



# New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences



Volume 4, Issue 11, (2017) 307-312

ISSN : 2547-881

[www.prosoc.eu](http://www.prosoc.eu)

Selected Paper of 6th World Conference on Design and Arts (WCDA 2017), 29 June – 01 July 2017, University of Zagreb, Zagreb – Croatia.

## Effect of Social Relations on Life Quality in Traditional Texture and New Habitats

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### Suggested Citation:

Ozturk, S., Umdu, D. C., Kalaycı, M. & Ayan, E. (2017). Effect of social relations to life quality in traditional texture and new habitats. *New Trends and Issues Proceedings on Humanities and Social Sciences*. [Online]. 4(11), 307-312. Available from: [www.prosoc.eu](http://www.prosoc.eu)

Selection and peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Ayse Cakir Ilhan, Ankara University, Turkey.

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### Abstract

In this study, social life and the status of social relations of individuals living in Hepkebirler District and Inonu District, one that has an extremely traditional texture and the other is one of the new habitat regions in Kastamonu City, respectively, are determined. A 10-question set was asked in the survey with the purpose to investigate the issue. The result of the survey shows that the most positive estimations were 'has an intensive population' for Inonu District and 'being peaceful and tranquil' for the other. In addition, most negative opinion was that 'costs of the residence and rents are cheap in the environment where I live' for both districts. However, this condition is more pressing for Inonu District as a new living location.

Keywords: Life quality, social structure, Kastamonu.

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## 1. Introduction

With the Industrial Revolution, negative environmental effects have increased in big cities (Oktay, 2007). Dundar (2002) claims that the change in people's demand, due to the impact of globalisation, increases the competitive capacity of cities, and the cities that are successful in this competition accomplish in attracting the population (Topcu, 2011). In the direction of this competition, the cities that have lost their identity come to the scene by unqualified planning and design. Because of this uniformity, an escape has begun at distant places to complexity as an alternative to big cities. With this escape, residential areas outside the cities have risen day by day. These displacement movements have constituted a fall in the life quality in cities day after day. Environmental problems have increased due to 80% of the total population of the countries living in cities in a large part of the world. The major reason for decline in people's life quality is environmental problems (Oktay, 2007). In this context, concepts of rapid urbanisation and life quality have come together. The concept of life quality that has been studied since 1960 has been included in the research areas of more different scientists since 1990 (Niray, 2002).

The concept of life quality is defined differently in different areas. It depends on culture, environment and country. Consequently, it has many definitions (Marans, 2007).

- Life quality is a concept that contains all of the environmental and individual psychological components. It is accepted that it varies with internal and external factors.
- The individual is satisfied with the physical environment to which he or she is able to respond to the expectations of living, and it is easy to reach the level of urban life quality. The provision of these expectations is formed by integrity of factors like the architectural structures composing the urban identity and character, open green areas and their relationship with environments.
- The concept of life quality is an approach that combines the measurable parts of the spatial, physical and social factors of the environment and the ways of perception of these components (Van Kamp, Leidelmeijer, Marsman, & De Hollander, 2003).
- According to the World Health Organization, life quality is a way of perception and evaluation of individuals' life situations, their cultural structures and values. This evaluation is shaped by factors such as the expectation, target and life anxiety of the individuals. It is also a complex structure that is shaped by factors such as the physical and psychological health of the individual, their freedom and their interaction in the social environment (Marans, 2007).

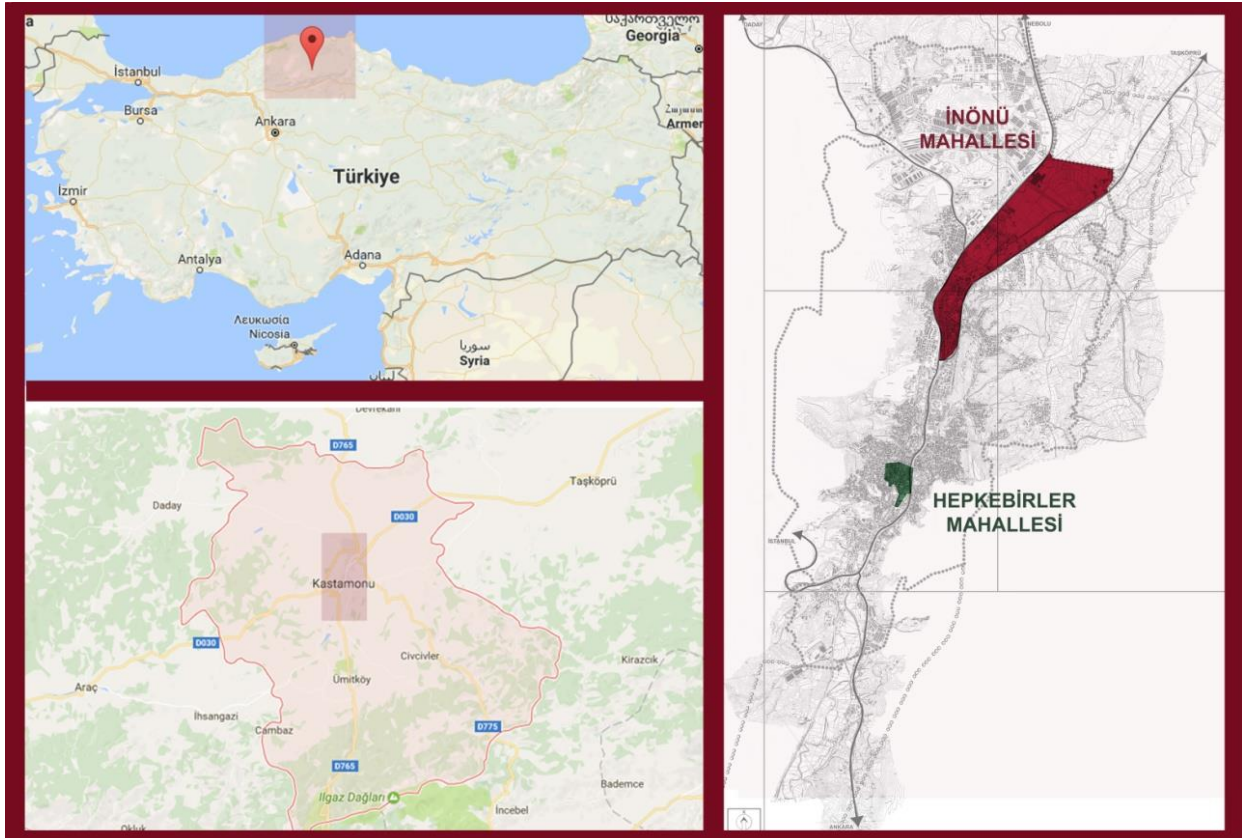
The term environmental quality means the potential to provide peace, welfare and a feeling of satisfaction to its population and users from physical, social and symbolic features that the environment has (Ceylan, 2015). For this reason, beyond the environmental elements, which create life qualities, the satisfaction related to social relationships criteria, which is significant, are the factors affecting the psychological components of individuals in the study.

## 2. Materials and Methods

Kastamonu city has a history of about 400 years. Hittite, Phrygia, Lydia, Persia, Rome, Byzantine, Seljuk, Danishmend, Candaroglu and Ottoman ruled the city of Kent. The city became one of the important cities of the Ottoman Empire until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The city centre of Kastamonu has been accepted as an urban protected area with significant historical and cultural potential such as castles, rock tombs, mosques, kulliyes, madrasas, inns, Turkish baths, bridges, traditional Turkish houses and Ottoman architecture (Ozturk & Gulgun, 2013). The settlement in the city is located in the east and west of the Karacomak Stream (Gokirmak's branch) since the Byzantine period (Ozturk & Ozdemir, 2013). This situation continued during and after the Ottoman period. The roads used in the first settlement period are used today in the north-south and east-west directions from streets and streets (Ozturk et al., 2013).

Kastamonu, a medium-sized city, is constantly emigrating from the rural area to the urban area, with new business and educational opportunities. This leads to the formation of new settlement areas. Local governments have preferred to spread the city to the north and south line with the effect of urban topography (Ozturk & Bozdogan, 2014).

This study has three phases. First, the sample area was defined. Two neighbourhoods that were physically, socially and culturally distinct from each other were selected as research areas in the study (Figure 1).



**Figure 1. Location of research area**

The reason for the selection of Hepkebirler District is that the district is one of the first residential areas, which has significant civil architecture samples and could protect its own cultural texture according to other districts. There are 70 registered buildings in the district (Kastamonu Archaeological Museum Archive, 2013). The total population is 2,136 people. The population rate is very low compared to the new settlement areas. Inonu District is a new residential area. According to other settlement areas, its infrastructure has already been completed, middle and upper income groups prefer the district, and it has examples of new period architecture. According to Hepkebirler district, it is more crowded with a population of 21,525 people.

In the second stage of the study, a survey was conducted to measure the satisfaction levels of the people living in the districts. In order to prepare the questionnaires and determine the number of households to be surveyed, a 5-point Likert scale (1: strictly agree, 2: agree, 3: partly agree, 4: disagree, 5: strongly disagree) was preferred. Ten questions exist in the survey to measure the condition of social relationships. To determine the number of household members who conducted the survey, cross-sectional method calculation and the formula of  $n = (Z2NPQ)/(ND2 + Z2PQ)$  was used (Ozdamar, 2001). According to this, the number of households is calculated as 102 for Inonu District

and 95 for Hepkebirler District. The Turkish Statistical Institute officers administered the survey from the people.

The third stage of the study is the evaluation phase of the obtained data. The data were evaluated using the SPSS 17.0 program. Differences between the parameters on the evaluation were attempted to be revealed by 'independent t test.'

### 3. Results

Ten questions were asked in the survey to reveal the level of social relations in the districts. It is seen that the values given to these questions in Table 1 do not make a big difference for the two districts.

**Table 1. Social relationship features in Inonu and Hepkebirler districts**

		My district is quite crowded.	My district is peaceful and calm.	Neighbourhood relationship is in a decent level.	Sale and rent costs are cheap where I live.	In my district, local and cultural life is protected enough.	In the district I live, social classes (family structure, life style) are similar.	Local residents are conscious of environmental issues.	My district is an ideal settlement.	The district is a part of me.	I do not think about leaving the district.
Districts name	Inonu	1.76	1.81	2.15	4.09	2.96	2.25	2.75	1.96	2.07	2.12
	Hepkebirler	2.18	1.85	1.88	3.23	2.55	2.14	2.92	2.14	2.25	1.91
	Importance	0.00 0**	0.72 8 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.05 3 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.00 0*	0.00 5**	0.309 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.23 7 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.10 7 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.11 6 <sup>N.S.</sup>	0.15 0 <sup>N.S.</sup>

Inonu District residents stated that they are more crowded than the residents of Hepkebirler District, both communities are a peaceful, calm and safe living environment, they are homogeneous in terms of social class, and their local and cultural identity is protected at a sufficient level.

### 4. Conclusion

The problem that cities have faced throughout history and still continue to face in different parts of the world is the dissociation that arises from the widespread use of urban cultures in rural areas. In an age where the new urban development is increasingly standardised and distorted, it is immediately noticed that one city is different from another. Because of this, the discerners of one city from another in every country are its environment, design and history. Today, the biggest and most common threat is one that comes from the demands of modern life. This dynamic demand is the main reason for migrations to large cities.

The process of raising the life quality is possible only by creating a trained conscious society and individuals. While high life quality cities are in the planning, sustainable cities that are ecologically, economically and aesthetically protected and compatible with the natural environment ought to be designed. The individual is satisfied with the physical environment in which he or she is able to respond to the expectations of the living, and it is easy to reach the level of urban life quality. The integrity of factors like the architectural structures composing the urban identity and character, open

green areas and their relationship with the environment is effective in the provision of these expectations. However, social relationships that affect psychological satisfaction as well as the physical dimension of the city are important components of life quality. Because the difference between the life quality and the standard of living is revealed by people's satisfaction ratings, the level of social relation, which is not a physical thing but a necessity, has been studied in this research.

These results, which have been obtained at the end of the surveys on Hepkebirler District, with dominated traditional texture and new residential zone in Inonu District, are as follows:

- The level of social relationship is adequate and moderate for both neighbourhoods (apart from the neighbourhood relation criteria that are considered inadequate). No significant difference was observed between the two neighbourhoods.
- It has been observed that Inonu District residents have higher environmental consciousness than residents of Hepkebirler District.
- Neighbourhood level is higher in 'Hepkebirler District'.
- In Hepkebirler District, housing prices are cheaper.
- Inhabitants of both the communities believe that their district is an ideal place to live.
- The sense of belonging is more in Hepkebirler. The residents do not want to leave the place they live in.

Based on all the data obtained in the study, it is seen that the inhabitants of Inonu are more satisfied than residents of Hepkebirler and in Inonu district, the level of life quality is more pleasing than the other. Nowadays, depending on the changing needs, in the process people living in the districts should be included in the decisions in determining the quality of life (Ozturk & Bozdogan, 2014). Accordingly, studies involving the user should be augmented in order to determine perceptions of the living environment, the characteristics of the existing residential area and the nature of the new regulations.

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