



A Research on Urban Identity: Sample of Kadıköy District

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ABSTRACT

Cities have idiosyncratic identities composed of the combination of identity elements which are generated by the natural, social or built environments. Due to globalization, neo-liberal approaches and urban branding, cities have lost their unique identities to a significant extent; and resemblances among cities have gradually emerged. Therefore, some research questions occur such as which urban elements are the identity elements that form the unique identity; what are the problems that threaten the identity elements; and which identity features should be emphasized. The aim of this study is to analyze the unique identity and identity elements and also determine the positive and negative identity features of an urban district. Central Kadıköy, located on the Asian side of Istanbul, was chosen as the experiment area and 117 questionnaires were conducted. The results have revealed that the most frequently defined unique identity element of Central Kadıköy is the Bull Statue; the second one is İskele Square and the third one is the Moda Coast. According to the focal points of this study, relation with nature is an important identity feature that needs to be emphasized; on the other hand, over-urbanization and deterioration of historical identity are the characteristics that should be prevented.

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1. Introduction: Urban Identity

Cities have features and identities of their own similar to every individual. Urban identity is a meaningful entirety that holds unique features in every city; exists in different scales; gets its shape from physical, cultural, socio-economic and historical factors; and is formed by lifestyles of its dwellers (Topçu, 2011).

Diverge features of cities are explained by the terms *urban identity* and *urban image* (Önem & Kilincaslan, 2010).

Urban identity is an integrity that is formed by elements that add meaning and value to that city

and differentiate that city from others (Birol, 2007). Physical features, natural texture, social structure, historical and cultural heritage define the identity of a city.

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Its geography, history, cultural values, architecture, past civilizations, local traditions, lifestyle, inhabitants, phases from the first settlement to this day, topography, vegetation, geopolitical position, the state of being a southern or western city, maritime and highway connections, the state of being open or closed to other cultures, economic structure, living organisms that it hosts, past occupations and wars, earthquakes, and its state of whether having been a capital city or not are the elements of urban identity. Differences in these features add a unique character to cities (TURAN & ERÇOŞKUN, 2017).

On the other hand, *urban image* consists of elements observed in the built environment of a city. In his study based on the definitions of numerous inhabitants of three American cities (Los Angeles, New Jersey and Boston), Lynch (1960) maintained that urban image had five fundamental elements: *paths, districts, borders, nodes and landmarks*.

Elements forming urban identity can be analyzed as being *natural, human, or artefactual* (Önem & Kilincaslan, 2010).

Natural identity elements are related to the natural environment data of the city. These are the features of the city such as general location, topography, climatic conditions, flora and fauna, geological and geomorphological conditions, and aquatic elements. Variations in these features differentiate and define a city, make it unique, and give the city its identity (Kaypak, 2010; Önem & Kilincaslan, 2010; Turgut et al., 2012)

Human identity elements are the individual and the society. Identity of the individual improves within the environment s/he lives in. Identity elements formed by human environment consist of sub-elements concerning demographical structure (size, density and structure of population, age groups), corporate structure (political, administrative, juridical, economic), and cultural structure (Önem & Kilincaslan, 2010).

Furthermore, **artefactual identity elements** are any arrangements made in a city. The value of a city comes from the memories of its inhabitants. Therefore, the element which exists in the artefactual environment and which holds the highest identity-forming potential is monumental structures and structure groups that have casual significance and the urban texture they form. Architectural values in a city constitute a remarkable portion of urban identity (Biol, 2007).

When individuals are attached to the place they live, attribute value to this place and make self-sacrifices for these values, that city receives a meaningful identity. For urban dwellers, if the environment they live in is only a place where they

earn a living and where certain activities are held; if it does not have meaning except these instrumental features, then that city is determined as an *unidentified city* (Kaypak, 2010).

Duration is needed for urban identity to be formed. As Biol (2007) indicates, Tekeli (1991) sees the formation of urban identity as a historical phenomenon and states that it is actualized by different layers forming coherent and meaningful integrity in time. Hence, it is difficult to purposefully produce an urban identity or replace a new identity instead of one that faced erosion for several reasons. On the other hand, urban identity can redefine itself in time parallel to social, cultural, physical and economic changes that occur over time. Therefore, not the loss but the transformation of urban identity can be noted (Biol, 2007).

In the 1980s, due to globalization and neo-liberal policies, one of the most frequently discussed issues was the loss of urban identity. In order to locate the cities on the map in the global rivalries, urban branding approaches have begun to change, transform and reconsider the urban identity. Due to those interventions, cities had significant losses from their unique identities. Such failures in preserving the unique identity gradually caused resemblances among cities; and as a consequence, they cannot offer diversities to their dwellers. Herein, the necessity of protecting the unique urban identity becomes utterly significant (Aslan & Kiper, 2016; Eraydin, 2016). In this study, the following research questions were examined in order to investigate and preserve the unique urban identity:

- Which urban elements are the identity elements that generate the unique identity of the city?
- What constitutes the unique urban identity?
- What are the problems that threaten the urban identity and/or identity elements?
- What are the features of the unique urban identity and/or identity elements that should be preserved and emphasized?

Kadıköy, located on the Asian side of Istanbul, is a century-old settlement which contains many historical layers and is, therefore, a palimpsest. It possesses many urban elements which demonstrate the urban identity, and which can be accepted as identity elements. Some of these urban elements are distinctly perceived by the inhabitants; whereas some of them have lost their visibility due to the existing palimpsest pattern. Consequently, a survey was conducted to analyze the existing identity elements of Central Kadıköy and compare them via different user profiles.

1.1 Aim of the Research

The main aim of this research is to reveal the existing identity elements of the Central Kadıköy. In addition, it is intended to evaluate the variation of the identity elements of Central Kadıköy defined by different groups in a community. For this purpose, the participants were grouped in terms of gender, age, duration of living in Istanbul and frequency of use and analyses were executed with these groups. The other aims of the research are as follows:

- To analyse the unique identity of Central Kadıköy;
- To determine the positive and negative identity features of Central Kadıköy;

- To suggest ideas to urban planners for preserving and emphasizing urban identity.

2. Methodology

The participants, experiment environment, procedure and data analysis of the research will be clarified in this section.

2.1 Participants

This research was conducted with 117 participants that consist of randomly selected citizens while they were dealing with various activities in Central Kadıköy. The table below shows their profile (Table 1).

Table 1. Personal Information of the Participant.

Personal Information	Category	Frequenc y	(%)
Gender	Female	70	59,8
	Male	47	40,2
Age	18-25	52	44,4
	26-35	37	31,6
	36-45	22	18,8
	46-60	5	4,3
	Over 60	1	0,9
Education Level	Literate	1	0,9
	Primary School	2	1,7
	Secondary School	1	0,9
	High School	19	16,2
	Undergraduate	80	68,4
Duration of settlement	Master's / PhD	14	12,0
	Less than a year	3	2,6
	1-5 years	16	13,7
	6-10 years	7	6,0
	11-15 years	3	2,6
Settlement	More than 15 years	21	17,9
	Born in İstanbul	67	57,3
	European Side	23	19,7
	Anatolian Side	94	80,3
	Everyday	11	9,4
Frequency of visit	Once a week	26	22,2
	More than once a week	9	7,7
	Once a month	25	21,4
	More than once a month	20	17,1
	A few times a year	26	22,2
Intended use	House/residence	5	2,16
	Office/school/course	17	7,35
	Cultural activities (Theatre, concert, exhibitions, etc.)	66	28,57
	Shopping	52	22,51
	Leisure/meeting/chat	91	39,39

59,8% (n= 70) of the participants, were female and 40,2% (n= 47) of them were male. 44,4% (n= 52) of the participants were 18-25 years of age, 31,6% (n= 37) were 26-35 years of age, 18,8% (n= 22) were 36-45 years of age, and 4,3% (n= 5) were 46-60 years of age. Of the participants 1,7% (n= 2) had primary school education, 0,9% (n= 1) had secondary school education, 16,2% (n= 19) had high school education, 68,4% (n= 80) received graduate level education, and 12% (n= 14) had undergraduate education. According to the data on duration of settlement, 57,3% (n= 67) of the participants were born in Istanbul. Besides, 17,9% (n= 21) of the participants have been living in Istanbul for more than 15 years; and 24,9% (n= 29) of them have been living here for less than 15 years. Of the participants, 80,3% (n= 94) live on the Anatolian side of Istanbul, while 19,7% (n= 23) live on the European side of Istanbul. According to the data of frequency of visit, 22,2% (n= 26) of the participants visit Central Kadıköy a few times a year, 21,4% (n= 25) once a month, and 22,2% (n= 26) once a week. Eventually, participants were asked about their intended use of Central Kadıköy; and they were allowed to specify more than one answer. Hereunder, 91 participants visit Central Kadıköy for leisure, meeting, chatting, and 66 participants do so for cultural activities such as theatre, concert, or exhibitions, while 52 participants visit Central Kadıköy for shopping (Table 1).

2.2 Experiment Environment: The center of Kadıköy

Located on the Anatolian side of İstanbul, Kadıköy District is surrounded by Maltepe District in the east, Üsküdar and Ümraniye Districts in the north, The Bosphorus in the west and Marmara Sea in the south (Figure 1).

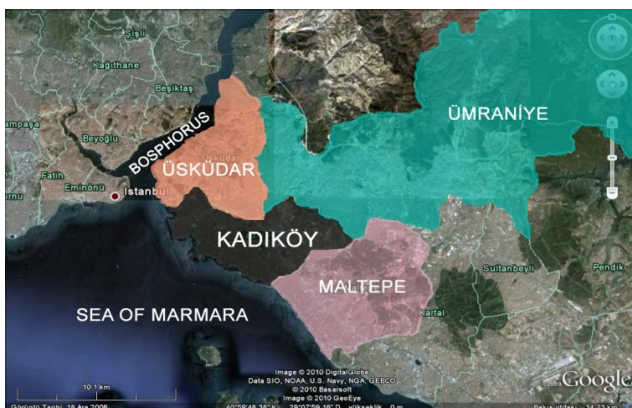


Figure 1. Kadıköy's Location within Istanbul (Developed by Author).

The historical core that forms Central Kadıköy's settlement is between the surroundings of Haydarpaşa Bay and Moda Cape. The central settlement consists of Osman Ağa and Cafer Ağa Neighborhoods which include historical areas such as Yeldeğirmeni, Moda and Kadıköy Historical Bazaar. The neighborhoods selected for the study are Osman Ağa and Cafer Ağa, which are described as "Central Kadıköy". These neighborhoods and their locations are shown in the figure below (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Settlement of Central Kadıköy (Developed by Author).

Although Kadıköy was founded in 685 B.C., Central Kadıköy had not made much progress until the 17th century; and onwards, essential historical buildings began to be built. Osmanağa Mosque was built in 1612, and Surp Takavor Armenian Church was built in 1721 (Turkmen, 2018). In the 19th century, inhabited by Muslim and Greek populations, Kadıköy was a village which consisted of four neighborhoods with a total of 516 stores and 1915 households (Çelik, 1993). The ferry transportation began in 1846. The grocery stores, bakeries, and taverns which were located on the İskele [Pier] Street, and whose customers were mostly the Greeks, gradually revived the commercial life of Central Kadıköy. By the fire in 1860, 250 buildings -three quarters of Kadıköy- were completely destroyed (Alus, 2019). At the beginning of the 20th century, there were five sea baths (a closed beach established on the sea), 31 pharmacies and 25 bakeries. Haydarpaşa Train Terminal was opened in 1908, and was closed in 2012 after the fire in 2010. Haldun Taner Theater was constructed in 1927 as a marketplace and was converted into a theater in 1989. The Apollon Cinema, which was built at the beginning of the 20th century, was later named "Hale" and finally "Rexx Cinema". Süreyya Opera House was opened in Bahariye Street in 1927. Kadıköy-Moda tramline was opened in 1934. In the 1950s, there were in total 37 tramlines, 30 of which were in Istanbul and 7 of which were in

Kadıköy (Turkmen, 2018). In brief, many identity elements in Central Kadıköy can be perceived by its users or/and have lost their visibility due to the existing palimpsest pattern. Therefore, Central Kadıköy, which contains the historical bazaar, was chosen as the experiment environment for the discussions on urban identity.

2.3 Procedure

117 copies of the survey consisting of open-ended and multiple-choice questions were executed in a week in January 2019 for this study at different hours of different days. The participants were from varying groups in terms of gender, age, or level of education. Before the survey stage, participants were informed in detail about the study. The first section consisted of demographic questions like age, gender and level of education of the participants. Later on, their inhabitancy in Istanbul and place of the settlement were asked in addition to their usage frequency and intended use of Central Kadıköy. Questions about gender, age, and inhabitancy in Istanbul and usage frequency provided data for groups for which comparative tables would be formed.

In the next stage, participants were asked questions about urban identity. Especially, they were asked to indicate urban elements that appealed to and affected them in Central Kadıköy. This was an open-ended question that required three elements from the participants. They were free in their answers; there was no guidance. In the following question, unique identity of Central Kadıköy was examined. The researcher formed various options, allowing the participants to indicate more than one choice.

Also, the researcher listed positive and negative features of Central Kadıköy and finally asked them to number three features they favored and three features they did not favor in the order of significance. The main purpose of this survey is to understand participants' perception of Central Kadıköy and their positive and negative opinions to infer the urban identity of Central Kadıköy.

In the assessment of close-ended questions of the survey, descriptive statistics such as frequency and arithmetic mean were used. Whereas in open-ended ones questioning identity elements, data were carefully examined; same data and data with close meaning were brought together and the frequency values (number of repetitions) were calculated. Frequency values were presented and interpreted in tables.

3. Data Analysis

The participants were asked to define three urban elements such as square, fountain, roof or façade in Central Kadıköy which were noticeable, memorable, and which existed in their mind. In the survey conducted with 117 participants, 269 identity elements in total were determined; yet, those with frequency values less than 5 were excluded from the analysis. The results revealed that the most defined identity element of Central Kadıköy is the Bull Statue by 14,8% (n=40); the second one is İskele Square by 11,5% (n=37) and the third one is the Moda Coast by 8,5% (n=23) (Table 2). As a consequence, the researcher created the identity map of Central Kadıköy with regard to identity data provided (Figure 3).

Table 2. General Assessment of Surveys.

	Category	F	(%)
Identity elements of Central Kadıköy	Bull Statue	40	14,8
	İskele square	31	11,5
	Moda coast	23	8,5
	Tramline	17	6,3
	Haldun Taner Theatre	16	5,6
	Bahariye Street	12	4,4
	Haydarpaşa Terminal	12	4,4
	Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	12	4,4
	Süreyya Opera House	10	3,7
	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	7	2,6
	Street of craftsmen	7	2,6
	Cinema Rexx	6	2,2
Osmanağa Mosque	5	1,8	

	Socio-cultural functions and activities	95	39,2
Unique identity of Central Kadıköy	Its history, past	59	24,3
	Commercial functions	38	15,7
	Natural environment and open spaces	19	7,8
	Visual quality of the buildings	16	6,6
	Educational functions	15	6,1
	Positive features	1. Its relation with the sea and ferries add a unique identity to Central Kadıköy.	64
2. Tramline adds meaning and identity to Central Kadıköy.		28	23,9
3. Spending time in Central Kadıköy creates a sense of belonging.		22	18,8
Negative features	1. There is no relation with nature; everywhere is full of buildings.	48	41
	2. Kadıköy lost its historical identity with the increasing number of retail shops.	18	15,3
	3. Kadıköy is a comfortless, crowded and insecure environment.	32	27,3

In the next stage, the question "What determines the identity of Central Kadıköy?" was asked, allowing the participants to indicate more than one option. In total, 242 unique identity descriptions were made. 39,2% (n=95) of the participants determined the unique identity of Central Kadıköy by socio-cultural functions and organizations whereas 24,3% (n=59) indicated its history and past, and 15,75% (n=38) mentioned commercial functions (Table 2).

In the following stage, the participants were asked to list three features they liked and three features they disliked in Central Kadıköy in the order of importance. According to 54,7% (n=64) of the participants, creating a unique identity of Kadıköy by the relation with the sea and the ferries was the most positive feature of

Central Kadıköy. As the second positive feature 23,9% (n=28) of the participants indicated that Moda-Kadıköy tramline added meaning and identity to Central Kadıköy. As the third positive feature, 18,8% (n=22) of the participants stated that spending time in Central Kadıköy created a sense of belonging (Table 2).

On the other hand, according to 41% (n=48) of the participants, its lack of relation with nature and its over-urbanization was the most negative feature of Central Kadıköy. The second negative feature was the loss of historical identity with the increasing number of retail shops, indicated by 15,3% (n=18) of the participants. The third negative feature was that Kadıköy was a comfortless, crowded and insecure environment with a percentage of 27,3 (n=32) (Table 2).



Figure 3. Identity Map Created by the Researcher Based on the Answers of the Survey (Developed by Author).

In line with the results of the survey, comparative analyses based on gender, age, duration of settlement in Istanbul and

frequency of use were established and presented in the tables below.

Table 3. The Analysis of Identity Elements via Variable of Gender.

Identity elements of central Kadıköy (female / 70)	Category	F	(%)	Identity elements of central Kadıköy (male / 47)	Category	F	(%)
	Bull statue	24	34,2		Bull statue	16	34,0
İskele square	19	27,1	İskele square	12	25,53		
Moda coast	17	24,2	Moda coast	6	12,76		
Haldun Taner Theatre	13	18,5	Haldun Taner Theatre	3	6,38		
Tramline	9	12,8	Tramline	8	17,02		
Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	8	11,4	Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	4	8,51		
Bahariye Street	6	8,5	Bahariye Street	6	12,76		
Surp Takavor Armenian Church	6	8,5	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	1	2,12		
Haydarpaşa Terminal	6	8,5	Haydarpaşa Terminal	6	12,76		
Süreyya Opera House	6	8,5	Süreyya Opera House	4	8,51		
Cinema Rexx	5	7,1	Cinema Rexx	1	2,12		
Street of craftsmen	4	5,7	Street of craftsmen	3	6,38		
Osmanağa Mosque	3	4,2	Osmanağa Mosque	2	4,25		

As seen in Table 3, the most defined identity element by women and men is the "Bull Statue". It can be seen that 34% of 47 male participants defined Bull Statue, while this percentage was 34.2% for 70 female

participants. Another highly-defined identity element was İskele Square of which 27.1% of the female participants and 25.53% of the male participants specified. Moda Coast and Haldun Taner Theatre were not defined with a

high percentage by male participants, while the percentages for female participants were 24,2 and 18,5 in respectively (Table 3).

Table 4. The Analysis of Identity Elements via Age Variable.

Identity elements of central Kadıköy (18-25 years of age/ 52)	Category	F	(%)	Identity elements of central Kadıköy (26-35 years of age / 37)	Category	F	(%)	Identity elements of central Kadıköy (35- 60 years of age/ 27)	Category	F	(%)
	Bull Statue	26	50			Bull Statue	8		21,6		Bull Statue
İskele square	15	28,84		İskele square	9	24,3	2	İskele square	7	25,9	
Moda coast	11	21,15		Moda coa	3	5,7		Moda coast	9	33,3	
Haldun Taner Theatre	10	19,23		Haldun Taner Theatre	5	9,6		Haldun Taner Theatre	1	3,7	
tramline	7	13,46		tramline	5	9,6		tramline	5	18,5 1	
Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	6	11,53		Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	3	5,7		Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	3	11,1 1	
Bahariye Street	5	9,6		Bahariye Street	2	3,8		Bahariye Street	5	18,5 1	
Surp Takavor Armenian Church	4	7,6		Surp Takavor Armenian Church	1	1,9		Surp Takavor Armenian Church	2	7,4	
Haydarpaşa Terminal	4	7,6		Haydarpaşa Terminal	2	3,8		Haydarpaşa Terminal	6	22,2	
Süreyya Opera House	5	9,6		Süreyya Opera House	2	3,8		Süreyya Opera House	3	11,11	
Cinema Rexx	4	7,6		Cinema Rexx	2	3,8		Cinema Rexx	0	0	
Street of craftsmen	2	3,8		Street of craftsmen	3	5,7		Street of craftsmen	2	7,4	
Osmanağa Mosque	1	1,9		Osmanağa Mosque	2	3,8		Osmanağa Mosque	2	7,4	

As seen in Table 4, identity elements defined according to age groups vary. The identity element, defined by 50% of the 52 participants between the ages 18-25, was the Bull Statue. On the other hand, 24.32% of 37 participants between the ages 26-35 defined İskele Square; and 33.3% of 27 participants at the age level of 35- 60 defined Moda Coast as the identity element of Central Kadıköy (Table 4).

The participants were grouped into three categories based on the duration of settlement

in İstanbul: born in İstanbul, living more than 15 years in İstanbul, and living fewer than 15 years in İstanbul.

Table 5. The Analysis of Identity Elements via Variable of Duration of Settlement.

Identity elements of central Kadıköy (Born in İstanbul / 67)	Category	F	(%)	Identity elements of central Kadıköy (More than 15 years / 21)	Category	F	(%)	Identity elements of central Kadıköy (More than 15 years / 28)	Category	F	(%)
	Bull Statue	22	32,8			Bull Statue	7		33,3		Bull Statue
İskele square	16	23,8		İskele square	7	33,3	3	İskele square	7	25	
Moda coast	3	4,4		Moda coast	4	19,4		Moda coast	16	57,1	
Haldun Taner Theatre	14	20,8		Haldun Taner Theatre	1	4,7		Haldun Taner Theatre	1	3,5	
tramline	11	16,4		tramline	2	9,5		tramline	4	14,2	
Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	5	7,4		Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	0	0		Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	7	25	
Bahariye Street	6	8,9		Bahariye Street	4	19,4		Bahariye Street	2	7,1	



Surp Takavor Armenian Church	1	1,4	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	1	4,7	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	5	17,8
Haydarpaşa Terminal	7	10,4	Haydarpaşa Terminal	3	14,2	Haydarpaşa Terminal	2	7,1
Süreyya Opera House	4	5,9	Süreyya Opera House	3	14,2	Süreyya Opera House	3	10,7
Cinema Rexx	2	2,9	Cinema Rexx	2	9,5	Cinema Rexx	2	7,1
Street of craftsmen	1	1,4	Street of craftsmen	1	4,7	Street of craftsmen	5	17,8
Osmanağa Mosque	2	2,9	Osmanağa Mosque	0	0	Osmanağa Mosque	3	10,7

As seen in table 5, 32.8% of 67 participants who were born in İstanbul stated that Bull Statue was the identity element of Central Kadıköy. 33.3% of the 21 participants, living more than 15 years in İstanbul defined Bull Statue, and the other 33.3% of the 21 participants defined İskele Square as the identity element of Central Kadıköy. On the other hand, 57,1% of 28

participants, living fewer than 15 years in İstanbul, defined Moda Coast as the identity element (Table 5).

From the data of participants' frequency of use of Central Kadıköy, the highest three values were chosen, and assessments were conducted via these three groups: Once a week, once a month, and once a year.

Table 6. The Analysis of Identity Elements via Variable of Usage Frequency.

Category	F	(%)	Category	F	(%)	Category	F	(%)
Bull Statue	9	34,6	Bull Statue	10	40	Bull Statue	3	11,5
İskele square	6	23,7	İskele square	6	24	İskele square	9	34,6
Moda Coast	7	26,9	Moda Coast	6	24	Moda Coast	2	7,6
Haldun Taner Theatre	3	11,5	Haldun Taner Theatre	2	8	Haldun Taner Theatre	2	7,6
tramline	4	15,3	tramline	4	16	tramline	4	15,3
Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	0	0	Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	1	4	Beşiktaş-Adalar ferry station	1	3,8
Bahariye Street	4	15,3	Bahariye Street	2	8	Bahariye Street	2	7,6
Surp Takavor Armenian Church	2	7,6	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	1	4	Surp Takavor Armenian Church	0	0
Haydarpaşa Terminal	1	3,8	Haydarpaşa Terminal	2	8	Haydarpaşa Terminal	4	15,3
Süreyya Opera House	2	7,6	Süreyya Opera House	3	12	Süreyya Opera House	1	3,8
Cinema Rexx	0	0	Cinema Rexx	2	8	Cinema Rexx	0	0
Street of craftsmen	1	3,8	Street of craftsmen	3	12	Street of craftsmen	1	3,8
Osmanağa Mosque	3	11,5	Osmanağa Mosque	0	0	Osmanağa Mosque	0	0

As seen in table 6, the Bull Statue was defined as an identity element by 34,6% of 26 participants who visited Central Kadıköy once a week and by 40% of 25 participants who visited central Kadıköy once a month. On the other hand, 34,6% of 26 participants who visited Central Kadıköy once a year indicated İskele Square as an identity element (Table 6).

4. Discussions

The Bull Statue, defined as a unique identity element of Central Kadıköy, is a landmark with an aesthetic design. It is located at the junction point of four roads, three of which are open to vehicle traffic and one of which is open to only pedestrians. The Bull Statue, having a historical significance, is a meeting and waiting point of Kadıköy, and with its imposing appearance, attracts the attention of inhabitants and visitors of Kadıköy.

The second most defined identity element of Central Kadıköy is a square. İskele square hosts several meetings, festivals, open-air exhibitions, and public organizations. Moreover, it is a juncture for transportation options such as ferries, subway, and buses. Therefore, its memorability is high.

Moda Coast, the third most defined identity element of Central Kadıköy, is a walking and recreational axis and can be accepted as both a path and a border. It is noticeable in terms of being a recreation axis connected to the sea.

Kadıköy – Moda tramline, which is another defined identity element, is a nostalgic symbol evoking the history of Kadıköy. The tramline, which was opened in 1934, lost its identity over time and was revived again in 2003. The 2,6 kilometer long tramline, since it provides movement, can be accepted as a path. However, what the participants indicate in this research is the existence of Kadıköy – Moda tramline by means of the red Tatra GT-6 model tramcar. The tramline remained in the minds of the participants with the red tramcars. If data were gathered by cognitive mapping, then tramline could have confronted us as a path. Nevertheless, in this study, Kadıköy – Moda tramline has transformed into a landmark with red tramcars.

Bahariye Street and the Street of Craftsmen, defined as an identity element, are both paths. However, what was intended to be defined here is the functions on these paths. Their memorability depends on neither movements nor the connections they provide. Bahariye Street draws attention with its shopping function whereas the Street of Craftsmen does so with the handcrafts, bibliopoles, and unique cafes.

It has been observed that landmarks were plentiful in identity elements. Especially Haldun Taner Theatre, Süreyya Opera House and Cinema Rexx with their meeting, waiting, and cultural functions; Surp Takavor Armenian Church and Osmanağa Mosque, with their religious function; Beşiktaş –

Adalar Ferry Station and Haydarpaşa Terminal, with their transportation function, were landmarks indicated as identity elements. The reasons for the memorability of these identity elements can be summarized as follows: Haldun Taner Theatre and Beşiktaş - Adalar Ferry Station are both located reciprocally in the İskele Square and they are singular historical structures that draw the eastern and western borders of the İskele Square as well as being significant meeting and waiting points for the inhabitants and visitors. Süreyya Opera House draws attention as a singular building among the attached constructions. It is the only structure of art among commercial function and the high number of users in its front show that it is an important meeting point. Likewise, the Armenian Church and Osmanağa Mosque draw attention as religious structures surrounded by commercial function. In addition, Haydarpaşa Terminal is a historical transportation building that provided the railway connection between İstanbul and Anatolia between 1908 and January 2012. This magnificent building which can be seen from the coast of Central Kadıköy has been the subject of several movies and documentaries.

Several characteristics form the unique identity of Central Kadıköy. Within this study, the participants indicated that unique identity was socio-cultural functions and activities. Significant structures with a cultural function such as Haldun Taner Theatre, Süreyya Opera House, Street of Craftsmen, and Cinema Rexx were the identity elements indicated for Central Kadıköy, supporting this conclusion. Moreover, Kadıköy hosts various social and cultural activities, and festivals with many venues such as Moda Stage, Barış Manço House, Duru Theatre, and Oyun Atölyesi (Play Atelier).

The most positive features of Central Kadıköy were described as its relation with the sea and ferries. Relation with nature was observed to positively affect the urban identity. An element of natural water that could be watched, approached, touched, and smelled was seen among the positive identity elements. In addition, inhabitants could watch the movements of these ferries, and be involved in this movement by travelling on the ferries. On the other hand, elements of casual life such as tramline, ferries, seagulls and Turkish bagels had a symbolic feature and affected urban identity. Tramline, having been indicated as an identity element of Central Kadıköy, enhances this claim. Possessing of Kadıköy by its users and sense of belonging were positively evaluated in terms of urban identity.

The most negative features of Central Kadıköy were its lack of relationship with nature and its over-urbanization. It was observed in this research that elements flourishing from the natural environment were not indicated within the identity elements. All the defined identity elements originated from the built environment. Over-

urbanization deported urban identity from nature and had a negative impact on identity elements. The increase of commercial buildings in Central Kadıköy led to the disappearance of historical texture and affected urban identity negatively due to the polychromy, advertising signboards, vivacity and polyphony that was brought by commercial buildings. This has led to an increase in human density and congestion. Crowdedness, congestion and redundant human movement affected urban identity negatively as far as less human density (desolation). Central Kadıköy has been perceived as a comfortless, crowded and insecure environment, and therefore received a negative identity.

According to Topçu (2011), the perception of urban identity varies due to personal characteristics such as age, gender, profession, and income in addition to being whether a tourist or an inhabitant in town. Therefore, even though the two most defined identity elements for Central Kadıköy were the same for both women and men, women later gave priority to identity elements related to recreation and culture. İskele Square and Bull Statue, being meeting and waiting points and transfer nodes in Central Kadıköy, were defined as an identity element by inhabitants living in İstanbul for more than 15 years. On the other hand, Moda coast, which was a recreation and walking axis, was defined as an identity element by inhabitants living in İstanbul for less than 15 years. Bull Statue was defined as an identity element by participants whose usage frequency of Central Kadıköy was more than once a month. It can be stated that participants who often visited Central Kadıköy adopted Bull Statue, which was located at the starting point of Bahariye Street, as a meeting and waiting point. On the other hand, İskele Square, which was the junction point of transportation such as collective taxis, ferries, and buses besides hosting several socio-cultural organizations, as defined by the participants who visited Central Kadıköy once a year. It can be said that participants who visited Central Kadıköy less often adopted İskele Square as an identity element due to using it as a transfer node.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the unique identity and identity elements have been analyzed along with the comparisons of identity elements of different user groups and the determination of the positive and negative identity features of an urban district. The focal points of this research provided in detail in the discussion section are summarized below:

- The urban elements which are perceived most in the existing urban pattern and adopted by inhabitants are identified as identity elements that generate the urban identity.

- The location, historical value and aesthetic features of an urban element strengthen its perception as an identity element.
- Nostalgic symbols of the cities are perceived as identity elements.
- The urban areas where urban identity is perceived most intensively and/or the urban areas which are identified as identity elements are listed as follows:
 - Meeting, waiting, and transfer points and squares that are used frequently,
 - The urban areas with strategic importance throughout the city,
 - The urban areas with elements that differ in image, function and location,
 - Recreation areas where individuals can socialize,
 - Urban areas with special functions such as shopping street, art street etc.
 - Historical buildings,
 - Buildings that differ within the urban order with their function (such as religious, cultural or transportation building), structure, architectural features, or façade details.
- The possibilities and functions that the city offers to its inhabitants are efficient in defining the unique urban identity. For instance; the unique urban identity of Central Kadıköy was defined as socio-cultural functions and organizations due to several social-cultural buildings and activities it had.
- Direct relation with nature, natural identity elements such as forest, sea, coastline or stream, nostalgic symbols of the city, and the inhabitant's sense of belonging are the features that positively affect the urban identity, and so they should be emphasized.
- Not having a relationship with the nature and destruction of natural identity elements, over-urbanization, deterioration of historical identity, human density and crowdedness, and security problems are the features that negatively affect urban identity; therefore they should immediately be prevented.
- Urban identity varies depending on the gender variable. For instance; women give priority to socio-cultural featured identity elements.
- Urban identity is influenced by the duration of the settlement. Individuals who live in the city for more than 15 years identify the meeting and waiting areas, transfer nodes and squares that they visit frequently, and the landmarks located in and around these areas as identity elements. On the other hand, individuals who live in the city for less than 15 years identify the recreation areas as identity elements.
- Urban identity is influenced by the usage frequency. Individuals who visit the city more than once a month determine the landmarks as identity elements while those who visit that

city once a year determine nodes or squares that function as meeting and waiting areas, and transfer nodes to be identity elements.

In the light of the general conclusions above, some suggestions for local governments, professionals, and non-governmental organizations are generated and listed below:

- Over-urbanization should be avoided in order not to destroy natural identity elements. Attention should be paid to preserve the relationship with the natural environment.
- Traces of historical periods should be restored and preserved, regarding the negative impact of the disappearance of historical texture on urban identity.
- Recently-constructed modern buildings and spaces which are significant in public memory should also be preserved with the same careful approach.
- The prerequisites for the protection of urban identity are to stop the unplanned urbanization, uncontrolled building development and standardization; to eliminate anomalous developments, and to ensure convenience with the existing environmental values in new constructions.
- Missing identity elements should be revived.
- The unique identity elements that begin to depreciate should be preserved, and be transferred to the next generations with the same worth and significance.

In this research, the data relevant to the urban identity and identity elements were obtained by the questionnaire method. Furthermore, cognitive map drawings can further be used in analyzing the identity elements, and also in evaluating the variation of the identity elements defined by different user groups. The influences of transformations and gentrifications on urban identity can be discussed. The extent to which these transformations and gentrifications are known and adopted by the inhabitants can be investigated. As a consequence, this study can be considered as an example of other research studies to be carried out on similar subjects.

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Conflict of interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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