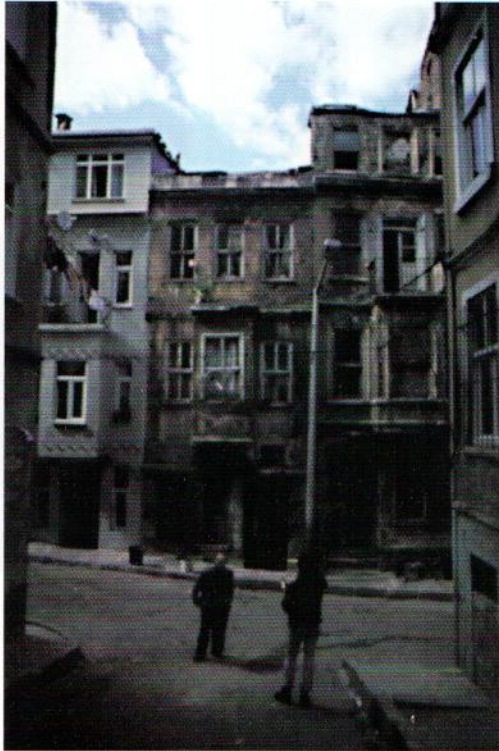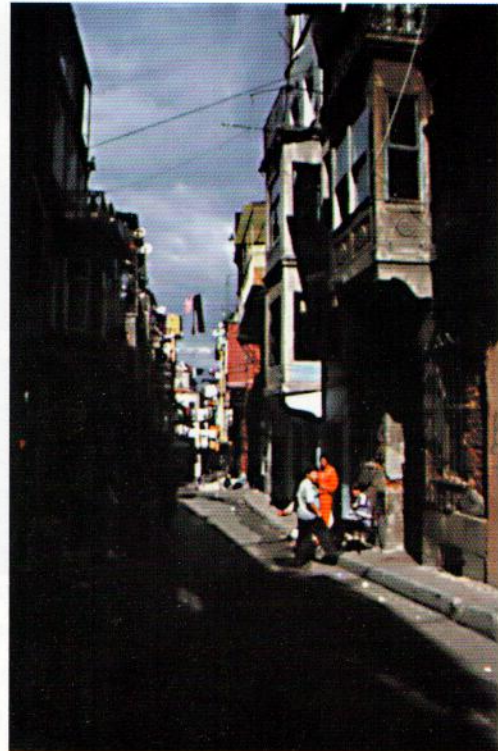

Figure 6.4. A view from Kalyoncu Kulluğu

Figure 6.5. A typical street of district ·

Yahya Kahya Sub-district The location of the district is the farest to the Taksim square. The photographs of the area can be seen in figures 6-7.

This survey area has mostly young population as general figures of Turkey. Although 33 % of the residents are living in this area more than 30 years, 19 % of them are living less than 5 years. It means that this area is still attractive for immigrants. Only 13% of the residents have İstanbul origin. 39 % of them have come from sub-district-village, while 61 % from centers of county or province. 4% of the residents are real unemployed. 58% of the employed household members are wage earners and 52% of them have another job to get more money. It means that the residents take place in marginal sector. Most of them (76%) are working around Taksim and it shows a strong relationship between housing and work.

For evaluating the quality of housing and environment, we have several criterions. Most of the residents (68%) are the owners and 52% of the flats are 61-100 square meters. 71% of them do not have garden in their properties and 62% of them use the street for social interactions. 68% of them assume that there is no building around worth to be conserved.

The most important future expectation is to have better opportunities for their children and followed by having a better job and better neighbourhood. It shows demands of residents to achieve better quality of life.
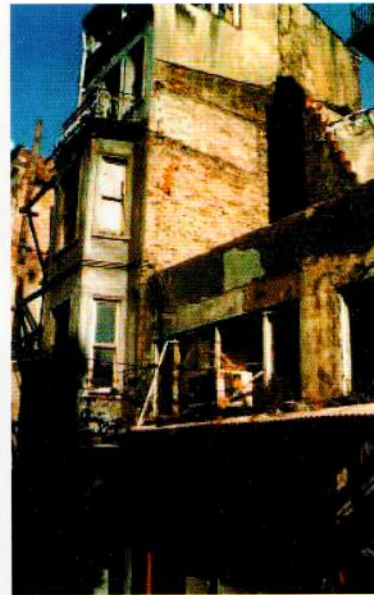

Figure 6.6. A general view of Yahya Kahya

Figure 6.7. An Example of the deteriorated texture in Yahya Kahya

The Findings of Physical Analyses

The results of the physical analyses on three sample areas put forward some differences and similarities. Firstly, these sample areas are mainly residential and also include commercial activities. They have strong relation to the commercial center of the city. Building material shows differences in these areas. The historical wooden buildings are still used in Çukur Sub-district, while it is seen stone and especially concrete buildings in two other districts. Çukur is a typical example of low income housing in the central areas. 40% of the buildings are on average of physical conditions and 38% of them are in bad physical condition. Yahya Kahya Sub-district has better physical conditions of buildings and is more dynamic than Çukur Sub-district.

Comparision of Sao Paulo and Istanbul Case Study

Differences in two cases are presented below. Considering the physical context; in Sao Paulo the case study is just one occupied building where 83 families live in and sanitary spaces like bathroom and toilet are shared in-between families. Whereas in İstanbul a neighborhood is the case study and considering sanitary spaces each family has their own independent facilities

In terms of socio-cultural context; in Sao Paulo public buildings are occupied, length of residence less than five years (73%) and the people have organizational initiative. On the other hand for the case of İstanbul it is seen the occupation of unknown ownership. Length of residence less than five years (39%) and the residents are not organised.

Similarities for the cases of Sao Paulo and İstanbul, considering physical context there is deterioration of built environment, inadequate services, inadequate green space, lack of maintenance and unsanitary living conditions in outdoor spaces. In reference to socio-cultural context there are similar processes of filtering of the low income inhabitants to central areas, illegal occupation of buildings in general

Evaluation of Data

The relevant data is now under the evaluation process, which can be given in three stages in order.

The first stage addresses the trends on where are we going. Within this context relevant demographic, economic, environmental and social trends are identified.

The second stage addresses the question "where do we want to be?". In order to realize this stage, collaboration with the local municipalities and community meetings are planned. An articulation of the shared community values and community vision for the future and assesssment of community needs will be developed in this stage.

The third and final step addresses the question "how do we get there?". This is strategic or action-planning process where short-term strategies are identified and actions are identified which intends to move the community in the direction of its long-term vision. Partners (municipality, university, community) who are responsible for implementing specific actions are identified in this stage.

A "visioning framework" will be established which presents a time-frame, overall focus, target areas of concern. The number of scenarios to be developed as part of the process will be determined .

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low-income housing problemmatic in central areas
of istanbul and sao paolo

THREATS, CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES

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AIM:-
The aim of this comparative research is to develop and apply urban housing rehabilitation policy for the degraded areas of Istanbul and Sao Paulo's central areas. In this context, developmental level and demographic structure of Brazil and Turkey are compared below.

PROFILE: TURKEY and BRAZIL
A brief look at the selected socio-economic indicators of Turkey and Brazil presents some similarities although there are basic cultural, historical and developmental differences between two countries.

Urbanization Trends, Size and Growth of Urban and Rural Population, for the years 1975-2025 are presented in the table 9 and table 10.

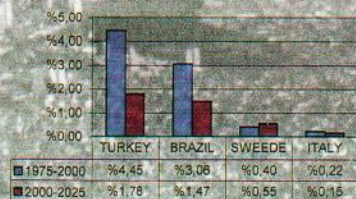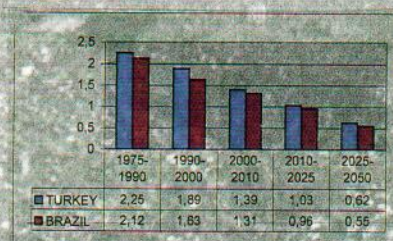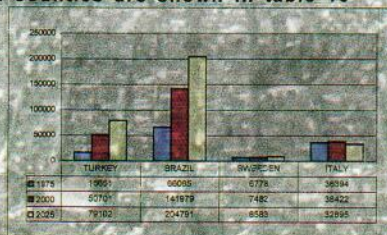|	TURKEY	BRAZIL	SWEEDE	ITALY
1975-2000	%4,45	%3,06	%0,40	%0,22
2000-2025	%1,78	%1,47	%0,55	%0,15

Table 9: Level of Urbanization (% of total population in urban settlements)

Urban population and annual growth rates of selected counties are shown in table 10 below.

	TURKEY	BRAZIL	SWEDEN	ITALY
1975	19591	66085	6779	36994
2000	50701	141979	7482	38422
2025	79102	204791	6588	32895

	1975- 1990	1990- 2000	2000- 2010	2010- 2025	2025- 2050
TURKEY	2,25	1,89	1,39	1,03	0,62
BRAZIL	2,12	1,63	1,31	0,96	0,55

The annual growth rate of both countries are about 2%, and the projections for 2025-2050 period are nearly same in the sense that it will reduce to about 5%.
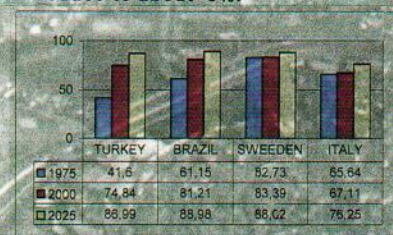

	TURKEY	BRAZIL	SWEEDEN	ITALY
1975	41,6	61,15	82,73	65,64
2000	74,84	81,21	83,39	67,11
2025	86,99	88,98	88,02	76,25

Table 10 : Urban Population and Annual Growth Rate

DIFFERENCES (Sao Paulo / İstanbul)

Sao Paulo

- Shared sanitary spaces more than one family (like bathroom, WC)
- One occupied building (83 families live in)

İstanbul

- Each family has their own sanitary spaces
- Neighbourhood

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Sao Paulo

- Occupation of public buildings
- Length of residence less than five years (% 73)
- They have organisational initiative

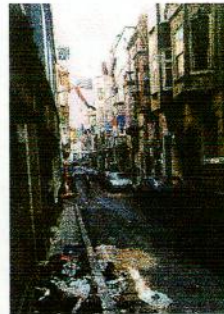### İstanbul

- Occupation of unknown ownership
- Length of residence less than five years (% 39)
- They are not organised

SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

SIMILARITIES (Sao Paulo / İstanbul)

- Deterioration of built environment
- Inadequate services
- Inadequate green space
- Lack of maintenance
- Unsanitary living conditions in outdoor spaces

PHYSICAL CONTEXT

- Filtering of the low income inhabitants to central areas
- Illegal occupation of buildings in general but it has also differences
- Real estate devaluation

SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

aerial view of istanbul

istanbul çukur district: low maintanance

sao paulo study area

aerial view of sao paulo
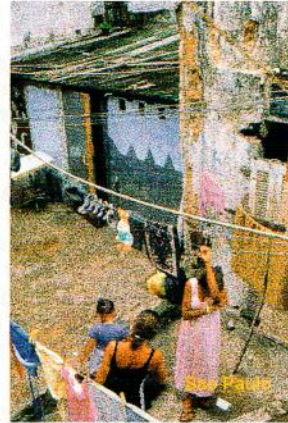

Street from Sao Paulo

CASE STUDY : Çukur Sub-district

Çukur Sub-district has mostly young population as general figures of Turkey. 66% of the residents are less than 30 years old. 46% of the residents are living in this area less than five years. It means that this area is more dynamic than Yahya Kahya Sub-district. 23% of them have İstanbul origin, though immigrants from Black Sea Region are 23% of the residents. Inner Anatolia and Eastern Anatolia Regions also have large proportion (19%-15%). This area shows a regional mosaic. Only 8% of the residents have come from sub-district-village and 80% of them have come from center of small or medium size cities.
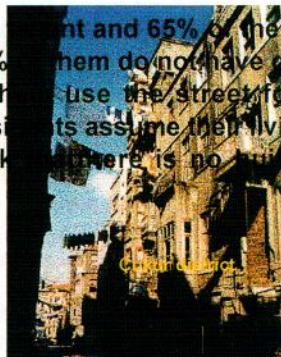
The most important future expectations are better job, better income and social security, better house and having better opportunities for the children. It shows that the residents of Çukur have more economic expectations than Yahya Kahya Sub-district.

çukur district

8% of the residents are real unemployed. 67 of the employed household members are wage earners. Only 20% of them have another job to get more money. Most of them (81%) are working around Taksim and it shows a strong relationship between housing and work.

Most of the residents (77%) are tenant and 65% of the flats are less than 60 square meters. 92% of them do not have garden in their properties and 66% of them use the street for social interactions. Only 15% of the residents assume their living place as a home. 81% of them think that there is no building around worthy to be conserved.

Çukur district

İstanbul Tarlabaşı /çukur district

Discussion:
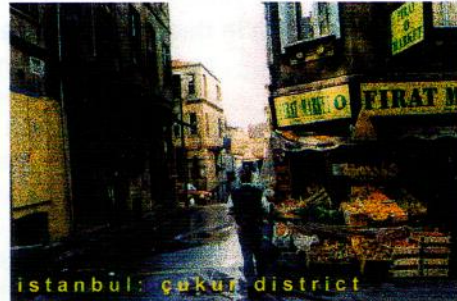
As indicated in Habitat II agenda in many countries markets serve as theprimary housing delivery mechanism.It is the responsibility of governments to create an enabling environment for a well functioning housing market. The enabling strategy was first adapted by the UN Global Shelter Strategy in 1988. It emphasizes that; governments should not be directly involved with the construction of houses; but that their resources should be directed to removing the constraints in the supply of resources and institutional arrangements. The public sector is the enabler; who enables other actors.

istanbul: çukur district

In addition to **"enabling"** people and increasing their capabilities for improving their lives; people should also be provided enough "power" to realize their plans. The findings of the research on two settlements nearby one of the water reservoir area in Istanbul Metropolitan area indicated that; residents are aware of the environmental problems due to the location of their settlements; but as the market value instead of use value dominates i.e. housing is not only shelter but a commodity in the illegal housing market; a contaversial situation arises. the enabling and empowerment strategy should be used very carefully not to interfere with the livability strategy. The enhancing capacity of community based and volunteer organizations should be used to shape local sustainable economic and social policies. The distinction between enabling driven enabling within the do not government different intervention Governments whose priorities market . The enabling policies and market policies is that the policies recommended Global Shelter Strategy necessarily imply less intervention but a kind of government intervene to help those housing needs and are not met by the potential conflict in shelter strategies between the need for liberalization "freedom to build" and the need for regulation *to correct market imperfections* is a particular illustration of the wider dilemma facing all economies that aim to be more equitable but also to remain competitive within the regional and international markets.

Suggested housing block for Sao Paulo

Interior of the new housing block