

THE NEW DIMENSIONS OF THE URBAN ORGANIZATION FROM THE LOCAL TO THE UNIVERSAL: A COMMUNICATION- BASED APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Today; growing cities, increasing population, decreasing living spaces and complexities of urban life pose many economic, political, cultural and social problems and challenges. Accordingly, the issues and the concepts related to urban have become much more debatable. The attempts to solve urban problems and to create more liveable cities take place in multifaceted that cannot be reduced to only economic, physical and spatial arrangements.

A holistic approach to urban organization is key to building more just and liveable cities. The cities are primary areas where they are most experienced that the contradictions deepened by the unevenly developing globalization. In such a complex urban life organization, the new local and universal policies and approaches are needed. The cities are the areas where the most dynamic segments of society are living in. The urban and civil organization in social areas is a planned, programmed action and communication process involving bringing all the dynamics of the city into action and unifying and coordinating their forces. In this study, urban organization is considered with its social dimensions; the role and importance of communication in the local and universal urban organization is underlined. The new dimensions of urban organization are evaluated in the local and universal framework, and the importance of communication in urban organization is emphasized.

Key Words: *Urban, Urban Organization, Urban Communication*

JEL Classification: O2, O3, R110

1. INTRODUCTION

Today; growing cities, increasing population, decreasing living spaces and complexities of urban life pose many economic, political, cultural and social problems and challenges. Accordingly, the issues and the concepts related to urban have become much more debatable.

The attempts to solve urban problems and to create more liveable cities take place in multifaceted that cannot be reduced to only economic, physical and spatial arrangements. A holistic approach to urban organization is key to building more just and liveable cities.

The cities are primary areas where they are most experienced that the contradictions deepened by the uneven and unequal development of globalization. In such a complex urban life, the new local and universal policies and approaches are needed. Therefore in this study, urban organization is examined with its local and universal dimensions. A human and environment oriented urban organization model based on social state and social policy approach is underlined.

2. URBAN, URBANIZATION AND URBAN ORGANIZATION

The world is becoming more urban. Most of the development policies are based on industrialization, and hence urbanization. Although the problems created by rapid urbanization after the 1960s are a matter of debate, interregional migrations to the urban from the countryside continue especially in the developing world. In the 1950s, 83 percent and in the 1975's 75 percent of the developing world's population was living in the rural areas while at the end of the 1990s about half of them would live in rural areas. The same trend shows that 2/3 of world's population will live in cities in 2020s. (Tatlidil, 2009) According to the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), half of the world's population was living in the cities in 2008, but the projected rate for 2050 is up to 70 percent.

Cities are the forms of settlement where non-agricultural production is made and, more importantly, where the control functions of the distribution of both agricultural and non-agricultural production are gathered and have a

certain degrees of size, heterogeneity and integration with regard to levels of technological development (Kıray, 1972). Cities are residential areas where their people are mostly engaged in business, industry and services. As for urbanization, it is a process of economic and social change associated with the increase of the number of people living in towns and the cities. Urban and urbanization are the phenomenon which includes a variety of economic, demographic, cultural and social factors.

The changes, contradictions and developments in the process of globalization have further complicated the urban and urbanization phenomenon. These conditions also make urban organization difficult and complicated. There is now a need for new methods, projects and policies in urban organization. Urban organization is a concept that should be considered in the context of social policy and social state approach. Unfortunately, due to the dominant neoliberal approaches, unplanned, unhealthy, non-environmental and non-human-oriented policies have come to the forefront. Rant-based urban transformations and practices give great damage to urban and urban life.

3. THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN URBAN ORGANIZATION

Communication has become an important tool in transforming the life of people and society into systematic structures in the historical process. People have been able to understand and to link with each other; to turn the developments in their life into records, and they also have been able to pass down what they have done from generation to generation in a systematic communicative structure. Since the early ages; the means of communication tools such as writing, picture, paper, printing press, newspaper, telephone, telegraph, radio, cinema, television, and computer and so on, each of them has made important contributions to social development (Güngör, 2011).

Communication is characterized as a social action that emerges in every phase and situation, in every condition and relationships from the beginning of social life to the present day (Tüfekçioğlu, 1997). The main purpose of the communication, of which values and meanings are shared in social context, is to be active at the environment and to lead development and changes of behaviours and attitudes in everybody else. (Zillioğlu, 2003). In

this context, we can define communication as a social interaction process carried out through messages (Mutlu, 1995).

Urban organization is also a social communication and interaction. In this context, urban organization is a planned, programmed action and communication process involving the mobilization of all the dynamics of the city and the consolidation and coordination of forces. Social development cannot be achieved without providing the urban organization and the support and participation of the people. From this point of view, in this study we are evaluating the urban organization in terms of communication.

Communication is an essential component of in urban organization. The technological advances have led to emergence of the new communication methods and techniques. Now, the traditional media (radio, television and printed media) and the "new media" bringing the computer and the internet together and its most important product "social media" have become important tools of social organizations. However, traditional methods are still indispensable in urban organization.

One of the most effective methods of interpersonal communication is the face-to-face interview, which is one of the most effective methods to meet the communication needs of people living in the urban area. Designing the environments for people living in the urban area in which they can meet and talk with each other is an important aspect of urban organization. Therefore, in urban organization and urban planning, communication should be considered as among the essential requirements of the society. In the design of urban space, attention should be paid to the planning of areas such as square, boulevards, parks, and shopping centres, entertainment areas where people can come together and communicate. Societies aiming at progress have to establish communication environments for all individuals, especially with the initiatives of the state, and bring communication tools to people's service. As a matter of fact, all great civilizations have tried to establish agoras, forum areas, market places, arenas, sports halls, fairgrounds in order to enable people to easily communicate with each other and to make progress based on communication (Cebeci, 2010).

4. THE DIMENSIONS OF URBAN ORGANIZATION

Urban organization is a concept that should be evaluated with holistic approach from local to universal. We can specify the dimensions of urban organization as follows:

- **Local Dimension** - Localization - Local Democracy - Local Government
- **Universal Dimension** - Globalization - Universal Regulations - Applications

4. 1. The Local Dimensions of Urban Organization

Nowadays, there has been talk about the new processes and concepts associated with the phenomenon of the globalization appeared in every sphere of life. The localization is one of those concepts that sometimes argued against the globalization; sometimes argued it goes hand in hand with globalization and is complementary to it.

The decentralization of public administration is a process involving the shaping and supervision of works belonging to local communities by themselves. In other definition, decentralization is a principle aimed at protecting the autonomy of local governments through the transfer of authority and resources from the central government to the local governments. Localization evolved as a concept gained momentum in the second half of the twentieth century, reflecting the tendencies of the government to get rid of excess centralized structure and decentralization of regional and local services, and to have democratic-transparent-efficient self-governance in local communities (Geray, 1997).

In a communication-based definition, the localization is a communication process involving coordination and mobilization of economic, social and cultural dynamics of local forces.

The 5 main elements of localization can be listed as follows: (Örs & Örs, 2008).

Participation: Ensuring that all local people have full participation and control of decisions about themselves and their surroundings;

Transparency: Ensuring transparency and transparency of all institutions and organizations involved in the localization process;

Empowerment of Democracy: Ensuring democratization at the local and national levels; allowing local governments to more power from central government, strengthening of non-governmental organizations, adopting of decentralized approach and training people through education for democratic citizenship from a lifelong learning perspective.

Organizing, Communication and Action: Localization is a planned organization and the process of communication and action which involves the mobilization and coordination of all local forces.

Social, Economic and Cultural Development: Localization brings about the development of democracy. On the other hand it promotes social, economic and cultural development. The localization project will reveal the potential of local resources; the local values and wealth will also gain importance.

4. 2. The Universal Dimensions of Urban Organization

Globalization, which we can define as the spread of the economic, social, cultural and political values to all around the world by crossing the local and national borders, requires a universal perspective on urban issues as in every field. The universal dimensions of urban organization are determined by the declarations and principles of international organizations.

The first of these is the Worldwide Declaration of Local Self-Government. This Declaration was adopted at IULA's (International Union of Local Authorities) 27th World Congress of Local Governments held in Rio de Janeiro on 23-26 September 1985. According to this declaration, the principle of local self-government should be recognized in the constitution or in the basic legislation concerning the governmental structures of the country. Local authorities' right of association should include that of belonging to an international association of local authorities. Local authorities should also be entitled to maintain links with their counterparts in other countries for the purpose of interchange and cooperation and promoting international understanding.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), another worldwide organization, was established with the process of unification of the three previous worldwide organizations IULA (International Union of Local Authorities), FMCU/UTO (World Federation of United Cities/formerly known as the United Towns Organizations) and METROPOLIS (World Association of the Major Metropolises) in a long-term process that started in Habitat II Conference in Istanbul in 1996.

The United Cities and Local Governments World Organization, headquartered in Barcelona, Spain, has begun to work actively since January 2004.

Organization's mission is to be the united voice and advocate of democratic local self-government on the world's stage; promoting and defending its values, objectives and interests in cooperation with the international community.

Some of the basic principles in the UCLG's establishment statement are: (<http://uclg-mewa.org/tr/>)

- Sustainable development in a globalizing world
- Social participation and poverty reduction
- Cities without slums
- Sustainable environment
- Water and hygiene for all
- Fundamental rights for all
- Education for all
- Cooperation and diplomacy
- Strategic partnerships
- Decentralization and local democracy
- Women's participation and gender equality
- From information society to participatory society

5. WORLDWIDE PROJECTS IN URBAN ORGANIZATION

A large number of worldwide projects have been developed in order to increase the quality of life in the cities, to create modern and planned cities, to protect the rights of urban dwellers and to instil a sense of urban awareness and urban responsibility. These projects, supported by international organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UN, EU, are the cornerstones of urban organization. The most important of these projects are:

- Smart Cities
- Eco Cities
- Slow Cities
- Sustainable Cities
- Creative Cities
- Women Friendly Cities
- Child Friendly Cities
- Disabled Friendly Cities
- Aging and Age Friendly Cities.

In this part of our study, we will give some examples of these kind of projects.

5.1 Smart Cities

The cities excelling in the areas such as Economy, Citizens, Government, Mobility, Environment and Quality of Life are accepted as 'smart '. In order to create sustainable future-oriented smart city, it is necessary to utilize all technological opportunities (<http://uclg-mewa.org/uclg-mewa-akilli-sehirler-komitesi>)

Smart technology is needed in any area, from mobile technology to sensor technology, from fiber internet infrastructure to intelligent energy networks, from intelligent transportation to large data and data analytics, from the city's security to health, cleanliness and environmental regulation.

Smart cities which are more comprehensive that cannot do fit to digital or automation moulds, are the cities that the buildings, landscaping and social facilities are in contact with people. The objectives of the smart city project are:

- To facilitate access to public services.
- To provide high quality health and care services to the needers and elders in the comfort of their homes.
- Providing faster and more comfortable transportation service in the urban travels from home to work, from work to home (door to door) and shortening the urban travel time.
- To encourage the use of alternative energy sources and reduce carbon footprint in the city.
- Ensuring reliable and cost-effective, efficient resource management to empower a growing economy.
- Presenting the city's real-time data to entrepreneurs, citizens and students through open data platforms.
- To increase the mobility of disabled people and contribute to access to social services.

Amsterdam Smart City initiative, which began in 2009, up to today has included 79 projects collaboratively developed by local government, government and businesses. These projects, aimed at developing a real-time decision making systems of the city, work on a platform connected to each other via wireless devices. Amsterdam City projects are aimed at reducing traffic congestion, saving energy and ensuring public safety. The city, with the intent of local people to participate in the project, receives application proposals within the scope of the project every year. Some of the houses are provided with intelligent energy meters that saving active energy. Intelligent lighting systems enabled the automatic adjusting of brightness of light of street lamps and the intelligent traffic management control which facilitate

drivers find the best routes to the address, is also one of the city's active initiatives (<https://amsterdamsmartcity.com/>)

Another smart city London attracts notice with its sustainable investments, especially in smart city applications. The congestion tax applied to reduce the traffic congestion is an example of this practice. In 2014, the city's entire transportation network was switched to contactless payment by London's transport company 'Transport for London'.

The use of smart networks, the dismantling and recycling of solid waste, the use of proximity sensors to prevent motor vehicle-bicycle collisions, the mapping of urban underground infrastructure, the real-time traffic management with the active participation of social media users, the online city guides designed that help tourists to travel around the city quickly and easily are also among the projects which put into practice (<http://www.ckillisehirler.org/londra/>).

5.2 Slow Cities

The Slow City movement which has been firstly emerged in 1999 has now spread to all over the world. In order to be considered a “slow city”, a city had to fulfil seventy different criteria in categories such as; environment, infrastructure, urban life, tourism policies. Besides these categories; the policies of art, social adaptation and hospitality are also taken as basis. The city, which wants to get the title of Slow City, has to certify its applicability to these issues. The main goal of the Slow City project is a sustainable and calm life in a city. Some of the criteria set by the International Cittaslow Association are: (<http://www.cittaslow.org/>)

- Protection of traditional structures
- Reduction of traffic congestion
- Use of local products
- Use of renewable energy
- Supporting restaurants where local food is served instead of fast-food shops
- Restoration of old structures

- Prevention of noise pollution
- Increasing the quality of the air
- Production of organic products
- Protection of crafts

Izmir's Seferihisar town is the first city that being entitled as a slow city in Turkey. Isparta Eğirdir, Sinop Gerze, Muğla Akyaka, Çanakkale Gökçeada, Sanlıurfa Halfeti, Ordu Perşembe, Artvin Savaşat, Sakarya Taraklı, Kırklareli Visa, Isparta Yalvaç, Aydın Yenipazar, Erzurum Uzundere and Bolu Göynük towns also are entitled as slow city by providing the necessary criteria.

5.3 Eco Cities

Ecocity Project, which has been supported by European Union Environment Funds, has been developed with the idea that 80 per cent of the total population in Europe is living in the cities and that a large proportion of them are small and medium-sized urban settlements. Under the Ecocity Project, it has determined 20 basic criteria and 34 indicators for qualifying as ecologic cities.

The ecological city is an environmentally balanced. These cities should allow people to live in harmony with nature in the future and at the same time to provide sustainable development. The cities, towns and villages should be built and designed as improving the quality of life and health quality of the individuals living there and should preserve their ecosystems dependent upon (Tosun, 2017).

Some of the goals of the ecological city approach are:

- Reducing the adverse effects of cities on the environmental system,
- The use of renewable energy sources,
- Designing street-street layout, building design so as not to interrupt air flows,
- Lowest level waste generation,
- Zero carbon principles are carrying into effect

- Ensuring that the whole city is like a forest with dense plantations and green corridors,
- Recycled material usage.
- Reduction of the ecological footprint to the minimum.

6. CONCLUSION

The ideal that the urban people having to get to the highest standard of livings, the protection of the city's natural and original texture, creating organized, clean and healthy living environments, is not possible to realize by itself. The way of achieving this ideal is through urban organization. There are important responsibilities and duties of especially states, local governments, public and private institutions and non-governmental organizations and all city dwellers in terms of the urban organization. For this reason, the coordination and cooperation between all elements of the city are needed. As a result;

- Urban organization, infrastructure regulations and urban transformation works all require efforts beyond physical and spatial regulations.
- The goal of urban organization is not to build and concretion, but to ensure that the urban people and all creatures live better. In short, it should be human and environment-oriented.
- Urban organization is not only local but also regional, national and international process. For this reason, it is a comprehensive dynamic process which should be evaluated in a broad perspective and carrying into effect from local to universal perspective.
- In local and universal level, social policy oriented projects should be designed for the creation of sustainable, planned and contemporary cities.
- Urban organization is a social interaction process. Therefore, communication is an indispensable factor. Planned and programmed communication activities involving all the dynamics of the city into action and unifying and coordinating their forces. From this point of view, we propose a sample model of urban organization in our study and an urban platform that carrying this model into effect.

Table 1: An Example Communication Model for Urban Organization

<i>First Stage</i>	<i>Second Stage</i>	<i>Third Stage</i>	<i>Fourth Stage</i>	<i>Fifth Stage</i>
Built a City Platform and Coordinate	Prepare Action Plan	Identify Target Groups	Determine Communication Methods&Tools and Start Action	Evaluate Effects
Government and Local Government	Communication Workshop Creative Opinions	City People Specific Target Groups	Face to Face Communication Visits Focus Groups	Opinion, Attitude and Behavior Changes
Universities Educational Institutions	City Features and Priorities Basic Arguments	Public Opinion Leaders	Radio, Television, Printed Media	Public Participation
Non-Governmental Organizations	Main Concept	Media Organizations and Professionals	Social Media Internet Portals	Social, Economic and Cultural Changes
Private Sector Institutions	Communication Design	Decision Makers Parliament Political Parties	Mass Events Public Meetings Educational and Informative Activities	Public Opinion Surveys Evaluation Research

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