

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDIES ON URBAN CONSCIOUSNESS: THE SAMPLE RESEARCH IN BURSA

Kentlilik Bilinci Çalışmaları İçin Kavramsal Bir Çerçeve: Bursa Araştırması Örneği

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Abstract:

In connection with city, urbanity and urbanization, studies concerning the formation of urban culture and enhancement of urban life quality have become even more important in recent years. In this context, the concept of urbanization consciousness has become the main focus of many debates and research. Urbanconsciousness is the state in which the individual feels responsible towards the city and that the city belongs to them. The fact that individuals residing in a city have a sense of urbanconsciousness is very important in the conservation of the natural, historical and cultural values of that city, in the protection of the investments made and in providing an environment for peace, trust and prosperity. Bursa is a field of study that may set a good example for urbanconsciousness due to its various qualities such as its historical background, geographical location, natural beauty, industrial and commercial potential and demographic structure.

The subject of the present article "A Study on Urban Consciousness in Bursa" has been conducted by Uludağ University in cooperation with Bursa City Council as a Scientific Research Project and it has aimed to gather information about the emotional involvement of the individuals residing in Bursa with the city they live in, their future plans regarding the city, their perceptions of Bursa, the values they acquired in this city, their perception of self in the city, their possessiveness of the city, their representations of self in the city, urbanization and civil consciousness tendencies, social solidarity, their behavioral patterns for their love, knowledge and possessiveness of the city, for the protection, improvement and adaptation to the city and, as a result, to interpret the findings comparatively by statistical measurements.

The fundamental concepts that have become prominent as a result of the literature review and investigations for the measurement of urban consciousness are: "sense of belonging, awareness, responsibility and transformation" within the context of knowing, loving, owning and integrating with the city in a quadruple structure.

Based on these fundamental concepts, indicators have been formed with a survey study including 2000 individuals; findings and results have been evaluated within this suggested conceptual framework and published as a book in 2015. This model which was applied within the scope of the project as

a distinctive model has a structure that could be taken as an example in many further urban consciousness studies. Conceptual correlations, findings, results and suggestions were opened to discussion over Bursa sample. It is anticipated that this formed conceptual framework may shed light on strategy, method, planning, administration and implementations of Local Governments, Non-Governmental Organizations and scientific institutions.

Key words: *Urban Consciousness, Belonging, Awareness, Responsibility, Transformation, Bursa*

Özet:

Kent, kentlilik, kentleşme kavramlarıyla bağlantılı olarak kent kültürünün oluşturulması ve kentsel yaşam kalitesinin artırılması yönünde çalışmalar giderek önem kazanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda kentlilik bilinci kavramı pek çok tartışmanın ve araştırmanın ana konusu haline gelmiştir. Kentlilik bilinci; kişinin kendini kente karşı sorumlu ve kenti de kendisine ait hissetme durumudur. Kentin sahip olduğu doğal, tarihi ve kültürel değerlerin korunması ve yapılan yatırımlara sahip çıkılmasında, huzur, güven ve refah ortamının sağlanmasında kentte yaşayan bireylerin kentlilik bilincine sahip olmaları büyük önem taşımaktadır. Bursa, tarihsel serüveni, coğrafi konumu, doğal güzellikleri, sanayi ve ticari potansiyeli, demografik yapısı gibi çeşitli özellikleriyle, kentlilik bilinci çalışmaları için örnek oluşturabilecek bir çalışma alanıdır.

Makaleye konu olan "Bursa'da kentlilik bilinci araştırması", Bilimsel Araştırma projesi olarak Uludağ Üniversitesi ve Bursa Kent konseyi işbirliğiyle, gerçekleştirilmiş, Bursa'da yaşayan bireylerin kentle olan duygusal bağları, kente dair gelecek tasarımları, Bursa algıları, Bursa'da edindikleri değerler, kentteki ben algıları, kenti sahiplenme duyguları, kentte kendilerini temsil biçimleri, kentleşme ve sivil bilinç eğilimleri, sosyal dayanışma, kenti tanıma, sevmek, kenti sahiplenme, koruma, geliştirme ve kente uyum yönündeki davranış biçimleri, kentli olma gibi konularda bilgi toplamak ve sonuçları istatistiki ölçümlerle karşılaştırmalı olarak yorumlamak hedeflenmiştir.

Yapılan okumalar ve incelemeler sonunda kentlilik bilincinin ölçülmesi ve yorumlanması için öne çıkan başlıca kavramlar: 4lü bir yapı içinde, kenti tanımak, sevmek, sahip

çıkma ve kentle bütünleşme bağlamında "aidiyet, farkındalık, sorumluluk ve dönüşüm" olarak tespit edilmiştir. 2000 kişi üzerinde yapılan anket çalışmasında bu ana kavramlara bağlı olarak göstergeler oluşturulmuş, bulgular ve sonuçlar önerilen bu kavramsal çerçeve içinde değerlendirilmiş; kitap olarak da 2015 yılında yayımlanmıştır. Özgün bir öneri olarak proje kapsamında uygulanan bu model, daha sonraki pek çok kentlilik bilinci araştırması için de örnek alınabilecek bir yapıdadır. Kavramsal bağıntılar, bulgular, sonuçlar ve öneriler, Bursa örneği üzerinden tartışmaya ve değerlendirmeye açılmıştır. Oluşturulan bu kavramsal çatının, Yerel yönetimlerin, STK'ların, bilimsel kuruluşların strateji, yöntem, planlama, yönetim ve uygulamalarına da ışık tutması umulmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Kentlilik Bilinci, Aidiyet, Farkındalık, Sorumluluk, Dönüşüm, Bursa*

Introduction

A City is a physical residential area with an economic efficiency such as commercial services, in which all kinds of products including the agricultural products are distributed, population, which densified in a bordered area, has stratified from social aspect, where vertical and horizontal mobility is widespread and the efficiency of non-governmental organizations gradually increases and the criteria of which is determined by every country according to its unique qualities (Bal, 1999:23, İsbir, 1991:8).

Urbanization is a social change process in which the participation process, type and time of the individuals to the production varies; it is a process that appears with mass migration from the countryside which offers a production-based lifestyle into the cities together with the socio-economic transformations seen in rural areas and that offers, along with the fact that cities have become centers of attraction from both the economic, social and cultural points, a new consumption-based lifestyle.

Recognizing that being in a city and being urban are two different things, while urbanization indicates the fact that population has concentrated on specific areas from the physical and demographic point of view; urbanity, as a concept bearing social and psychological content, is a way of life that expresses the internalization of urban culture and values (Parlak, 2011: 453-454).

Urbanity explains the resocialization process of the individuals migrating to the city. Socialization is the internalization process of the individuals of the value-norm system and behavioral patterns of the social group they are in and gradually of the society. Individuals migrating to the cities internalize the value-norm system of the urban society, way of thinking and behavioral patterns and gradually life style of urban people. This process is related with many variables such as previous life experience of every individual or group, time spent in the city, social environment they interact with, their profession, level of education, etc. Naturally, though

an ideal urban profile is formed, the establishment of an urban prototype is based basically on the fact that individuals undergo an urbanization process depending on time, society and city and are accepted as a result of this process (Bal, 1999:35).

The major factor that distinguishes "an individual residing in the city" and "urban" is hidden in the concept of "consciousness" which incorporates "awareness", "belonging to" and "responsibility". Urbanity is a state of consciousness and requires active effort. In the light of these definitions, a recent concept that has become prominent is urban consciousness. **Urban consciousness** is a state in which the individual feels responsible towards and possessive of the city. According to another definition, urban consciousness is the attitudes, values and behaviors formed by the knowledge resulting from living in the city (Güçlü, 2002:18).

It is meaningful that the concept of urban consciousness has become prominent in recent years, is being discussed and many urban consciousness studies have been conducted in various scales. The principal condition for the formation of urban consciousness is the fact that the individuals establish meaningful and strong bonds with the city they reside and internalize the culture of living in the city by feeling like a part of the city they live in. Moreover, this requires participating into the decision making process regarding the city, being individuals feeling responsible from the urban formations and protecting the city within the frame of modern administration mentality. In this regard, the concept of urban consciousness has increasingly become crucial as a strategic notion and the studies in this field have gained momentum.

Field of Study, Method and Content

The Scientific Research Project which the present study is based on has aimed to measure urban consciousness in Bursa and has been conducted by Uludağ University with the cooperation of Bursa City Council. The survey was applied to 2000 individuals in 7 central districts of Bursa and the demographic data, basic results and other data obtained by cross analysis and compatibility analysis, evaluations and discussions regarding these data were printed as a book. It is expected that the analysis and interpretation of these data for the longterm strategic planning and activities carried out by the decision makers concerning the city of Bursa shall constitute a basis for strategy, method, planning, administration and implementations of local administrations, non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions.

With its historical background of more than 2000 years, the city of Bursa has been through various transformations since the day it became the first capital of the Ottoman Empire until today. When considered within the scope of historical continuity, it is seen that Bursa has been an important residential area in every time period. Among the reasons why people have preferred to settle in the city of Bursa are the fact that it enables marine and land transportation due to its geographical location, its closeness to an important center

such as Istanbul, its climate, natural structure and the economic opportunities it provides. The city has continued its existence as an important trade center throughout the history and received dense migrations in various time periods. Developed commercial and social life has made Bursa an attractive settlement destination where the individuals can find a dynamic economic and social life all through the history and a unique culture has emanated in the city.

Notably, following the establishment of the first organized industrial zone of Turkey in this city in the 1960s, the city has received migration rapidly and entered into a process of urbanization and transformation. Opening of the University in the city in 1970s has been another trigger for the migration. Today, with its population over 2,5 million, Bursa is the 4th biggest city of Turkey with regards to economic significance, population and development. Bursa is an important field of study for measuring and interpreting urban consciousness due to its abovementioned characteristics.

The present study which was conducted in Bursa for measuring urban consciousness differs from the other five previous studies executed in different cities of Turkey (Antalya, Istanbul, Bursa, Konya, Samsun) in that it is based on a new model proposition.

Recognizing and loving the city, feeling a sense of belonging, owning and protecting the city and participation to problem solving are important in the formation of urban consciousness. Based on this fact, the present study estimates three main concepts: awareness, belonging to and responsibility. Transformation and integration processes of the individuals who have arrived to the city by way of migration to the city life is added to this structure as the fourth factor.

The fundamental characteristics that form this model are as follows:

1. Recognizing the history and cultural and social values of the city.
2. Loving and possessing the city by feeling the emotion of belonging to the city.
3. Protecting and conserving the city, undertaking responsibility in order to realize physical, cultural and social transformation.
4. Having a transformation and adaptation process within the context of integration with the urban life.

Urban consciousness in Bursa is measured by the indicators suggested in the light of these concepts and the results are displayed by using statistical methods.

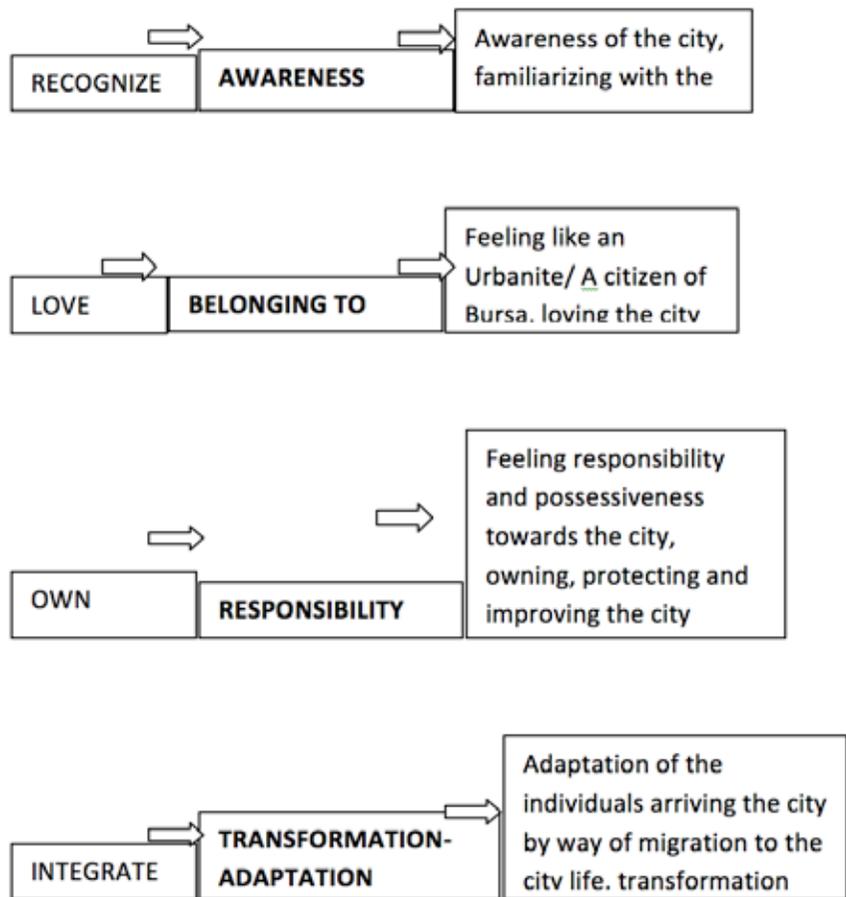


Figure 1: The diagram of conceptual framework of Urban Consciousness Research.

Considering the distribution of the questions of the Survey, it is seen that apart from the demographic questions, the indicators regarding the estimated concepts are grouped to support the main headings:

1. Indicators regarding "Awareness" (Recognition)

- *Perception of Bursa
- *The reason for preferring Bursa (Knowledge-Emotion)
- *Evaluations towards the identity of Bursa: recognition of its potential and values.
- *definition of urbanity
- *Evaluation of the individuals of their current state and improvement as urbanites
- *Recognizing the City: Visiting places of importance, recognizing the values of Bursa.
- *Participation to urban cultural and social activities.

<p>2. Indicators regarding “Belonging to”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Loosening of the ties to the hometown *State of missing Bursa *Commitment to Bursa (the idea of not abandoning) *Preferences and attitudes in cases of birth, marriage and death in the city *Loving the city of Bursa *Describing oneself as resident of Bursa, the desire to recognize and own the city
<p>3. Indicators regarding “Responsibility”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Membership to urban institutions: urban organization awareness, participation to decision, administration and control mechanisms *Behavior and communication sensitivity regarding the social life in the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criticism Warning Conscientious responsibility Appreciation Courtesy driven communication

Table.1 Urban Consciousness Indicators

Findings of Urban Consciousness in Bursa Study:

Considering demographically, it is seen that some of the estimations made at the beginning are confirmed in the results.

- *Time spent in the city,
- *Difference in consciousness caused by being born in Bursa,
- *Social and economic urban gains obtained in the city,
- *Confirmation of the relationship between age-education-level of income and urban consciousness in urban consciousness context; thus, urban consciousness levels of the individuals who:
 - Were born in Bursa,
 - Are at the age of 45 and above,
 - Have been living in Bursa for a long period of time such as 54-63 years,
 - Have a regular job for more than 35 years
 - have a high level of urban consciousness as expected.

Based on these results, it is possible to say that being born in a city has made an additional contribution to the feeling of being an urban and increased the level of urban consciousness. On the other hand, it is possible to state that as the age increases owning the city also scales up and that this fact increases the level of urban consciousness. In other words, the more age increases, the higher urban consciousness level occurs. Another finding is that as the time spent/lived in a city increases, it is seen that the level of urban consciousness also increases. It is possible to state that decisiveness of economy is valid also for this situation and that the individuals with a regular income have a higher level of urban consciousness than those who do not have a regular income.

When all these findings are considered together, it could be expressed that being born in a city, age, time spent in that city and having a regular income have a direct effect on urban consciousness.

Apart from the demographic findings, some results regarding awareness, belonging to, responsibility and transformation-integration within the context of urban consciousness:

In terms of the definition of urbanity, “feeling like a resident of Bursa”, “regarding as the owner” appear as prominent factors. The fact that being an urban is explained as more than being born to a place, as feeling oneself as belonging to a place is an indication of the formation of urban consciousness. This approach overlaps with modern-day definitions of city which is described as the place where individuals gain a position and status with their personal efforts. In other words, even if the individuals were born in another place, they are able to become an urban individual in the universal sense in the city they live in.

The emotions felt while living in Bursa are expressed mainly with positive feelings such as “happy, peaceful, at ease, safe”. The fact that individuals express their feelings about living in Bursa with such positive expressions although the city has expanded largely in recent years is a very rare quality that could not be said for many cities in the world. Although Bursa is a big city, it has the warmth and atmosphere of a family.

Though the percentage of the individuals who arrived to the city by way of migration for going hometown is high, the reason for this is explained mainly as “visiting the hometown”. This fact means that even if individuals who migrated to the cities have contact with their hometowns, they would not abandon the city they live in. According to the results Bursa is a city which is missed and not desired to leave.

According to the results, obeying the social and moral rules and displaying sensitivity about this issue have become prominent. Considering that majority of the population have later arrived to the city, this is an important chance for Bursa. This means that “belonging to”, one of the key concepts of urban consciousness, is present in the residents of the city. The individuals, who feel like they belong to the city, have passed to the next stage by drawing attention to obeying social rules and displayed the existence of urban consciousness by activating “responsibility”.

In urban consciousness context, it is meaningful that the rate of following local media is quite high. Following local media indicates that individuals are interested in the city they live in; in other words, they display their sensitivity regarding the city they reside in. As to sensitivity, it is an essential element of being urban. It is possible to regard it as an indicator of the fact that individuals are faithful to the place they live in and have a high level of perceiving the local.

Membership to Non-Governmental Organizations, generally, appears as weak. This result could be explained as absence of being an organized society consciousness which is one of the requirements of being an urban individual and living in the city.

When considered from transformation point of view, it is seen that individuals who have settled in Bursa by way of migration have been through a transformation in their economic status and life style. Cities, as they are a social change process at the same time, have an effect on the lives of the people. In this scope, individuals who migrate to the city for better job opportunities go through a transformation peculiar to the cities in their life styles as well as their economic status.

For “belonging to” concept, the main emphasis of the participants for the things that should be done in Bursa has been on humanitarian values such as cooperativeness, tolerance and hospitality, protecting history and nature, unity and solidarity without any exceptions. The prerequisite of being able to exist together in the city, “the place where you meet strangers”, is bringing humanitarian values into the forefront by paying no attention to where anyone comes from. It is important for the individuals living in Bursa to be aware of and draw attention to this fact. On the other hand, the need to protect historical and natural characteristics is emphasized and this is meaningful because of the fact that it indicates that the individuals living in Bursa have recognized and feel responsible towards their city.

Summarily, in the light of the questions covered in the survey, it is seen that individuals who:

- Do not visit their hometown frequently,
- Are members of foundations and non-governmental organizations related with the city,
- Regard themselves as owners of the city,
- Follow the local media
- have a higher level of urban consciousness.

Not visiting hometown frequently indicates higher level of consciousness in “belonging to” context from the point that it represents the fact that the resided city has been internalized. On the other hand, membership to non-governmental organizations indicates high urban consciousness level in “responsibility” context. The fact that individuals regard themselves as owners of the city is a state that directly indicates high level of urban consciousness. Following local media, as mentioned before, is directly related with level of urban consciousness. If the individuals are concerned about the city they live in, they follow local media, in other words, this indicated a developed urban consciousness.

Result:

It is very important for the individuals residing in the cities to have urban consciousness in conserving the natural, historical and cultural values of the city and protecting the investments made to the city. The prerequisites of the procurement of urbanization by way of improving urban consciousness are recognizing and loving the city that they

live in, feeling a sense of belonging to this city, protecting, improving and feeling responsible towards the city. In this context, conceptual framework established within the scope of the study provided the opportunity to measure and evaluate urban consciousness.

As a result, Bursa is a remarkable city with its historical, natural and cultural structure, social and economic opportunities and potentials it presents. Its urban adventure, demographic features and the rapid change it has been through, with its positive and negative aspects, have made Bursa an important research ground from the point of understanding and interpreting the concept of urban consciousness. In the light of the findings, it is seen that Bursa is a city with a high level of urban consciousness. The conceptual framework concerning the concepts of awareness, responsibility, belonging to and transformation which form the structure of the present study has been presented as a new model proposition for urban consciousness and the important correlations and results revealed as a result of the study have been opened for discussion and interpretation over Bursa model.

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