GÜRCÜKAPI URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROJECT: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL EVALUATION OF STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS[1]

Kafkas University
Economics and Administrative Sciences Faculty
KAUJEASF
Vol. 16, Issue 31, 2025
ISSN: 1309 – 4289
E – ISSN: 2149-9136

Article Submission Date: 24.11.2024 *Accepted Date: 02.06.2025*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project from a multidimensional perspective, focusing on the perceptions of property owners. The research examines various aspects, including identity, accessibility, equity, participation, diversity, environmental sensitivity, economic benefits, workplace features, and quality of life. In this study, a descriptive and cross-sectional research design was used to examine the beneficiaries' perceptions of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project from a multidimensional perspective, with data collected through surveys and open-ended questions. Data collected from a survey of thirty-one property owners sheds light on how different dimensions of the transformation process were perceived. The results indicate that the project has been particularly successful in areas such as identity, accessibility, and equity, with high satisfaction observed regarding the preservation of local heritage and design compatible with the environment. However, there are identified areas for improvement, particularly in participation, economic benefits, and quality of life. The study suggests that future projects should be designed in a more inclusive and balanced manner. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and urban planners.

Keywords: *Urban transformation, stakeholder perceptions, Gürcükapı urban transformation project*

JEL Codes: *R30, R38, D78*
Scope: *Public administration*
Type: *Research*

DOI: 10.36543/kauiibfd.2025.023

Cite this article: Batuhan, T., Muti, A., Yılmaz, M., & Kaymaz, Ç. K. (2025). Gürcükapı urban transformation project: A multidimensional evaluation of stakeholder perceptions. *KAUJEASF* ,16(31), 598-635.

[1] It has been declared that the relevant study complies with ethical rules.

GÜRCÜKAPI KENTSEL DÖNÜŞÜM PROJESİ: HAK SAHİPLERİNİN ALGILARININ ÇOK BOYUTLU DEĞERLENDİRMESİ

Kafkas Üniversitesi
İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi
KAÜİİBFD
Cilt, 16, Sayı 31, 2025
ISSN: 1309 – 4289
E – ISSN: 2149-9136

Makale Gönderim Tarihi: 24.11.2024 *Yayına Kabul Tarihi: 02.06.2025*

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ÖZ | Bu çalışma, Gürcükapı Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi'ni, hak sahiplerinin algılarını çok boyutlu bir perspektiften değerlendirerek ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, mülk sahiplerinin kimlik, erişilebilirlik, eşitlik, katılım, çeşitlilik, çevresel duyarlılık, ekonomik faydalar, işyeri özellikleri ve yaşam kalitesi gibi farklı boyutlardaki görüşlerini incelemektedir. Bu çalışmada, Gürcükapı Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi'nin hak sahiplerinin algılarını çok boyutlu bir şekilde incelemek amacıyla betimsel ve kesitsel bir araştırma deseni kullanarak, anket ve açık uçlu sorularla veri toplanmıştır. Otuz bir mülk sahibinden elde edilen anket verileriyle, proje sürecinin çeşitli yönlerinin nasıl algılandığı ortaya konulmuştur. Sonuçlar, projenin özellikle kimlik, erişilebilirlik ve eşitlik gibi alanlarda başarılı olduğunu, yerel mirasın korunması ve çevreyle uyumlu tasarım gibi konularda yüksek memnuniyet sağlandığını göstermektedir. Ancak, katılım, ekonomik fayda ve yaşam kalitesi gibi alanlarda iyileştirme gerekliliği vurgulanmıştır. Çalışma, gelecekteki projelerin daha kapsayıcı ve dengeli bir şekilde tasarlanması gerektiğini önermektedir. Bu bulgular, politika yapıcılar ve şehir planlamacıları için önemli veriler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Kentsel Dönüşüm, Paydaş Algıları, Gürcükapı Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi*

JEL Kodları*: R30, R38, D78*

Alan: *Kamu Yönetimi*
Türü: *Araştırma*

1. INTRODUCTION

The global population's rise to one billion took thousands of years, but in just the past two centuries, this number has increased sevenfold, reaching approximately 8 billion (Taagepera & Nemčok, 2024; UNFPA, 2024). This dramatic population growth has been accompanied by an acceleration of urbanization. In 1950, around 30% of the world's population lived in urban areas (Giddens, 2012), while by 2022, this figure had risen to about 60% (UNCTAD, 2022). This shift highlights the urbanization dynamics of the current century. The rapid urbanization process on a global scale has brought with it a range of social, cultural, environmental, demographic, and economic challenges (Moglia et al., 2018). These challenges include factors negatively impacting urbanization, such as excessive and dense population mobility in cities, insufficient housing stock, transportation, environmental and infrastructure deficiencies, informal settlements, chaotic urban development, and uncontrolled growth. In response to these urban issues, both developed and developing countries have introduced the concept of urban transformation (Keleş, 2021).

Urban transformation projects have been widely implemented in recent years across the world to address the social, economic, and environmental challenges faced by major cities. These projects generally aim to transform the outdated and unhealthy urban structures, resolve infrastructure issues, and improve the quality of life, leading to significant changes in urban areas. In Türkiye, the recent surge in urban transformation projects, particularly in major cities, has deepened the discussions in this field. These projects are often implemented with the goals of renewing the building stock, fostering economic development, promoting social integration, and achieving environmental improvements. However, in many cases, the focus has been solely on the physical aspects of transformation, with insufficient attention given to the social, cultural, environmental, and economic impacts. In this context, it is crucial to analyze the effects of urban transformation projects in a more comprehensive manner in order to manage these projects more efficiently and inclusively.

This study evaluates the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project from a multidimensional perspective and to explore the perceptions and experiences of the stakeholders regarding the project. The study aims to address the opportunities and challenges encountered in such projects by considering the social, economic, environmental, and cultural dimensions of urban transformation.. This study conducts a comprehensive, multidimensional analysis of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, examining the perceptions and expectations of the stakeholders involved. The originality of this research lies in its evaluation of not only the physical dimension of urban transformation but also

its social, cultural, environmental, and economic impacts, thereby rendering its findings particularly significant. The findings of this study may offer valuable insights for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of ongoing and planned urban transformation projects in Türkiye.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The historical foundations of urban transformation have evolved in parallel with major societal changes that emerged during the 19th century (Gürler, 2003; Polat & Dostoğlu, 2007). The processes of industrialization, factory production, and the spread of capitalism—originating in Western Europe and expanding to America and the rest of the world—triggered rapid and unprecedented urban growth (Swingewood, 1998; Çelebi, 2007; Ritzer, 2011). This rapid expansion of cities brought significant challenges such as overpopulation, irregular urbanization, inadequate infrastructure, and housing shortages (Kıray, 2000; Kıray, 2006; Giddens, 2012). These conditions negatively impacted the social and economic structures of urban life, contributing to the deterioration of living conditions, especially in rapidly growing industrial cities.

In response to these challenges, the first urban renewal and transformation efforts were initiated, grounded in the principles of modern urban planning. Notable early examples include the United Kingdom's Housing Acts and Baron Haussmann's renovation of Paris, which aimed not only to modernize urban infrastructure and public health systems but also to create more organized and socially cohesive urban environments (Jordan, 2015; Paccoud, 2016). These initiatives were not merely physical interventions; they reflected broader socio-political goals to reshape social order, hygiene, public health, and urban functionality (Polat & Dostoğlu, 2007). During this early phase, urban transformation was closely aligned with the idea of modernity and state-led spatial control, often involving the clearance of so-called "unhygienic" districts and the construction of wide boulevards, transportation systems, and new public facilities. The goal was to make cities not only more efficient and livable but also symbolically representative of new political and economic regimes.

After the devastation of World War II, the significance of urban transformation increased markedly. European cities, many of which had been heavily damaged by war, became sites of large-scale reconstruction efforts. This period marked the rise of more integrated and comprehensive urban policies that included revitalization, renewal, improvement, preservation, legalization, and health restoration strategies (Douglas, 2006; Kocabaş, 2006; Longa, 2011; Zheng

et al., 2014; Evin, 2021; Keleş, 2021). These multi-pronged approaches highlighted the complex and interrelated dimensions of urban transformation. Today, urban transformation is widely acknowledged as a multifaceted intervention strategy aimed at improving cities' physical, environmental, economic, and social conditions (Yaman, 2014). It involves the rehabilitation of deteriorated urban fabrics, renewal of underutilized or risky zones, and enhancement of quality of life through long-term planning frameworks.

Contemporary urban transformation extends beyond addressing issues of poverty and informal housing. It encompasses adaptation to climate change, mitigation of disaster risks (particularly earthquakes and floods), conservation of cultural heritage, and the regeneration of brownfield sites and aging housing stock. This broadened understanding reflects an evolving urban agenda that is shaped by both global and local drivers. The success of urban transformation efforts depends on holistic and inclusive planning that takes into account not only physical renewal but also environmental sustainability, social equity, and public participation (Roberts, 2000). Projects must be developed in line with the specific needs of local communities and aim to address deep-rooted social inequalities. Social justice, equitable development, transparency, and participatory governance are now considered core principles in contemporary urban transformation discourse. Engaging residents and other stakeholders in decision-making processes fosters a sense of ownership and trust, which are essential for the long-term sustainability of transformation efforts.

In summary, the historical evolution of urban transformation demonstrates that while physical restructuring remains a central goal, the concept has increasingly integrated broader socio-spatial and ecological objectives. The modern approach to urban transformation reflects the complexity of urban systems and the need for comprehensive strategies that prioritize not only growth and efficiency, but also resilience, cultural continuity, and inclusive development.

2.1. Historical Development of Urban Transformation in Türkiye

Urban transformation in Türkiye has historically evolved in response to shifting socio-economic, legal, and spatial dynamics. Initially shaped by the consequences of rapid rural-to-urban migration in the mid-20th century, the process has transitioned from informal housing responses to an increasingly institutionalized and risk-oriented framework. Particularly between the 1950s and 1980s, Türkiye witnessed unplanned and accelerated urban growth resulting from internal migration, leading to the proliferation of informal settlements (gecekondu) in major metropolitan areas. The absence of a coherent housing strategy or effective urban planning mechanisms during this period produced a

fragmented urban structure characterized by infrastructural inadequacies and socio-spatial inequality (Tekeli, 1998; Kıray, 2007; Tekeli, 2011; Tekeli, 2016; Keleş, 2021). In an attempt to legalize and regulate these areas, the government enacted the Slum Law (Law No. 775) in 1966. However, despite providing legal status to informal settlements, the law was insufficient in curbing unregulated construction and failed to reverse the pattern of irregular urbanization (Şenyapılı, 2014; Tekeli, 2014; Yolcu, 2021).

From the 1980s onward, urban transformation began to be addressed through more formal legal and planning instruments. Laws such as No. 2805 (1983) and No. 2981 (1984) introduced mechanisms for zoning and rehabilitation in slum areas, marking the first significant legal framework for transforming informal settlements into multi-story residential structures (Ataöv & Osmay, 2007; Yolcu, 2021). The enactment of the Zoning Law (Law No. 3194) in 1985 further institutionalized urban transformation efforts by regulating land use and facilitating infrastructure development, particularly through Article 18, which allowed for land readjustment in unplanned neighborhoods (Erdoğan & Ergen, 2005; Url-1). During this period, the focus began to expand from mere legalization of the built environment to broader interventions such as environmental improvement and selective historic preservation, which also introduced early forms of gentrification.

In the early 2000s, Türkiye's urban transformation agenda gained significant momentum, driven by the increasing involvement of central government agencies, particularly the Housing Development Administration of Türkiye (TOKİ), and the growing influence of public-private partnerships. Legal reforms including the Metropolitan Municipality Law (Law No. 5216, 2004) and the Municipal Law (Law No. 5393, 2005) provided municipalities with enhanced authority to initiate and implement urban transformation projects, while also enabling them to incorporate social infrastructure into redevelopment processes (Url-2; Öztürk et al., 2023). Law No. 5104 (2004), which facilitated the Northern Ankara Entrance Urban Transformation Project, and Law No. 5366 (2005), aimed at the renewal and preservation of historical and cultural assets, reflected a more diversified approach to transformation (Url-3). These legislative tools institutionalized urban regeneration not only as a solution to physical decay but also as a strategic tool for cultural commodification, economic stimulation, and urban rebranding.

A significant paradigm shift occurred with the enactment of Law No. 6306 on the Transformation of Areas Under Disaster Risk in 2012, which reframed urban transformation as a key national policy for disaster risk reduction. Motivated largely by Türkiye’s vulnerability to seismic activity, the law

facilitated the identification and demolition of buildings at risk, while promoting their reconstruction under safer and more resilient standards (Suğur, 2014; Daşkıran & Ak, 2015; Uğur et al., 2016; Ağın & Çelik, 2022). However, the implementation of this framework revealed considerable challenges, including delays in the designation of risky areas, protracted administrative processes, and limited community engagement. Moreover, many urban transformation projects carried out under this law were criticized for accelerating real estate speculation and causing social displacement, raising concerns about the equity and inclusiveness of transformation practices.

In an effort to address these shortcomings, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization introduced the Urban Transformation Action Plan in 2019. This plan sought to expand the scope of transformation by integrating disaster preparedness with broader urban development goals such as flood mitigation, relocation of industrial zones, and renewal of historic centers (Anadolu Agency, 2019). The devastating earthquakes in Elazığ and İzmir in 2020, followed by the catastrophic Kahramanmaraş-centered earthquakes in 2023, further underscored the necessity of urgent and proactive urban transformation interventions (Efe, Yıldızan & Kiriş, 2024). In response, Law No. 7471 was adopted in 2023 as an amendment to Law No. 6306, introducing the Urban Transformation Directorate to enhance centralized oversight over the planning, inspection, and evacuation of high-risk urban areas.

These developments signal a shift toward a more centralized urban governance model, where the role of local governments in transformation processes has been diminished in favor of state institutions such as TOKİ and the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. While this has enabled greater administrative capacity and responsiveness in the face of disaster risks, it has also raised concerns regarding the erosion of participatory governance and the democratic legitimacy of urban transformation processes. Although early efforts focused predominantly on informal settlements, contemporary transformation practices in Türkiye now encompass a broader agenda including risk mitigation, resilience building, environmental sustainability, and cultural heritage preservation.

In conclusion, urban transformation in Türkiye has progressed from reactive slum legalization efforts to proactive, strategic interventions grounded in disaster risk policy and spatial planning. Laws such as No. 5393 and No. 6306 provide the foundational legal framework guiding current practices. However, for urban transformation to achieve its stated goals of safety, inclusivity, and sustainability, it must move beyond physical restructuring and incorporate principles of social equity, public participation, and transparent governance.

Without these, transformation risks becoming an exclusionary process that prioritizes market logics over community well-being and spatial justice.

2.2. Transformation of Historical Areas and the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project

The urban transformation policy of Erzurum Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) aims to improve both the physical and social structures of the city. Taking into account the city's historical, cultural, and geographical characteristics, urban transformation projects are designed not only as spatial transformations but also as a means for social and cultural development. The primary goal of urban transformation in Erzurum is to eliminate risky and irregular constructions while preserving historical sites and creating a modern urban structure. EMM has adopted a "Preserved History, Transforming City" motto and has embraced an in-situ transformation model, focusing on revitalizing the city's historical areas (EMM, 2022a, 2022b). The preservation of historical areas, protection of registered monuments, and their revitalization are key objectives in this transformation.

One of the most significant urban renewal initiatives launched by EMM is the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project. The aim of this project is to modernize the existing building stock in the region, improve the quality of life, and strengthen the urban infrastructure. While the initial urban transformation projects in Erzurum concentrated on buildings at risk of disasters, the Gürcükapı project was designed as a broad social, economic, and environmental transformation process. This project not only focuses on physical renewal but also aims to improve the social structure of the area and promote economic development. The primary goals of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project include:

- **Preservation of Historical and Cultural Heritage**: Key structures around the historical Gürcükapı Mosque will be uncovered and restored. These areas will be revitalized, ensuring that the historical heritage is preserved.
- **Revitalization of Commerce**: Gürcükapı Square, located on the historic Silk Road, is one of the city's most important commercial hubs. The transformation of this square aims to restore its role as a trade center, with modern and functional structures revitalizing the commercial life of the area.
- **Earthquake Risk and Safety**: The current structures consist of old, earthquake-vulnerable buildings. Their demolition and replacement with

modern, safe structures will be a crucial step in ensuring the safety of people and property.

- **Modern Buildings and Services**: New buildings will be designed with the input of architects and engineers, ensuring that the needs of residents and businesses are met, thus bringing the commercial and residential areas up to modern standards.

The transformation process in Gürcükapı Square has been formalized through specific legal foundations. In line with Article 73 of the Municipal Law No. 5393, EMM declared Gürcükapı Square as an urban transformation area on June 1, 2021, through the 346th Municipal Council decision. On October 14, 2022, with the approval of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change (Decision No. 4792040) and under Article 2 of the Disaster Risk Reduction Law No. 6306, the area was designated as a "reserve area." The urban transformation efforts in Gürcükapı Square gained momentum after this designation, proceeding in a planned manner with the following stages:

- **Identification of Property Ownership and Meetings**: The existing structures, land, and ownership rights in the transformation area were identified, and meetings were held with the property owners. Public informational meetings were also organized to gain support for the project.
- **Business Relocation and Agreement**: Before demolition, new business locations were proposed to the owners while ensuring the relocation of businesses from their original sites. Agreements were made regarding compensation, where the difference in cost between the demolition of existing businesses and the construction of new ones was settled.
- **Project Design and Planning**: Various project designs and zoning plans were developed for Gürcükapı Square. These designs considered both the needs of the local population and the historical fabric of the city.
- **Demolition and Construction**: After the planning and design phases, demolition of the existing structures began. Following this, new construction work commenced and was completed in approximately six months.
- **Delivery of New Business Premises**: After the new buildings were completed, new business premises and ownership titles were handed over to the rightful property owners.

Before the implementation of the project, there were 23 parcels and 113 stakeholders in the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation area. The area contained 34 businesses (three of which were owned by EMM) and 10 unregistered structures, totaling 44 independent units. There was also a five-unit apartment building that

was acquired via expropriation. The total parcel area was 3,382.82 m², while the debris area was 10,547.95 m². After the transformation, the total construction cost of the newly built area was approximately 63.37 million TL, with a total construction area of 13,628.15 m². The new development includes 41 independent business units and a 65-vehicle parking lot (2,106 m²). The business area belonging to individuals has been planned at a total of 7,840.70 m².

The Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project was implemented as part of EMM's urban transformation policies, aiming to modernize the city while preserving its historical and cultural heritage. This project not only sought to eliminate disaster risks but also aimed to strengthen trade and create economic vitality in the region.

3. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to evaluate the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project based on the perceptions and expectations of its beneficiaries. The research question of this study is: "What are the perceived impacts of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project on its beneficiaries, and how do these perceptions vary across different dimensions of the project (e.g., identity, accessibility, equality, participation, environmental sensitivity, economic benefits, quality of life)?" This question aims to explore the diverse perceptions of the beneficiaries regarding the project, with a focus on how these perceptions differ across multiple aspects such as the project's impact on identity, accessibility, equity, and participation. By examining these dimensions, the study seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of the beneficiaries' views on the urban transformation process, shedding light on both positive and negative aspects of the project and offering valuable insights for future urban planning and policy development.

The research design is based on a specific structure that aligns with the purpose and scope of this study. This study utilizes a descriptive and cross-sectional research design to examine the impact of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project on the perceptions of its beneficiaries. The descriptive research design aims to identify participants' perceptions and expectations regarding the project and to define these perceptions across various dimensions. The cross-sectional design allows for data collection within a specific time frame, namely during the completion phase of the project.

The research collects quantitative data through surveys and aims to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' views through open-ended questions. This approach enables the evaluation of participants' perceptions across different dimensions, such as identity, accessibility, equality, participation, environmental

sensitivity, economic benefits, and quality of life. The collected data were evaluated through statistical analysis, and the differences in participants' perceptions were analyzed across these various dimensions. This research design aims to develop a comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project.

The population of the research consists of the beneficiaries directly affected by the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project. A survey method was used for data collection in this study. The first section of the survey consists of 5 questions aimed at identifying basic demographic characteristics of the participants, such as age, gender, and educational status. The second section asks beneficiaries to evaluate the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project. In this section, 40 Likert-type scaled questions (ranging from 1 to 5) were used to assess the project's success level in relation to 10 main dimensions and their sub-criteria. These dimensions and criteria are designed to systematically capture participants' perceptions, expectations, and overall evaluations of the project.

Additionally, four open-ended questions were incorporated to gather participants' perspectives on the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project. The first question sought to understand how participants would describe the project in a single sentence, allowing for a concise reflection of their overall perception. The second question aimed to identify what participants considered to be the most significant justification for the project, thus providing insight into the underlying reasons they associate with its implementation. The third question focused on the stakeholders or institutions that participants trusted the most in safeguarding their rights during the transformation process, offering valuable information regarding the role of trust and authority in the context of urban renewal projects. Finally, the fourth open-ended question was about whether any civil society organizations emerged during the urban transformation process. These questions were designed to capture the multifaceted nature of the participants' perceptions and expectations related to the urban transformation process.

The survey form was developed by utilizing previous studies in the literature (Ertaş, 2011; Yıldız, 2018; Biler, 2019) and was presented to the beneficiaries for their opinions. The survey was administered through face-to-face interviews. Participants were informed about the purpose of the survey, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of data collection, and it was emphasized that participation would be anonymous. Considering the total number of beneficiaries in the area, the total number of beneficiaries was determined to be thirty-four. The survey was conducted between January 2024 and February 2024, and one person could not be reached, while two people did not participate. As a

result, the survey was completed with thirty-one beneficiaries, reaching 91% of the population.

The validity of the study was ensured through expert evaluations of the survey, which confirmed its content and relevance. Additionally, a pre-test (pilot study) was conducted to assess the applicability and comprehensibility of the survey, leading to revisions of certain questions based on the pilot results. The reliability of the study was assessed using the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha), which yielded a value of 0.965, indicating a high level of consistency and reliability. After conducting statistical analyses, the reliability of the data was confirmed, ensuring that the results were consistent and dependable. Moreover, responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed using qualitative analysis, providing deeper insights into the beneficiaries' perspectives on the process.

The survey form consists of various criteria under 10 dimensions to assess the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project. Each dimension was supported by questions designed to evaluate different stages of the project. The dimensions and criteria were deductively developed based on a thorough review of the literature. This approach ensured that the framework was grounded in established theoretical and empirical studies, providing a solid foundation for the research. Table 1 presents a comprehensive set of dimensions and criteria used to evaluate the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Area, which encompasses multiple aspects of urban planning and development.

Table 1: Dimensions and Criteria Used in the Evaluation of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Area

DIMENSION	**CRITERIA**
Quality of Life	Physical and aesthetic design of open spaces Implementation of security measures Provision of local employment opportunities Design of buildings enhancing human comfort
Diversity	Mixed-use and flexible development model Land use in a manner that protects the environment
Equity	Design suitable for the use of the disabled, elderly, and children
Process Management	Management of the process from start to finish
Participation	Societal participation in public decision-making processes
Accessibility	Appropriate design for pedestrian and public transport
Identity	Preservation of local characteristics Preservation of historical buildings Compatibility with the environment

Environmental Sensitivity	Conservation of energy resources Conservation of water resources Conservation of materials Protection of environmental and human health during construction stages Landscape design
Economic Benefit	Increase in property value due to transformation Enhancement of commercial potential
Workplace Features	Satisfaction with the facade of individual properties after transformation Satisfaction with the size of individual properties after transformation Satisfaction with the architectural features of individual properties

Each dimension included in the survey serves a specific purpose in evaluating the success and impact of urban transformation projects. The Quality of Life dimension seeks to enhance the living experience by creating healthier, safer, and more comfortable environments that promote well-being and social interaction. Diversity focuses on accommodating various needs and activities, fostering a dynamic and resilient urban space through mixed-use areas and the integration of diverse socio-economic groups. The Equity dimension ensures inclusivity by addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, promoting social equality, and ensuring equal opportunities for all residents. Process Management emphasizes the importance of overseeing the development process to meet goals, timelines, and quality standards while fostering community participation for greater efficiency and acceptance. The Participation dimension highlights the significance of involving the community in decision-making, ensuring that the transformation reflects the collective interests of residents and enhances social acceptance. Accessibility ensures that urban areas are easy to navigate for everyone, improving mobility and fostering social connections, while also supporting economic development. The Identity dimension preserves local culture, history, and community characteristics, ensuring that modernization respects the area's unique identity. Environmental Sensitivity advocates for sustainable, environmentally friendly practices, minimizing impact through resource efficiency, construction health considerations, and landscape design. The Economic Benefit dimension aims to create value for both local and national economies, enhancing property values and commercial potential. Finally, the Workplace Features dimension evaluates satisfaction with changes to individual properties, focusing on design, size, and functionality to meet business needs. Together, these criteria ensure a holistic approach to urban transformation, aiming for a balanced, inclusive, sustainable environment that promotes

community participation, accessibility, economic growth, and the preservation of local identity.

For the questions under each dimension, a Likert scale was used to measure the satisfaction levels of the participants. Participants rated each question on a scale from "1" (very poor) to "5" (very good). This analysis helped determine how each criterion was evaluated by the beneficiaries. The score distribution range was calculated using the following formula:

Distribution range = (Maximum value - Minimum value) / Number of degrees

Based on this calculation, the difference between the maximum value of 5 and the minimum value of 1 (4 points) was divided into 5 equal intervals, meaning each interval was calculated to be 0.8 points. Based on this calculation, the Likert scale values were categorized as in Table 2.

Table 2: Scoring Used in Evaluation

Score	**Value**	**Score Range**
5	Very Good	4.20-5.00
4	Good	3.40-4.19
3	Average	2.60- 3.39
2	Poor	1.80- 2.59
1	Very Poor	1.00- 1.79

The results were analyzed based on the average scores of each dimension and criterion, and meaningful insights regarding the perception of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project by the property owners were obtained from these data. By utilizing the scoring system intervals, it is possible to determine which aspects of the project were more successful and which areas require further development. As a result, improvements needed in the implementation of the project were identified, and recommendations that may guide future urban transformation projects were developed.

The study has limitations in terms of its sample, participant biases, and temporal context. The research was conducted solely with property owners affected by the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, which limits the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, participants' feedback was shaped by their personal experiences and perceptions. Therefore, different results may be obtained from other projects. Finally, since the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation

Project process has only recently been completed, long-term effects and outcomes were not within the scope of this study.

3.1. Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for the survey was granted by the Atatürk University Institute of Social Sciences Ethics Committee. In its meeting on 02.01.2024, the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences at Atatürk University, under decision number 12, unanimously concluded that there were no ethical concerns regarding the rationale, objectives, approach, and methodology of the research. The Ethics Committee confirmed that the study could be conducted in compliance with scientific ethics. This decision was formally communicated via document number E.88656144-000-2400001830.

3.2. Limitations

This study has several limitations. Firstly, it focuses exclusively on the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project and the perceptions of stakeholders within that specific area. The study does not include the opinions of other key stakeholders, such as the general public, non-governmental organizations, and external actors like local governments and contractors. Additionally, the sample size of 31 stakeholders, while representing 91% of the targeted participants, may not adequately reflect the broader population affected by the project. A larger and more diverse sample could provide a more representative picture and capture a wider range of perspectives. Furthermore, the study is cross-sectional, assessing the project at a single point in time. A longitudinal study, evaluating the project over different phases or years, could offer deeper insights into the long-term effects of the transformation process. The scope of the study also excludes certain dimensions, such as long-term environmental impacts or public health effects, which would require more in-depth research. A follow-up study conducted at the project's completion or after additional phases would help capture changes and developments that occurred after the survey period.

4. FINDINGS

The descriptive analysis results regarding the demographic data of the participants in the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project survey are presented below (Table 3). According to these results, it can be observed that the majority of the project beneficiaries are middle-aged property owners who have been living in the area for a long time. Participants generally hold at least a secondary school or university degree, and the majority of participants are male.

Table 3. Demographic Data of the Beneficiaries of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project

Variables	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	29	93,55
	Female	2	6,45
Age	Under 30	2	6,45
	31-40	3	9,68
	41-50	9	29,03
	51-60	11	35,49
	Over 60	6	19,35
Education Level	Primary School	1	3,22
	Secondary School	8	25,81
	High School	13	41,94
	University	8	25,81
	Master's Degree	1	3,22
Time Spent in the Area	1 year	5	16,13
	10-19 years	8	25,80
	20-29 years	10	32,26
	30-39 years	3	9,68
	Over 40 years	5	16,13
Property Status	Property Owner	30	96,77
	Tenant	1	3,23
TOTAL		**31**	**100**

Based on responses to open-ended questions, the general opinions of the beneficiaries regarding the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project are predominantly positive. The participants perceive the project as a beneficial initiative that uncovers the historical fabric of the area, renovates the region by demolishing old buildings, and meets the city's needs. This positive perception highlights the project's dual aim of revitalizing both the physical environment and the city's cultural heritage.

Participants provided a range of responses to the question, "How would you describe the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project in one sentence?" Many emphasized the project's necessity for the area and its successful renewal efforts, such as "A much-needed, underdeveloped project," "A very necessary project for Gürcükapı," and "The area has been cleaned, and the appearance has improved." Others stressed its importance for urban development and the city's aesthetic, such as "A project that changes the appearance of the city," and "Beneficial for adding beauty to the city." However, some expressed critical views regarding ongoing issues, such as the municipality's perceived lack of accountability, with comments like, "A failure. Problems continue, the municipality is not taking responsibility, the heating system is problematic..." In

general, the responses reflect a combination of appreciation for the project's contribution to urban renewal and concerns about unresolved problems.

The question, "What do you think is the most important justification for the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project?" elicited responses focusing on the poor condition of the buildings and the need for renovation. Many respondents emphasized the outdated and deteriorating structures, citing issues like "The buildings had reached the end of their life," "The buildings were old and worn out," and "The buildings were not earthquake-resistant." Other responses highlighted the project's role in urban aesthetics and safety, such as "To beautify the city" and "To create a clean market with a historical appearance." Several participants underscored the necessity of renovation to address structural and functional deficiencies, with statements like, "The buildings had to be renewed," and "The existing buildings were inadequate in terms of both structure and functionality." Additionally, some responses pointed to the need to address irregular urban development, emphasizing the importance of transforming the area, which had been waiting for improvement for decades. Overall, the justifications provided reflect a combination of structural, safety, aesthetic, and urban planning concerns, signaling that the project was seen as crucial for improving both the physical condition and the image of the area.

In response to the question, "During the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation process, who or which institution did you trust the most in terms of protecting your rights?" many participants expressed trust in the Erzurum Metropolitan Municipality (EMM), while others also mentioned trust in higher authorities, such as the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. However, some respondents indicated initial skepticism toward institutions and emphasized their desire to secure themselves through solid contracts. A few participants also raised concerns about discrepancies in project specifications, such as issues with building designs and measurements. In general, while many beneficiaries trusted local government bodies, there was an initial period of doubt that shifted as the project progressed.

Lastly, the beneficiaries of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Area did not establish any civil society organizations during the transformation process. Instead, they reported resolving their issues through direct communication with the municipality. This indicates that a strong trust relationship was established between the beneficiaries and the municipality, with participants expressing confidence in the municipality’s solution-oriented approach.

4.1.10 Dimensions of Beneficiaries' Opinions on the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project

The perceptions and evaluations of the beneficiaries regarding the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project were examined under 10 dimensions. The data obtained from participants reflect the scores for each dimension as well as the general satisfaction levels of the participants. Below is the evaluation of each dimension, the average scores obtained, and an explanation of what these scores imply.

4.1.1. Quality of life

Within the scope of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, the "Quality of Life" dimension measures participants' views on various physical, security, and comfort aspects of the project. The scoring details for the Quality of Life dimension are listed in Table 4. Accordingly, 46.15% of participants evaluated the design of open spaces in terms of appearance and size as "very good," with the majority of the remaining responses falling under the "good" category. Opinions regarding the adequacy of security measures and crime prevention were generally positive, with 63.64% of participants rating security measures as good, and 26.52% rating them as very good. The evaluations regarding the creation of local job opportunities were more mixed. While 34.48% rated it as good, 31.03% gave a moderate assessment. There were also generally positive evaluations regarding the provision of natural lighting, ventilation, and comfort in the buildings.

Table 4: Scoring for the Quality of Life Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Design of open spaces (physical and aesthetic)	Open spaces were designed appropriately in terms of appearance and size	0,77	4,62	11,54	36,92	46,15	**3,935**
Security measures	Adequate measures were taken regarding security and crime prevention	0,00	3,03	6,82	63,64	26,52	**3,968**
Provision of local job opportunities	Local job opportunities were created	0,00	8,62	31,03	34,48	25,86	**3,452**
Building	Natural lighting	0,74	0,00	4,41	61,76	33,09	**4,097**

design for human comfort	was provided in the buildings						
	Natural ventilation was provided in the buildings	0,76	3,03	9,09	45,45	41,67	**3,968**
	Thermal, visual, and auditory comfort was provided in the buildings	1,49	2,99	6,72	32,84	55,97	**4,065**
Average Score							**3,914**

As a result, the overall score for the "Quality of Life" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated as 3.914, and this dimension was rated as "good" (3.40-4.19). Participants indicated that the project had a positive impact on improving the quality of life. The infrastructure improvements, environmental arrangements, and modernization of living spaces within the project were well received by the beneficiaries. However, some participants complained about the inadequacy of social spaces and the limited green areas. Overall, it can be said that the quality of life within the scope of the project is positive and that this dimension has been successfully implemented.

To strengthen the Quality of Life dimension of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, where participants provided generally positive feedback, several focused improvements could further enhance resident satisfaction and well-being. While the design of open spaces, building comfort features, and security measures received favorable evaluations, certain aspects—such as the creation of local job opportunities and the availability of social and green spaces—were identified as areas needing improvement. To address these gaps, the project could prioritize the expansion and diversification of social spaces, such as public parks, community centers, and recreational areas, which would not only contribute to social cohesion but also provide critical green infrastructure. Additionally, promoting local economic development initiatives, such as incentivizing small businesses and supporting local entrepreneurship within the project area, could improve employment opportunities. Enhancing multi-functional open spaces that combine leisure, commerce, and cultural uses would further contribute to residents' quality of life. Overall, targeted enhancements in these areas would complement the project's physical improvements and support a more holistic, sustainable urban living environment.

4.1.2. Diversity

The "Diversity" dimension within the scope of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project examines participants' views on the variety of uses, flexibility, and environmental sustainability aspects of the project. The scoring details for the Diversity dimension are listed in Table 5. According to the findings, participants gave positive evaluations on the design of buildings to allow for mixed and diverse uses, with 48.12% rating it as "good" and 41.35% rating it as "very good." Similarly, regarding whether the buildings were designed with enough flexibility to meet new needs, 46.51% rated it as "good," and 42.64% rated it as "very good." Opinions about the sufficient utilization of existing infrastructure incorporated into the project were also positive, with 53.96% of participants rating this criterion as "very good."

Table 5. Scoring for the Diversity Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Mixed-use and flexible development model	Buildings were designed to allow for mixed and diverse uses	0,00	6,02%	4,51	48,12	41,35	4,000
	Buildings were designed with enough flexibility to meet new needs	0,78	7,75	2,33	46,51	42,64	3,871
Use of land to protect the environment	Existing vegetation and trees were preserved	0,00	2,86	4,29	42,86	50,00	4,226
	Existing infrastructure was utilized	0,00	2,88	8,63	34,53	53,96	4,194
Average Score							**4,072**

As a result, the overall score for the "Diversity" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated as 4.072, and this dimension was rated as "good" (3.40-4.19). Participants assessed the project as successful in terms of usage diversity, flexibility, and environmental sustainability. Specifically, most participants gave high ratings for environmental criteria such as the use of land in a way that protects the environment and the utilization of existing infrastructure. The mixed-use and flexible development model also received a positive evaluation. Overall, the project was successfully implemented in this dimension.

To further enhance the Diversity dimension of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, despite its positive evaluation, several targeted strategies can be implemented. While participants rated the mixed-use design, flexibility,

and environmental considerations favorably, continuous improvement can ensure sustained adaptability and resilience. Firstly, expanding the functional diversity of spaces to include more community-oriented uses—such as educational, cultural, and recreational facilities—can improve social integration and daily utility. Secondly, ensuring greater modularity in building design would allow users to easily adapt interior layouts to evolving needs, such as shifting between residential, commercial, or hybrid uses over time. Additionally, to strengthen environmental sustainability, integrating green roofs, vertical gardens, and rainwater harvesting systems can enhance the preservation of natural resources while aligning with climate-sensitive urban design principles. These measures would reinforce the project's success in offering a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable urban environment.

4.1.3. Equity

The "Equity" dimension examines participants' views on the accessibility and suitability of the project for groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly, and children. The scoring details for the Equity dimension are listed in Table 6. According to the findings, participants mostly gave positive evaluations regarding the project's suitability for people with disabilities, with 54.29% rating it as "good" and 42.86% rating it as "very good." The project's suitability for the elderly received similarly high evaluations. 53.90% of participants rated it as "good," and 42.55% rated it as "very good." The project's suitability for children was also assessed very positively. 67.15% of participants rated the design suitable for children as "good," and 29.20% rated it as "very good."

Table 6: Scoring for the Equity Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Suitability for people with disabilities, the elderly, and children	Designed for the use of people with disabilities	0,00	2,86	0,00	54,29	42,86	4,226
	Designed for the use of the elderly	0,00	1,42	2,13	53,90	42,55	4,258
	Designed for the use of children	0,00	1,46	2,19	67,15	29,20	4,129
Average Score							**4,204**

As a result, the overall score for the "Equity" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated as 4.204, and this dimension was rated as "very good" (4.20-5.00). Based on the evaluations of the Equity dimension, the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project was assessed as highly suitable and accessible for groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly, and children. Participants

specifically noted that the designs for people with disabilities and the elderly were excellent, while the suitability for children was also highlighted as good. Overall, the project achieved excellent results in this dimension and demonstrated successful implementation in terms of accessibility.

To further strengthen the equity dimension of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, targeted enhancements can be introduced despite its already high performance. While the project was rated "very good" for its inclusivity toward people with disabilities, the elderly, and children, maintaining and improving equity requires continuous and adaptive strategies. First, periodic user experience evaluations involving these specific groups can provide more nuanced insights into real-life accessibility challenges. Second, increasing the number of universally designed facilities, such as tactile paving, ramps with appropriate gradients, accessible playgrounds, and shaded resting areas for the elderly, would reinforce physical inclusion. Lastly, integrating inclusive signage and digital tools (e.g., QR codes providing audio navigation for visually impaired users) could support a broader range of accessibility needs. These improvements would not only enhance the inclusiveness of the project but also ensure that urban spaces remain adaptable and welcoming to all user groups over time.

4.1.4. Process management

The "Process Management" dimension evaluates the management and implementation steps taken throughout the entire process of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, from its initiation to completion, based on participants' opinions. The scoring details for the Process Management dimension are listed in Table 7. According to the findings, participants expressed satisfaction with the overall management of the project and mostly believed that the process was well-managed. The project created the perception that the transformation expected by participants was successfully realized. Most participants felt that the project met their expectations. Additionally, participants stated that the municipality adhered to its commitments during the project and completed it on time. This created a perception of smooth process execution. Property owners reported that the title deed procedures were facilitated, and no significant obstacles were encountered in this regard. Participants considered the municipality-led execution of the project beneficial and efficient.

Table 7: Scoring for the Process Management Dimension

Indicators	Survey Question	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Management of the process from start to finish	The transformation I envisioned before urban transformation was realized	0,00	6,25	9,38	59,38	21,88	**4,000**
	The municipality adhered to the committed time frame in the urban transformation	3,13	3,13	6,25	37,50	46,88	**4,258**
	It was easy for property owners to receive their title deeds after urban transformation	6,25	6,25	6,25	46,88	31,25	**3,935**
	Having the municipality lead the transformation was beneficial	0,00	3,13	9,38	25,00	59,38	**4,452**
Average Score							**4,161**

As a result, the overall score for the "Process Management" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated as 4.161, and this dimension was rated as "good" (3.40-4.19). In terms of Process Management, the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project was managed successfully. Participants noted that the municipality adhered to its commitments and expectations throughout the transformation process, the project proceeded smoothly, and property owners easily acquired their title deeds. There was a general consensus that the municipality-led transformation was beneficial. Overall, this dimension achieved very good results, showcasing successful management.

To further enhance the effectiveness of process management in urban transformation projects like Gürcükapı, several key improvements could be implemented. While participants expressed high satisfaction, especially with the municipality's leadership and adherence to the timeline, some indicators—such as the ease of acquiring title deeds—received relatively lower scores, suggesting areas for refinement. First, the digitalization of administrative processes (e.g., online tracking systems for title deed applications and project milestones) could streamline bureaucratic procedures and reduce perceived complexity. Second, establishing dedicated communication and liaison units within municipalities could enhance stakeholder engagement, providing real-time updates and direct support for residents throughout the process. Finally, formalizing feedback mechanisms at each phase of the project would help capture and address grievances or suggestions in a timely manner, reinforcing transparency and trust

in the implementation process. These strategies would help institutionalize effective governance and improve stakeholder satisfaction in future urban transformation initiatives.

4.1.5. Participation

The "Participation" dimension evaluates the interaction and involvement of stakeholders, particularly property owners, in decision-making processes and information sharing during urban transformation projects. The scoring details for the Participation dimension are listed in Table 8. According to the findings, participants noted that stakeholder participation in the decision-making process was ensured, although some participants felt that they needed more information. Overall, there was a positive view regarding the participation aspect. Participants expressed general satisfaction with the information sharing during the urban transformation process, although some participants might have expected more communication. Property owners were largely able to comfortably express their requests and complaints to the municipality during the transformation process. However, some participants indicated that this communication process could have been more effective. Participants reported that their demands and expectations were largely met, but a few expressed that their expectations were not fully fulfilled.

Table 8: Scoring for the Participation Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Public participation in decision-making	Stakeholder participation in decision-making processes was ensured	0,00	1,54	13,85	61,54	23,08	**3,871**
	I was satisfied with the information sharing process during urban transformation	0,78	4,65	4,65	58,91	31,01	**3,839**
	I was able to express my requests and complaints regarding the urban transformation	0,00	3,13	18,75	46,88	31,25	**3,613**
	My demands/expectations regarding the urban transformation were met	0,83	1,65	32,23	36,36	28,93	**3,903**
Average Score							**3,806**

As a result, the overall score for the "Participation" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated as 3.806, and this dimension was rated as "good" (3.40-4.19). In terms of participation, the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project performed well in involving property owners. Participants indicated that participation in decision-making, information sharing, and the ability to express complaints were generally ensured. However, some expectations for more information and improved communication channels remain. Overall, this dimension achieved good results and could be made more effective with improvements to increase participation.

To strengthen stakeholder participation in the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, it is essential to develop more inclusive and transparent communication strategies. While the current approach was positively received overall, feedback indicates that some participants felt inadequately informed or insufficiently engaged. To address these concerns, participation can be enhanced by diversifying communication tools—such as using digital platforms, printed materials, and community meetings—to ensure that information is timely, accessible, and understandable to all beneficiaries. Additionally, establishing formalized participatory mechanisms, such as advisory or monitoring committees involving property owners and local representatives, would help institutionalize stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes. Educational workshops and orientation sessions can also increase residents' capacity to contribute meaningfully. Finally, by implementing a structured and responsive feedback system for handling concerns and complaints, the municipality can strengthen transparency, build trust, and transform participation from a procedural requirement into a genuine form of collaborative governance.

4.1.6. Accessibility

Accessibility is one of the most important aspects of an urban transformation project, as the adequacy of public transportation and pedestrian pathways directly impacts the project's usability and accessibility. The scoring details for the accessibility dimension are listed in Table 9. According to this, participants reported that the project area is highly suitable for pedestrian access. The width and safety of the pedestrian pathways have been provided at an adequate level for users, and positive feedback was given regarding pedestrian accessibility. Participants also made favorable evaluations regarding the project's suitability for public transportation. Easy access to public transport and improvements in this infrastructure have significantly increased the project's accessibility.

Table 9: Scoring of the Accessibility Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Suitability for pedestrian and public transportation	The design is suitable for pedestrian access	0,00	1,44	6,47	48,92	43,17	**4,226**
	The design is suitable for public transportation	0,00	1,38	2,07	41,38	55,17	**4,387**
Average Score							**4,306**

The overall score for the "Accessibility" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated to be 4.306, and the project's effects in this dimension were rated in the "very good" (4.20-5.00) category. The Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project demonstrates high success in the accessibility dimension. Participants stated that both pedestrian pathways and public transport systems have been well designed and ensure safe transportation. They also expressed satisfaction with the central location of the transformation area, as new workplaces are in close proximity to public transport lines. Furthermore, the pedestrian pathways were reported to be suitable, with areas accessible to people with disabilities. These results indicate that the project's overall accessibility goals have been successfully achieved and that it meets the public's transportation needs.

To further enhance accessibility in urban transformation projects such as Gürcükapı, improvements should prioritize stronger integration between pedestrian networks and public transportation systems. While current accessibility levels are evaluated as very good, especially in terms of design and proximity to transit routes, sustained success requires addressing finer details. Ensuring that sidewalks, crossings, and transit stops are barrier-free and fully accessible to individuals with disabilities will increase inclusivity. Expanding the frequency, reach, and reliability of public transport services in the area can also better accommodate growing demand and diverse user needs. Moreover, the addition of clear, multilingual signage and safe, illuminated pedestrian pathways would improve navigation and security for all users, including the elderly and children. These enhancements would support a more cohesive and equitable urban mobility environment.

4.1.7. Identity

Identity is one of the key dimensions of an urban transformation project, as the preservation of local features and the compatibility of the design with the environment affect the social and cultural acceptability of the project. The scoring details for the identity dimension are presented in Table 10. According to the

participants, the efforts made to preserve local identity in the project were evaluated very positively. The preservation of local features and identity in the area is seen as a significant success for the project. Historical buildings have been meticulously preserved, and works on architecturally and culturally significant buildings have been met with high satisfaction. This reflects the care taken in preserving the historical texture of the region. The project has been designed to be compatible with the surrounding architectural structures and physical features. Participants noted that the project is aesthetically and functionally aligned with the environment.

Table 10: Scoring of the Identity Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Preservation of local features	The identity and local features of the area were preserved	0,00	0,00	2,05	46,58	51,37	**4,419**
Preservation of historical buildings	Historical, architectural, religious, and culturally significant buildings were preserved	0,00	0,00	0,00	34,21	65,79	**4,613**
Compatibility with the environment	The area was designed to be compatible with surrounding architectural structures and physical features	0,00	0,00	4,29	45,71	50,00	**4,367**
Average Score							**4,466**

The overall score for the "Identity" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated to be 4.466, and the project's effects in this dimension were rated in the "very good" (4.20-5.00) category. The preservation of local features and historical buildings, along with ensuring the design is compatible with the environment, are important factors that enhance the social and cultural values of the project. Participants stated that the project area was redesigned in harmony with both local identity and the surrounding environment.

To further strengthen the preservation of identity in urban transformation projects, efforts should prioritize continuous community engagement and context-sensitive design practices. While the Gürcükapı Project was rated very positively in this dimension, maintaining long-term cultural integrity requires active collaboration with local stakeholders to identify and preserve elements of architectural, historical, and cultural value. Future interventions should be guided by design principles that respect and reflect the unique character of the area, ensuring compatibility with traditional styles and urban textures. Complementary measures such as installing interpretive signage, organizing heritage-focused

community events, and integrating local narratives into the public realm can reinforce residents' sense of belonging and cultural continuity. These strategies can enhance both the symbolic and practical significance of place identity within urban transformation contexts.

4.1.8. Environmental sensitivity

Environmental sensitivity is an important dimension in urban transformation projects, reflecting the sensitivity to environmental preservation and sustainability. The scoring details for the environmental sensitivity dimension are presented in Table 11. In the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, various designs and implementations were carried out with environmental factors in mind. Participants reported that energy-saving materials and equipment were used in heating and lighting to promote energy efficiency. However, participants expressed mixed opinions on this aspect, and energy conservation practices were sometimes rated at a moderate level. On the other hand, participants noted that appropriate equipment and technologies were used to reduce water consumption. This indicator, similar to energy conservation, was also evaluated positively, but there is still perceived room for further development. Regarding the use of local and natural building materials, participants provided favorable feedback. Additionally, the use of durable materials is considered an important factor contributing to environmental sensitivity. High satisfaction was reported regarding the focus on environmental and human health during the construction process, as well as waste management and environmental protection measures. Participants evaluated the environmental measures taken during construction very positively. The project also received high scores for its landscaping efforts, with environmentally compatible arrangements made. Participants noted that the area was also aesthetically well-designed.

Table 11: Scoring of the Environmental Sensitivity Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Energy conservation	Energy-saving materials and equipment were used in heating	0,00	3,17	23,81	41,27	31,75	**3,806**
	Energy-saving materials and equipment were used in lighting	0,00	3,01	13,53	42,11	41,35	**4,000**
Water	Equipment and	0,00	3,15	25,98	31,50	39,37	**3,806**

conservation	technology were used to reduce water consumption						
Material conservation	Local building materials were used	0,00	1,50	11,28	57,14	30,08	**4,032**
	Natural building materials were used	0,00	1,48	8,89	56,30	33,33	**4,097**
	Durable building materials were used	0,85	3,42	7,69	41,03	47,01	**4,037**
Environmental and human health protection during construction	Environmental and human health were protected during construction	0,00	0,00	8,39	39,16	52,45	**4,323**
	Waste management was effectively applied during construction	0,00	1,49	8,96	44,78	44,78	**4,167**
Landscaping	Appropriate landscaping arrangements were made in the area	0,00	1,42	4,26	48,23	46,10	**4,258**
Average Score							**4,058**

The overall score for the "Environmental Sensitivity" dimension, considering all criteria, was calculated to be 4.058, and the project's effects in this dimension were rated in the "good" (3.40-4.19) category. Positive feedback was received on energy savings, water conservation, material use, environmental and human health protection during construction, and landscaping. Environmental and health measures during construction, along with landscaping efforts, were the areas most highly rated. Overall, the actions taken concerning environmental sensitivity contribute positively to the project's sustainability.

To further strengthen environmental sensitivity in urban transformation projects, it is important to advance energy and water efficiency measures through smart systems and innovative technologies. While the Gürcükapı Project received positive feedback in this dimension, especially in landscaping and construction practices, there remains room for improvement in energy and water conservation. Broader integration of renewable energy solutions and efficient water reuse systems can enhance sustainability. Prioritizing the use of local, natural, and long-lasting materials not only reduces the environmental footprint but also supports the local economy. Additionally, incorporating ecological landscaping with native species can improve biodiversity and ecosystem health. These actions will contribute to more resilient and environmentally responsible urban environments.

4.1.9. Economic benefit

Economic Benefit is a dimension that evaluates the economic impacts of urban transformation projects, particularly their contributions to property value and commercial potential. The scoring details of the Economic Benefit dimension are listed in Table 12. According to the participants, there has been an increase in property values after the urban transformation, and they expressed satisfaction with this outcome. This indicator received a high score. Additionally, there have been observations that the number of visitors and customers increased after the transformation. However, this indicator received a slightly lower evaluation, as some participants mentioned that the transformation did not have as significant an impact on the commercial potential as expected.

Table 12: Scoring of the Economic Benefit Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
The urban transformation project increases real estate value and commercial potential	The urban transformation increased the value of my property	0,00	3,13	3,13	21,88	68,75	**4,613**
	After the urban transformation, the number of visitors and customers increased.	0,00	6,25	65,63	12,50	12,50	**3,323**
Average Score							**3,968**

The overall score for the "Economic Benefit" dimension, considering all criteria, is calculated as 3.968, placing the effects of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project in the "Good" (3.40-4.19) category. The Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project has demonstrated positive performance in the Economic Benefit dimension, particularly in terms of property value increase and the improvement of commercial potential. However, some participants, who expected greater commercial impacts from the transformation, assigned lower scores to the increase in visitor and customer numbers. Overall, a good result has been achieved in terms of economic benefit, demonstrating the project's economic sustainability and success.

To enhance the economic benefits of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project, targeted strategies could be implemented to more directly stimulate commercial activity. While the increase in property values has been widely appreciated, the relatively modest rise in customer and visitor numbers suggests a need for complementary measures—such as improving

signage, public spaces, and marketing support for new businesses. Incentives for small enterprises, event-based promotional activities, and improvements in accessibility to commercial areas could help attract more foot traffic. Strengthening the commercial infrastructure and visibility of business units within the transformed area would contribute to maximizing the project's economic potential and fostering long-term local economic development.

4.1.10. Workplace features

Workplace Features is a dimension that measures the impact of urban transformation projects on workplaces, evaluating participants' satisfaction with the facade, size, and architectural features of their workplaces. The scoring details of the Workplace Features dimension are listed in Table 13. According to the participants, they were generally satisfied with the facade of their workplaces. This feature indicates that the visual aspect of the project added value to the area. The level of satisfaction regarding the size of the workplaces was slightly higher, with participants expressing that their workplace needs were met and that they were satisfied with the size. Participants also generally expressed satisfaction with the architectural design of their workplaces, indicating a positive view of the project in both aesthetic and functional terms.

Table 13: Scoring of the Workplace Features Dimension

Indicators	**Survey Question**	**Beneficiaries' Evaluation (%)**					**Score**
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
The level of satisfaction with the facade, size, and architectural features of individual properties after the transformation.	Satisfaction with the facade, size, and architectural features of the individual property after the transformation	6,25	6,25	6,25	56,25	21,88	**3,839**
	Satisfaction with the size of individual property after urban transformation	3,13	3,13	9,38	56,25	25,00	**4,000**
	Satisfaction with the architectural features of individual property after urban transformation	0,00	18,75	3,13	37,5	37,5	**3,968**
Average Score							**3,935**

The overall score for the "Workplace Features Satisfaction" dimension, considering all criteria, is calculated as 3.935, placing the effects of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project in the "Good" (3.40-4.19) category. In this

dimension, the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project has successfully ensured satisfaction. Participants provided positive feedback regarding the facade, size, and architectural design of their workplaces. Overall, this dimension is evaluated within the "Good" score range, showing that the project has been successful for workplace owners and has improved workplace conditions.

To further enhance satisfaction with workplace features in urban transformation projects like Gürcükapı, several targeted improvements could be considered. Although participants generally reported satisfaction with the façade, size, and architectural features, the variation in responses suggests room for refinement. Incorporating participatory design processes, where future occupants can provide input on interior layouts and functional needs, may lead to higher satisfaction levels. Additionally, offering customizable interior spaces, flexible layouts, and enhanced lighting and ventilation systems could improve usability and comfort. Ensuring that architectural features are not only aesthetically pleasing but also support operational efficiency and local business needs will help maximize long-term functionality and satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project through a multidimensional analytical framework encompassing physical, social, cultural, economic, and environmental aspects. Empirical findings, based on stakeholder feedback across ten key dimensions, offer a detailed understanding of the project's successes as well as areas necessitating further improvement. Quantitative results indicate that the project performs particularly well in the dimensions of Identity, Accessibility, and Equity, which scored 4.466, 4.306, and 4.204 respectively, situating them in the "very good" category (Table 14). These findings suggest that the project has effectively preserved local cultural heritage and architectural integrity, thereby fostering a strong sense of place and community ownership. Moreover, the alignment of design with the existing environment and enhanced accessibility features reflect successful integration of social inclusiveness and mobility enhancements, as evidenced by positive stakeholder evaluations regarding pedestrian pathways, public transportation, and facilities for vulnerable populations such as individuals with disabilities, children, and the elderly. Collectively, these achievements underscore the project's role in promoting social cohesion and environmental sustainability—two essential pillars of contemporary urban regeneration.

Table 14: Evaluation of the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project Across 10 Dimensions

Dimension	**Average Score**	**Evaluation**
Quality of Life	3,914	GOOD
Diversity	4,072	GOOD
Equity	4,204	VERY GOOD
Process Management	4,161	GOOD
Participation	3,806	GOOD
Accessibility	4,306	VERY GOOD
Identity	4,466	VERY GOOD
Environmental Sensitivity	4,058	GOOD
Economic Benefit	3,968	GOOD
Workplace Features	3,935	GOOD
General Average	**4,089**	**GOOD**

However, despite these notable strengths, the analysis reveals important challenges in the dimensions of Participation, Economic Benefit, Quality of Life, and Workplace Features, which received comparatively lower average scores ranging between 3.806 and 3.968, categorized as "good" (Table 14). These results imply that while physical transformations have been largely effective, the processes underpinning community engagement and economic revitalization warrant enhancement. In particular, feedback highlights insufficient stakeholder involvement during decision-making phases, potentially limiting the inclusiveness and legitimacy of the transformation process. Furthermore, although an increase in property values was observed, the expected growth in commercial activity and the equitable distribution of economic benefits were not fully achieved, signaling the need for more strategic economic policies aimed at fostering local entrepreneurship and job creation. Additionally, the moderate evaluations related to quality of life and workplace features emphasize the importance of adopting a holistic approach that goes beyond the built environment to address socio-economic factors such as safety, employment opportunities, and the functional adequacy of workspaces, all of which are crucial for translating physical improvements into meaningful community outcomes.

Integrating these insights, it is apparent that successful urban transformation requires a balanced emphasis on both tangible infrastructure improvements and the often less visible social, participatory, and economic

dimensions. The Gürcükapı project's achievements in preserving identity and enhancing accessibility demonstrate how sensitive design interventions can reinforce community attachment and improve urban functionality. Yet, the identified deficits in participatory processes and economic outcomes reveal systemic challenges in achieving equitable and inclusive transformation. This underscores the imperative to embed robust stakeholder engagement mechanisms and targeted economic strategies early in the project lifecycle to enhance project legitimacy and ensure fair distribution of benefits among diverse social groups. Moreover, the moderate scores concerning workplace features and quality of life call for heightened attention to post-construction socio-economic dynamics, such as safety and local employment, to fully realize the potential of urban renewal.

Building on these findings, future research should broaden its scope beyond stakeholder perceptions to include longitudinal assessments and multisectoral analyses involving local authorities, private sector participants, civil society, and the broader community. Such a comprehensive approach would yield a more holistic evaluation of urban transformation processes and the complex governance structures that shape them. Comparative studies across different urban contexts could further illuminate best practices and inform context-sensitive adaptations. Additionally, advancing participatory methodologies to engage a wider array of stakeholders more democratically should be a priority, addressing one of the key challenges identified in this study. Given the Gürcükapı project's success in environmental sensitivity, further exploration into sustainable urban practices—such as energy efficiency, green building technologies, and waste management—is warranted to strengthen ecological outcomes in future projects. Economic dimensions also merit deeper investigation, particularly focusing on the equitable distribution of transformation benefits through detailed analyses of local job creation, housing affordability, and market dynamics. Furthermore, infrastructure services including transportation, healthcare, and education remain critical to urban well-being and should be rigorously monitored to support residents' quality of life and economic participation. Finally, integrating smart city technologies and digital innovations offers promising avenues to enhance urban efficiency, sustainability, and liveability, representing a fruitful direction for subsequent research.

In conclusion, the Gürcükapı Urban Transformation Project exemplifies significant achievements in cultural preservation, accessibility, and environmental stewardship, while simultaneously highlighting critical areas for enhancement in participation, economic equity, and socio-economic well-being. This study contributes a robust multidimensional evaluative framework and empirically grounded insights that can inform more holistic, inclusive, and

effective urban transformation initiatives within Turkey and comparable contexts. By integrating diverse perspectives and embracing long-term, participatory approaches, future urban renewal projects can achieve more sustainable and socially just outcomes, ultimately advancing both scholarly understanding and practical policy-making in the field of urban transformation.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

7. FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study did not benefit from any funding or support.

8. AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

TB, AM: Fikir
TB, AM: Tasarım
TB: Denetleme
MY, ÇKK: Kaynakların toplanması ve işlemesi
TB, AM, ÇKK: Analiz ve Yorum
MY: Literatür taraması
TB, AM, MY, ÇKK: Yazıyı yazan
TB: Eleştirel inceleme

9. ETHICS COMMITTEE STATEMENT

We declare that all ethical guidelines for authors have been followed by all authors. Ethical approval is not required.

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