



International

Journal of Human Sciences

ISSN:2458-9489

Volume 17 Issue 2 Year: 2020

A communication and participation-oriented model proposal for current urban transformation processes

Miray Gür¹

Abstract

Research Problem: Urban transformation planning policies, which have been the focus during the last decade in Turkey, have begun to progress with renewal of risky areas with the introduction of Law No. 6306. While it was stated that increasing the quality of life and social rehabilitation of area residents were targeted in transformations where neighborhoods are transformed into urban land, in fact, resident expectations were not met and the residents, who experienced dissatisfaction in the transformed environments that were not suitable for their lifestyles, left these areas or continued their lives in despair due to economic reasons. Ignorance of resident expectations in transformation process reduces their quality of life and only through participation the residents, who are the actors that experience the impact of transformation the most, could express their preferred lifestyle. **Aim:** The present study aimed to propose a participatory transformation model in transforming the current transformation framework into a user-oriented approach. **Method:** In the development of the model, the participation scenarios / strategies were integrated into the break points in the process defined in Law No. 6306 which underlines the current urban transformation dynamics. **Findings:** Each experience that different transformation processes which the proposed model could be applied based on its own dynamics would create new structuring processes that would contribute to the model. Based on the model, it was aimed to establish continuous communication and information flow between users, architects, authorities and other stakeholders, to increase socio-physical satisfaction of the residents since the residence and residential environment would be built based on resident demands and to sustain the sense of belonging and satisfaction of the residents with the preferences. **Conclusion:** The process based on the proposals that were determined with participation principle and continuous communication between all stakeholders and especially the architect and residents would establish the foundation for not only to secure risky buildings, but also for socially and economically sustainable urban transformation projects that would provide added value to the city and improve the quality of life of urban residents.

Keywords: Urban transformation; resident participation; participation model; law no. 6306; quality of life.

¹ Assoc. Prof. Dr., Uludag University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture, miraygur@yahoo.com



INTRODUCTION

Urban spaces are restructured with urban transformation, which constitutes the focal point of planning policies in Turkey during the last decade. With the introduction of the Law No. 6306 in 2012, social classes are being reintroduced to urban spaces and the neighborhoods are evolving into urban land with the reorganization of urban areas with urban transformation as one of the fundamental planning policies. The increases in urban space prices, property transfers and displacements demonstrated that the urban space was not approached with a resident-oriented perspective, and the quality of life decreases as the individuals cannot adapt to the physical and social environment as a result of the transformations conducted by central organizations (Şentürk, 2015, Gür and Dostoğlu, 2016). In the approach where transformation processes are conducted on risky areas, processes can result in residents whose socio-spatial expectations are not met and lifestyles are not sustained. In this case, the failure to achieve the social improvement goals and the emergence of new social and economic dilemmas are considered negative consequences.

At the beginning of the transformation process, it could be stated that certain residents of the area preferred the renovation of their neglected buildings based on the observations or interviews conducted with the residents. However, the lack of communication between the residents and the authorities during the process, the inability of the residents to express their expectations and suggestions, conducting the transformation in an undemocratic and non-transparent environment result in the disappointment and unhappiness of the residents (Eranlı Demirli et al., 2015, Gür and Dostoğlu, 2016). Communications and participation are necessary for the residents to express their post-transformation expectations and the inclusion of the residents, who are the actors that would be affected by the process the most, in the process. In the field of architecture, theoretical and practical methods of participation of the residents in the process are determined or applied, however centralized urban transformation ignores these methods. If the transformation practices aim to improve the quality of life of the residents, these practices should be used oriented. Because the quality of life includes the satisfaction of the user with the environment and life preferences (Diener and Suh, 1997, 190, Marans, 2003, 78).

Improvement of the physical environment through participation supports the sense of belonging and user satisfaction and organizational actors and provides financial savings. The dimensions that support this financial saving through participation can be addressed in a few sentences. The first is that users can interfere with the size of the housing according to their needs, so that they do not downswing for the payment of the size of the houses that the household does not need. Similarly, as the number of households increases, it will be possible to avoid paying for standard sized houses that do not meet the need sufficiently. Through participation, it may be possible for users to choose spatial sizes and units located in the dwelling based on their number and needs of households. Also, depending on the economic situation of the user, it may be possible to determine the construction materials and the workmanship details at the implementation stage in communication with the contractor. As a matter of fact, in Bursa Doğanbey Urban Transformation, the right holders got into an economic debt for the payment of the housing sizes that could not meet their need, and this suffered them. Moreover, almost all of the residents are dissatisfied with the quality of the construction, causing them to not get the value of the economic debt (Gür et al., 2019).

Furthermore, participation in the transformation of areas with earthquake risk or urban deprivation is effective on the acceptance of the projects. Resident and public participation play a critical role in social sustainability (Mahdavejad, Amini, 2011, 405,406). It is necessary to inform the citizens to prevent/resolve social conflicts and to share the government's authority and decision-making mechanisms with the public for accepted urban transformation. Based on the discussions on acceptance of transformation projects based on the threat risks in Turkey, participation would contribute to ensure acceptance, user satisfaction and environmental quality.

Enforcing the top-down approach that connects national/regional or district level actions with a parallel bottom-top approach is a prerequisite for development of a new models for Turkey

in sustainable renewal (Kocabas, 2006, 26). In planning vision determined by KENTGES that develops important urban development strategies in Turkey, development of application instruments was targeted until 2023, and development of an integrated, institutionalized and participative planning system was aimed (KENTGES, 2010). However, the present urban transformation process could not adequately fulfill this aim. The present article aims the transformation framework to focus on user experience, and thus, aims to develop a transformation model that is expected to integrate with the Law No. 6306, including participative recommendations to enforce the communications and resident lifestyles.

CONTEXT

The process described in Law no. 6306 approaches urban transformation based on risky buildings and property transfer, social structure changes and economic dimension could be prioritized in practice. In order to achieve more communication-oriented processes, the present study aims to create a participatory, holistic and resident-oriented transformation model that would include the residents in the process as actors who experience the impact of the process the most and to enable the residents to express their expectations and proposals. Thus, the aim of the article is to transform the transformation framework where the users are not sufficiently active into a lifestyle-oriented approach, to define the active role of the residents in the design and implementation process, and to recommend a transformation model oriented on communications and participation among the actors, the architect and the residents.

A model is developed using the proposed scenarios based on the answers sought for the research problem “How to develop a communication and participation oriented urban transformation process where the residents would be satisfied with their housing, physical environment and social lives and would not experience economic problems?” by investigating the participation opportunities on every stage of the process. Although the recommendations are consistent with the transformation processes where the architect and the contractor play a more active role, it is possible to develop various recommendations for block or neighborhood-based scales where the municipality and TOKI are involved.

METHODOLOGY

In the development of the model, participation scenarios/strategies are recommended in the targeted communication environment between the central authority, local government, contractor, architect and the resident for the breaking points that guide the process described in the Law No. 6306 which is one of the significant urban transformation dynamics in Turkey. Thus, the problems that trigger the user dissatisfaction and migration in the work conducted in recent urban transformation projects in Turkey, the studies conducted to produce resident participation oriented design models in architecture and recommendations developed for Turkey were scrutinized (Wang et al. 2016, Hosseini et al. 2017, Hacılibeyoğlu 2017, Türkün and Aslan, 2014, Eranıl Demirli et al. 2015, İçli 2011, Demir 2013, Kocabas 2006). The proposed model adopts the progress of the transformation processes that were guided by top-down centralized policies with the perspective of the communications between the architect and the residents in a democratic and communicative environment, describes the role of the architect more clearly, and includes the resident in different stages of the production of physical environment that shapes the resident's life. Thus, the active participation of the resident is recommended in solving the problems determined in the resident's environment, and it is aimed to sustain the sense of belonging, to resolve the disputes between the residents and the authorities, and to realize the bottom-up effects.

THE ACTORS OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION AND REFLECTIONS OF URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS ON RESIDENTS IN TURKEY

The actors involved in urban transformation in Turkey has been reduced into the central control over time by the new laws. In 2004, TOKI started to become dominant in the slum renewals with the introduction of the law no. 5162. In these transformation projects implemented to reduce disaster risk and the renewal of slums, TOKI played an active role (Genç, 2008). Güzey (2009) argued that the institution aims to change the urban scale and renewal of social structures (Güzey, 2009, 31). Consistent with this argument, previous studies demonstrated that residents left the areas within time (Uzunçarşılı Baysal, 2010, Türkün & Aslan, 2014, Gür & Dostoğlu 2016). Rather than risk prevention, TOKI stimulated economic growth transformations and changes in urban land and building stock as a result of the efforts to create attractive investment opportunities for domestic and foreign capital (Eliçin, 2014, 150-153). It was observed that the views and requirements of the residents were neglected in the decision mechanisms conducted under the leadership of TOKI (Turgut and Ceylan 2010, Uzunçarşılı Baysal 2010, Türkün and Aslan 2014, Eranlı Demirli and other 2015, İçli 2011, Demir 2013).

The fact that the projects built under the Law No. 5366 such as Dikmen, Sulukule and Ayazma were far from the objectives of preservation and renewal, and the increased authority of The Ministry of Environment and Urbanism on urban renewal with the Decree no. 644 in 2011, and the discussions on the Municipality Laws No. 5393 and 5998 at the Constitutional Court led to the enactment of the law no. 6306 in 2012 on the renewal of risky spaces. The Mass Housing Law No. 2985, Decree No. 644 and the “Law on the Transformation of Areas under Disaster Risk” No. 6306 allocated extensive urban transformation authority to the Ministry (Hacıbrahimoglu, 2013). Law No. 6306 has been intensively criticized from various perspectives. These could be summarized as follows:

- a) Uncertainties about those responsible for determination of risky buildings and areas or authoring the related reports, the lack of a legal basis for the calculation of the 2/3 majority, the ambiguity in the process of consensus by the 2/3 majority on land analysis, the provisions regarding the sale of the property owned by the remaining 1/3 stakeholders, exclusion of the stakeholder beneficiaries through various contracts on the land share, the lack of basis for emergency expropriation in case of the lack of consensus or majority decision that could victimize the residents.
- b) The Ministry's sole authority to execute the risky area announcements and implementation decisions, the lack of explicit statement of the limitations, lack of control, accountability and transparency.
- c) The restrictions imposed on the property and defense rights, bereavement of the information, participation and objection rights of the individuals due to absence of a suspension period, the lack of an equitable distribution of zoning rights, the lack of respect for important social dimensions such as rights, freedoms and social justice.
- d) In buildings that were deemed risky, the regulations on suspension of public services, the abandonment of the buildings in a short period of time and compulsory liquidation of the area, the fines against those who attempt to prevent determinations, evacuations and demolitions, the possibility that these regulations could lead to health and security problems for the poor individuals and tenants who had to occupy these buildings, human rights issues for disadvantaged communities.
- e) Predisposition to rent-oriented use and transfer of property rights, production of ready-to-use land for the real estate and construction industries, concerns on the construction of projects contrary to the neighborhood structure and zoning of different areas for construction.

- f) The fact that the goal of transforming the risky buildings within/outside the area is only one of many aspects of urban transformation, the elimination of the principles of planning that are based on scientific and holistic approaches, the fact that transformation only aims the improvement of the physical environment without any association with urban planning, the possibility of leading to social and cultural traumas, the possibility that traffic problems could lead to inadequate urban furniture and areas of infrastructural collapse (Demirkol and Baş 2013, Pakel 2013, Doru 2013, Şahin 2013, Aydın 2014, Daşkiran and Ak 2015, Özay and Demirbaş 2017, Çelikkilek and Öztürk 2017).

In the current processes where social environments, NGOs and professional chambers are not included in the field of urban politics and where a top-down authoritarian approach is perceived, the above-mentioned approach adversely affects the formation of democratic decision-making processes. Previous studies demonstrated that government-oriented initiatives are transformed into marketing efforts with the resale of urban areas and residences (Kuyucu, Ünsal 2010, 1484, 1485). The strategies that integrate urban spaces into the land market through transformation projects in Turkey, appreciation of the economic value, and exclusion of the residents led to a debate on the controllability of urban development (Güzey, 2009, 36). From the architectural perspective, it was observed that the regulations fail to mention physical environment quality, the provision of user requirements and expectations in buildings and residential areas, provision of quality, aesthetical and innovative solutions in the city in addition to the urban health.

THE LACK OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE SPATIAL REFLECTIONS OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES

In addition to the administrative and economic impacts of urban transformation, its negative socio-cultural effects are observed on the environment. The physical environments produced by the central organization eliminate neighborhood construct and these are developed in order to meet the human needs mechanically based on economic constraints and concerns. Significant impacts are experienced on the lives of the residents, who are rendered legally and economically defenseless as a result of the transformation (Türkün and Aslan 2014). The residential and public spaces that allow the socialization requirements and genuineness of the individuals in the neighborhood culture disappear along with the transformations (Türkün & Aslan 2014, Eranıl Demirli et al. 2015, İçli 2011, Demir 2013, Gür & Dostoğlu 2016). The fracture in social networks and the migration of non-trustworthy individuals for the area negatively affect their *raison d'être* (Uzunçarşılı Baysal, 2010). The post-transformation problems of the dissatisfied residents lead to economic conflicts, failure to communicate with the authorities and the loss of the socio-physical experience that was present before the transformation (Türkün & Aslan, 2014, Eranıl Demirli et al. 2015, İçli, 2011, Demir 2013, Gür and Dostoğlu 2016). In a study conducted in Barbaros Neighborhood at Ataşehir district, where the urban transformation activities were prevalent after the law no. 6306 was enacted, it was observed that insufficient urban services and social furniture areas (except religious and administrative facilities), security problems, insufficient transportation, non-accessible social furniture areas (except religious and administrative facilities) adversely affected user satisfaction. In the study, it was reported that population density increased in urban area, however the transformation did not contribute to public spaces and social furniture areas (Okumuş and Eyüboğlu, 2015). In Kagithane, on the other hand, the higher income groups preferred the area after the transformation, indicating the change in social structure associated with rent (Aydın, 2014). On the other hand, the planning that was initiated before the Law No. 6306 in İzmir supported the practices with a holistic approach which was better integrated into urban zoning after the enactment of the law (Çelikkilek & Öztürk, 2017). There are also a large number of unfinished projects that were initiated after the adoption of the law, and different discussions are likely to emerge after the implementation of these projects.

The current approach that focuses on building security and economic issues does not prioritize user satisfaction due to the unhealthy communication and participation environment. Participation requires inclusion based on a common goal, collectivity and impact, contributing to the legitimacy of decision-making and implementation processes for the administration and dissemination of democracy (Sanoff 2000, Sanoff 2012). It is possible and necessary to involve individuals in most political construction processes that affect their daily lives (Karkın, 2012). In this context, the urban transformation conducted with the central actors is an example of this case. Individuals who would be affected by design and planning decisions should be included in the process, they should be informed and aware about problems and solutions should be produced together (Hosseini et al. 2017, 117, Sanoff, 2000, 9). Resident groups are the main force in the improvement of housing conditions, and recognition of different demands, justice and cooperation are important. The urban administrations that the central government transfers its authority to in transformation projects are the dynamic that could be transformed into a resident-oriented dynamic (Hosseini et al. 2017, 118).

According to the UN, social justice is a part of social development and user participation is an integral part of this attitude, especially in developing countries (UN, 2016). In the framework of sustainable urban development as described by the EU, it is important to encourage social participation. Today, the conversation about social justice in transformation projects is focused on resident perspective in Turkey and there is a need to redraw the lines of the process. It is necessary to “share, divide and distribute” the value created with the transformations and the principles of justice should be a priority. The necessary legal, social and political models should be developed within the framework of principles that reduce the inequalities between the urban areas and “concretize the justice“ (Köktürk, 2016).

Various studies discussed recommendations to improve legal regulations and applications. Issues such as consideration of the experiences and models applied in other countries, the requirement for the support of civil society and the private sector even for the projects initiated under the leadership of the public sector, the lowest possible intervention in property rights of the individual, introduction of a new planning system that would approach the issue with a multidimensional perspective, consideration of protection and usage principles depicted in other regulations, active participation of local governments were mentioned and the significance of participation was underlined (Yasin 2013, Şahin 2013, Genç 2014, Daşkiran and Ak 2015). In these studies, the significance of a functioning control mechanism within the context of providing information about the process, a transparent and accountable administration and rules and mechanisms that could generate trust among individuals were emphasized as well as the participation of professional chambers, NGOs and universities, and it was stated that the law should be rectified accordingly (Şahin 2013, Demirkol and Baş 2013).

Within the scope of urban transformation experiences from the world and Turkey, where participation and the user as a stakeholder are included in the process and thus the satisfaction of the user is supported, the first example of England Elephant Castle Opportunity Area can be mentioned. Through the app, the Southwark Council aims to 'create a new exciting destination for London over the next 15 years' through this implementation (<https://www.propertyinvestortoday.co.uk/breaking-news/2019/9/london-regeneration--elephant--and--castle-from-shabby-to-chic>). The first feature to be emphasized here is that Southwark Local Strategic Partnership includes stakeholders that differ among city and neighborhood users according to their profession and goals. This supports participation. In Elephant Castle, the participation mechanism has played an active role in enhancing job and employment opportunities as well as improving the quality of life and economic opportunities of residents as well as improving physical qualifications. The detailed framework for achieving community participation, including the objectives desired to be achieved, provided the balance between organizational actors and the right holders, and having a say in the decision-making mechanisms of these residents (Kocabaş 2006). In other words, it designed the participation

process before the start of implementation. Opportunities to be provided in the region through renovation are; the new pedestrianized town center, market square and 5,000 new or replacement homes, as well as the creation of up to 450,000 sq ft of retail space, an integrated public transport hub and new green spaces. These studies indicate that the neighborhoods that need it are benefiting from transformation and that efforts are made to improve the quality of life of the local people. A number of strategies have been developed for low-income residents of the region to benefit users who suffer from social exclusion, and, as seen in local media, unlike renewal practices in London, low income groups have been given the right to live in the region after transformation (<http://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/sep/23/elephant-castle-regeneration-heygate-estate>). Supporting local economic activities and strategies for affordable housing reinforces this goal. Kreuzberg can be mentioned as the second positive example. It aimed at the transformation, urban renewal and the development of new residences, where the international building exhibition called IBA was the forefront. The most important aspect of the transformation is described with twelve items; involving local people in decision mechanisms and at different stages of the process, conducting planning processes in a transparent and democratic environment, and transferring this dimension to life in real terms, both in project acquisition and implementation processes (Hämer 1987). In this context, besides physical recovery, economic support was provided to the users and the process also contributed to the strengthening of the social structure, and positively affected the quality of life of the users with different dimensions. Contrary to approaches shaped by traditional and organizational actors, the displacement of users in the transformation of Kreuzberg is minimized with the concept of “democracy as a owner of construction” (Arin 2006).

In the example of Ankara, Dikmen Valley, although it is possible to participate in the beginning of the process, this was not supported during the implementation phase (Türker Devecigil 2005). The conversion did not allow the participation of the user community, especially after the completion of the first stage. After the first stage, change of management caused the anxiety of rent to direct the project (Nalbantoğlu 2003). This brought about a change in the social structure in relation to the economic components, and the neighborhood relations and history of the right holders disappeared over time. In the Dikmen Valley Project, it is seen that the physical qualities of the houses have been improved, but the gentrification process that has occurred over time has negatively affected the social relations and the area users (Sönmez 2006). The two cases in Turkey that lack of participation aggrieved the right holders can be mentioned as Doğanbey and Sulukule. The transformation process in Sulukule ignored the neighborhood. The knowledge and approval of the local people, who were not aware of the transformation before the implementation, were not used in decision making processes for project development (Islam and Enlil 2010, Somersan et al. 2011, <http://sulukulegunlugu.blogspot.com/>). The fact that the Roma, who intervened directly with their transformation, did not have any say at any point in the process, is incompatible with the municipality's goal of participating. The built houses are well above the pre-transformation standards, and are not suitable for the actual owners of the neighborhood before the transformation in terms of either lifestyle or economic situation. In this environment, participation, urban and social integration cannot be mentioned. In Doğanbey, all decisions at various stages were made with the cooperation of organizational actors, and the percentage of participants stating that the lack of a right to speak affects their satisfaction negatively is over 80%. The rate of participants stating that they are not satisfied with the distribution of the houses by drawing lots and are uncomfortable not to choose their flat is more than half. In Doğanbey, where the public's trust in local government has decreased considerably, the absence of the user in the process has adversely affected belonging and social relations as well as housing satisfaction. Studies in Doğanbey reveal that the lack of user participation negatively affects satisfaction and quality of life with numerical data (Gür and Dostoğlu 2016, Gür et al. 2019).

In urban transformations where residents are dissatisfied with the socio-physical environment (Doganbey, Kucukcekmece, Uzundere, Atasehir, etc.), this is usually due to the lack of communication between the authorities and the residents. The most important goal of communication and participation proposal in urban transformation is the communication, cooperation and reconciliation between the residents, other stakeholders and the authorities. Participatory design is an interactive and pluralistic environment where the ideas and experiences of the users and other stakeholders that would be affected at the end of the process are discussed (Hacalibeyoğlu, 2017, 41). Participation, which entitles the user the choice of a habitat, is strongly associated with stakeholders such as designers, users, NGOs, as well as the political authority that is the actor in the background of the transformations. In urban transformation processes, law no. 6306 is the primary dynamic today (Şahin, 2013). The process described in the law includes the stages of the procurement of the application documents for the earthquake risk report, application to the ministry-licensed institution for the report, preparation of the earthquake report by the institution, determination of the building as risky, the signature of the joint decision protocol for the building by two third majority of the apartment owners, presentation of building joint decision protocol to the Provincial Directorate of Infrastructure and Urban Transformation Directorate, sale or expropriation of the property of one third minority of the apartment owners, contacting a contractor/construction company for the rebuilding or strengthening the building, design of the projects and reconstruction of the buildings, application for the rent assistance or loans, and obtaining the occupancy permits from the municipality for the completed building. The lack of an information exchange between the area residents and the Ministry officials prior to the determination of the risky building and application of strict sanctions rather than communication and negotiation processes during the stage of voting make the process difficult for the residents. Furthermore, the fact that the role of the architect and architectural design was not clearly defined in the transformation process in terms of physical environment quality and user satisfaction is negative for the quality of the transformation environment.

The fact that the user has to obtain a risky building report to live in a healthy and qualified residence is a serious restriction in the Law No. 6306. The system approaches the transformations only from the perspective of providing safe housing during a disaster. The applicants' reasons besides the risk factors, their lifestyle requirements and expectations are not included in the law. The direct demolition or expropriation decision when the buildings is declared risky aggrieves certain residents and tenants. Thus, the problem associated with housing and property rights emerge and the process develops excluding the residents.

Neglecting the reasons of the individuals who does not agree with 2/3 majority is another indicator of the lack of communication. In this case, their shares could be bought by other owners or the state and leads to the problem of dispossession. The lack of information on the design of the area of transformation, its contribution to the city, solution of resident problems in the joint decision protocol leads to an only economical solution. The lack of a body or an article where resident lifestyles, expectations, residential area-urban space relationship and urban connections of the area are evaluated is deficiency of the code in terms of physical space quality. From an architectural perspective, consideration of the risky spaces only based on security by the law, and neglect of issues such as physical and social construction suitable for resident lifestyle and urban integration and a holistic and sustainable perspective, the fact that the resident remains in an economy-oriented role as an important stakeholder that would be affected by the process, and the ambiguous role of the architect consist the neglected issues in the improvement of the physical environment.

THE URBAN TRANSFORMATION MODEL BASED ON COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION BETWEEN THE STAKEHOLDERS

The communication and participation-oriented transformation model was developed by integrating the proposal design strategies/scenarios into the break points that constitute the process described in Law No. 6306 since it is the most common method. The communication and participation model proposal developed in the present study aims to conduct the process based on the perspective of the society and residents in a fair and democratic environment and to develop an infrastructure that would allow the definition of the role of the resident and designer in the political, legal, social and physical models required for the transformation projects. In the proposed model, the transformation process is approached from the perspective of creating a physical environment suitable for the resident lifestyles and it aimed to clarify the role of the architect. Here, the architect, instead of interfering with the user experience through the environment she or he produced, has a role that maintains the balance between demands, professional knowledge and approaches in an effort to communicate and reconcile with the user in a democratic environment. Based on the participatory architectural design model developed by Hacılibeyoğlu (2017), the model developed for urban transformation envisages a process that allows for discussions and feedback based on alternatives and an evolving process. The developed model aimed to remove the negative aspects of the current processes for the user and transform the process into a positive one with communication-oriented stages. Since urban transformation system intervenes with social relations along with the physical environment, economic status, lifestyle, personal preferences etc., it is also expected that the model could be adapted to different areas based on the local dynamics. In the model, recommendations where the architect and contractor are more active and that could adapt to single building / apartment scale transformations were developed. However, in a different study, different communication and participation based suggestions could be developed for block neighborhood scale transformations.

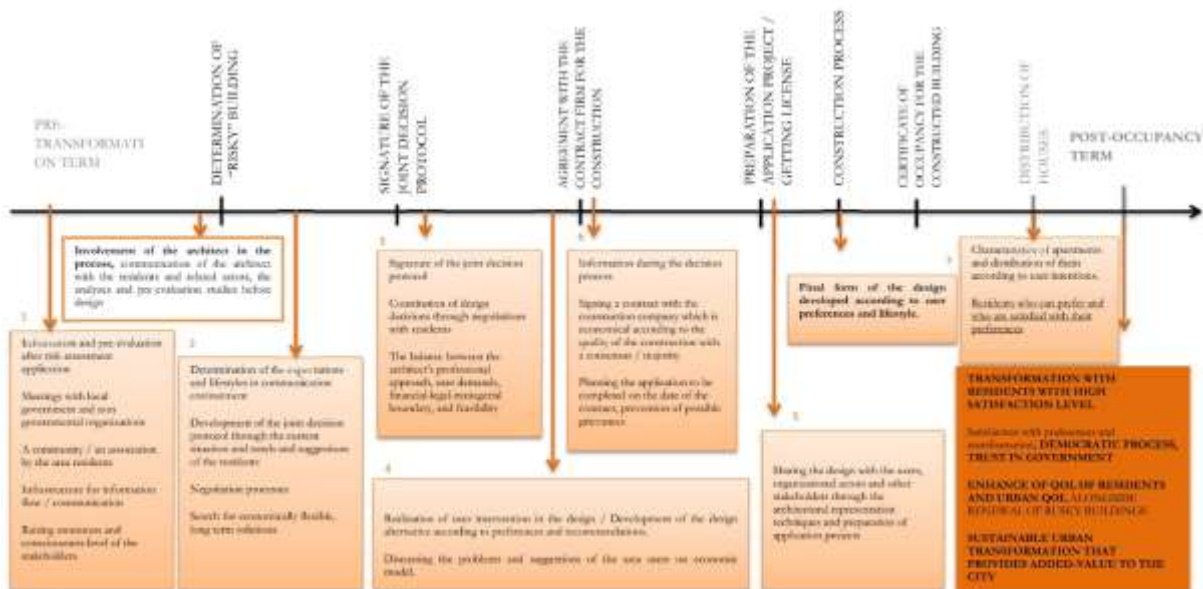


Figure 1. Proposed communication and participation oriented model for the process that is currently implemented based on the law no. 6306

The model that adopts communication and participation in urban transformation and presented in Figure 1 proposes to conduct preparations for the process starting from the pre-transformation period. Determination of the role of the architect in order to design the area of renewal based on resident lifestyles and the guidance of the process by the designer in collaboration

with the residents from the beginning based on communication and participation principles would be positive. Thus, it is recommended that the residents who would apply for the risk assessment report in the first stage of the transformation should develop an infrastructure for continuous flow of information and communication. Therefore, the use of social media channels to ensure continuous flow of information, establishing rapid communication channels via telephone and email, creation of a website where the process is explained in detail, and using the local press in the process would ensure that the local people and the citizens are informed about the project. Considering the fact that the stakeholder who initiates the process based on the Law No. 6306 is the resident, establishment of a community/association that includes the residents could play a key role in the communication between the stakeholders, including other users and government officials.

There are different methods of participation in urban transformation such as access to information, negotiations, community development, active community participation, and public administration (Kocabaş, 2006, 68). The present model, instead of using one of these methods, adopted to implement the required participation method in different stages of the process to conduct a flexible and efficient process. It would be positive to establish a user community in order to establish communication between different stakeholders and authorities, for organizational purposes, to organize periods of communication and environment such as meetings and seminars. For this purpose, associations can be established based on the appropriate transformation scale. As a matter of fact, struggling together for information and a common objective is very important. Since the residents would engage in a result-oriented struggle for transformation of their habitat, the decision about the architect and the contractor that would undertake the project if the building is determined as risky and initiation of the discussions on the contact conditions should be the responsibility of the association established by the residents.

As seen in Figure 1, it is recommended that the architect preferred by the residents to visit the site together with the authorities. Based on the principle of participation, the architect should conduct interviews and action research with the residents, determine their requirements and expectations, and it is recommended to integrate these stages at the beginning of the process. Today, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization is authorized to plan, contract, set the standards and approve all plans during the planning process (<http://www.tbb.gov.tr/basin-ve-yayin/mevzuat-duyurulari/20161027-6306-sayili-kanunun-uygulama-yonetmeliginde-degisiklik-yapilmasina-dair-yonetmelik>). However, in parallel with the risk assessment, it is important to define the role for the architect and to share the planning authority for the quality of the environment. It is necessary for the architect to communicate with the residents starting from the first stage and to investigate resident lifestyles before the demolition of the buildings. The architect should balance the organizational and legal processes, professional design knowledge and user expectations.

Step 1: Preliminary assessment and establishment of communications infrastructure:

In parallel with the risk assessment application, the good aspects, problems and potentials in the area should be determined with a current status analysis and the initial analysis should not be based solely on risk, but physical and social environment, resident lifestyle, the interaction and connections between the area and the city. Renewal of the risky building entails only the physical dimension of the transformation. The analyzes and the pre-evaluation report conducted in the initial stage should be presented verbally and in writing to the residents and stakeholders. It is also recommended to establish communications among the residents, as well as with the architect during the design process, with the contractor during the application stage and among the attorney, officials, other stakeholders during other stages. Expectations of users should be expressed through the community association and the need for individual efforts should be eliminated in the process. At this stage, it would be positive to raise the awareness level among the owners

and other stakeholders in preparation for the transformation process with the contribution of the community/association.

Later in the process, if the building is condemned, during the stages of the signature of building joint decision protocol with the 2/3 majority, presentation of the protocol to Provincial Infrastructure and Urban Regeneration Directorate, and the sale/expropriation of the properties of 1/3 of the owners, demolition/expropriation could victimize certain residents/tenants and problems related to housing and property rights could be experienced. It is a problem to neglect the reasons of the individuals who do not participate in the 2/3 majority. While the scope of the protocol renders the issue economics-oriented, the areas are assessed only in terms physical dimensions due to security concerns, and a physical and social building suitable for urban integration, and a holistic and sustainable perspective could not be defined.

Step 2– Communications environment and negotiation processes parallel to the “risky” building determination: Parallel with the demolition of the building after condemnation, the architect should analyze the lifestyle of the residents through dialogue and identify the satisfactory/dissatisfactory elements. In this context, the architect should also arrange meeting(s) for the purpose of exchanging ideas between the designer and the resident. In the participatory design model, establishment of the accurate balance in the conflict between the professional knowledge and resident demands and interactive and consensus-based design approach are positive. The conflict between professional knowledge and resident demands in urban transformation includes the property rights, appreciation of the price, the urban effect of physical renewal at the same location and social transformation. Thus, a transformation process based on interaction and consensus between the architect, the resident and the authorities should be adopted.

In this step prior to the signature of the joint decision protocol, the principles pertaining to the demolition of the building, allocation of the shares, the conditions of contractor agreement, the principles of whether an urban transformation loan should be used should be determined by the user initiative. Meetings should be organized about the determination of the decision protocol and a deliberate discussion should be conducted and a protocol should be developed based on the current status and user requests. Provision of the protocol should be a process that includes feedback and reassessments, provided that it would be completed within the period specified in the law. In the joint decision protocol, the approval of a 2/3 majority is valid according to the code, however it is important to discuss the concerns and property share of the 1/3 of the owners who did not agree with the joint decision. The exclusion of these users from the process could lead to the violation of rights, economic victimization and neglect. The status of the 1/3 should be resolved with communication-oriented legal means and the shares of these users should not be sold directly. At this point, centralization of the decision authority in a single institution constitutes a problem, and a consensus among all residents is necessary through communication and various stakeholders with professional knowledge are needed to reach such a compromise. In case of inability to obtain the approval of the majority, another attempt should be made for consensus instead of a rapid expropriation.

Since decisions about the physical environment are important in this process, the issues that affect the way of life such as the location of the residence, creation of common living spaces within the framework of social relations could be included in the protocol based on the principle of sharing. In this context, the architect would have the opportunity to achieve awareness on resident demands and to formulate the decisions about the design of the environment. It is important to systematically transfer the data, analyses and pre-evaluation results about the social and physical character of the area, urban connections obtained in the previous step into this stage. Prior to the signature of the joint decision protocol, it is important that the discussions between the architects,

residents and other stakeholders regarding the experience defined by the physical environment, access to urban facilities or possible economic problems should be finalized in favor of the residents. The joint decision protocol should be finalized to encourage users to remain in the area as per the discussions conducted during the negotiation process.

Step 3– Signature of the joint decision protocol: The balance between resident expectations, architectural decisions, financial-legal-administrative limitations and applicability: After the signature of the joint decision protocol, the demolition process of the condemned building commences within the legal process, and the contract and technical specifications are signed. The first problem that arises at this stage is the user, whose rights of housing and access to public services are harmed and the second problem is the neglect of the topic of the design. The housing allowance provides a short-term solution and does not provide the time necessary to prepare for the demolition process. At this stage, more flexible, constructive and long-term solutions should be produced for individuals who experience economic problems.

Step 4 – Development of the design and economic model based on user preferences: With the commencement of the demolition process, the design issue, which was not mentioned in the code, should be considered comprehensively. While the architect develops the design proposals in a participatory transformation project, the architect should determine the design parameters (residence-street relations, neighborhood connections, environment, housing density/typology that allows sustenance of neighborly relations) based on resident lifestyle and expectations determined at the beginning of the process. Scenarios should be developed to improve the unsatisfactory elements and development of satisfactory elements, and regional potentials should be assessed. Within the scope of architectural design, consultation meetings should be organized on the post-transformation lifestyle, housing and housing environment, and urban connections (recreation areas, public/semi-public spaces, transportation network within the housing area and one that provides urban connections, etc.) where the residents could express their views and the design should be developed through mutual persuasion and negotiations. By establishing a communication environment and determination of the principles of participation, it would be ensured that the architects and residents could reach a consensus, minimizing the risk of maladaptation of the residents to the post-transformation housing and environment and improving the user satisfaction. Through determination of post-transformation connections and access distances, the spatial organization, public spaces, social facilities and access opportunities that would strengthen the neighborhood based on user requirements and preferences should be included in the design decisions. The architect, who designs the environment that would be implemented in the next step, should produce design decisions based on her/his personal architectural approach, resident lifestyle, urban environment and context by balancing the user demands, capabilities of the contractor firm, and the limitations of the legal and regulation framework. The post-transformation appreciation of the real estate value would be the revenues of the process and this should not be emphasized. Since the next phase is the development of construction projects, the designer should produce different alternatives that would allow user intervention at this stage. Alternatives should be discussed and the design should evolve and improve under user control and open to user intervention. The right of preference is important in participatory transformation and transformation of the determined design alternative into an architectural project based on user preferences and suggestions would reflect this principle.

Step 5 – Sharing the projects developed based on user preferences with all stakeholders: The model recommends sharing preferences with organizational actors and other stakeholders before finalizing the project, by discussing the design alternatives and completing the design based on user preferences. Design application projects, models and 3D visuals should be developed for sharing with other stakeholders and the project should become ready for application for license. In order to support the transformation with the principles of participation, it is suggested to conduct collective presentations for the residents on the future physical environment, urban interaction facilities and the economic model of the transformation and tools such as information brochures to sustain the information exchange should be developed.

In transformation processes, the economic consensus among the local residents is another important point. Prior to the finalization of the project, the problems and suggestions of the users should be discussed and the general trends on the housing size should be determined at this stage. Based on the joint decision on the size of the property, the needs and preferences of different types of residents and families, joint decision on loan use, it is necessary to discuss the housing size and economic model at this stage to eliminate future problems and if necessary, the design alternative and economic model should be revised. At this point, users have a second chance to interact with the architect, intervene to the housing sizes based on the economic preferences.

Step 6 – Deciding on the contractor firm for construction with consensus/majority, developing plans to prevent possible victimization and conflicts: The architect should collaborate with the contractor in order to avoid any adverse consequences during the construction and should supervise the implementation of decisions. If the architect is employed at the construction firm, he/she should meet the department that would execute the construction and the users to develop the design decisions and if the architect is independent, he/she should possess the authority to make decisions in consensus with the residents. It is a fact that the economic dimension is an important criterion in the decision-making process when contracting the firm, however the economic criterion should not be a priority if the aim is to construct housing units and a residential environment that is suitable for the socio-spatial lives of the residents and where the quality of life is adequate. In this framework, the residents could be able to trust the firm and be convinced that the contractor would honor the building joint decision protocol (including owner shares) and contract principles, possesses adequate construction teams and equipment to construct the project developed under user control and construct the most economic but not the most inexpensive building based on the construction quality. The construction of the buildings based on the limitations of the construction techniques of the contractor firms leads to problems in both architectural design and quality. Architects and authorities should decide on the contracted firms, the possible physical and social urban impact should be discussed, economic concerns and rent should not be prioritized. In the case where users experience difficulties to select a firm, it is recommended to conduct a vote among the residents, to obtain the views of all stakeholders in the decision process, and to select the firm as a result of these efforts.

Following the demolition, the construction contract and technical specification should be signed within the time allowed by the regulations. In contracts with the construction company, it is important to anticipate possible limitations, to plan the completion of the construction within the committed period of time, and to organize the economic and administrative dimensions. It will be beneficial for the property owners to retain a law firm to prevent and resolve potential disputes with the firm or to prevent user grievances induced by the firm. Contracts between the construction company and residents should be outlined within the knowledge of the architect and

the attorney. At this stage, an article may be included in the contract to enable users to claim their rights in case of a possible change in zoning plans. It is very important to inform all stakeholders during the process of signing the contracts, and to reach a consensus among the individuals. At this point, the community/association established by the residents could play a role. Contracts are signed based on the agreement and reconciliation of the parties, however the contract must be drafted by a notary and signed at a land registry office by the parties to guarantee the contract terms and to take measures against possible disputes, prior to the application for the construction license.

Step 7 – The process that develops based on user preferences and lifestyles: Today, it could be observed that the residents could be dissatisfied with certain features of their housing after transformation. There are a several users who are dissatisfied with the fact that their residence is large/small for their family, far away from urban facilities and transportation network when compared to pre-transformation, and they could complain about daylight level, climatic comfort and neighbors. This is due to the determination of housing by chance where users do not have the right to choose. In construction projects with economic concerns, user demands, the need for different housing sizes, and user trends are ignored. However, it is possible to achieve satisfaction by determination of user trends and providing them the right to choose. Grouping based on the neighborhood, size and floor that the users want to live in would ensure the sustenance of the social life. Furthermore, when the housing unit size is determined based on user preferences, the economic problems and the ratio of dissatisfied residents could be minimized. The satisfaction levels of the residents with a right to select who know that their demands are taken into account for different parameters of their residence could improve. The satisfaction rate of individuals who are aware that the transformation process develops under their control would be positively affected

The following could be expected in a transformation process based on communication and participation oriented proposals (Figure 1):

- Continuous communication and information flow between the residents, architect, and other stakeholders and actors,
- Increase in socio-physical satisfaction of the resident since the resident could intervene in the design and the housing and housing environment is designed based on household requirements, neighborhood relations, user expectations and demands,
- Prioritization of social life due to the fact that physical environment production was based on the user lifestyle,
- Satisfaction of the residents with the preferences due to the fact that the characteristics as plan layout, size, location in the area of the apartment homes are determined and they are distributed based on user views and trends.
- Minimizing the economic conflicts among the residents due to the consensus on joint decision protocol on the physical and economic models constituted at the beginning of the process,
- Positive processes where possible conflicts and user problems are prevented by the fulfillment of the contract by the parties since the contract was signed under the supervision of the notary and the attorney and probable problems are resolved with consensus,
- The trust of the residents for the authorities and the system could be improved since the stakeholders would be informed about all the stages of the construction in a democratic process.
- The transformation projects could be conducted to construct areas with urban added value, that prioritize the quality of urban life and satisfy both area residents and urban users based

on the analysis of settlement and resident character and urban impact and connections, not only to secure risky buildings.

- Adoption of the proposed active participation, increase in environmental quality and urban resident satisfaction could lead to socio-physically sustainable urban transformations.

Conclusion and recommendations

The transformation applications conducted in the form of the renewal of risky buildings within the framework of the Law No. 6306 are based on economic value appreciation as a reflection of the attitude of central administration and although the process is initiated under the control of the residents, their control decreases over time and turns into marketing and rent-oriented actions, where it is impossible to talk about the quality of life of the residents. Renewal of areas under disaster risk is an important requirement for Turkey, however the implementation of transformation projects based on building security is an unproductive and inadequate approach to achieve sustainable cities. Sustainable urban renewal is associated with resident and environmental requirements, environmental quality and user satisfaction.

Communication and participation oriented transformation model proposal aims to include residents in the process of producing solutions to spatial problems to defend their rights, to take their expectations into account, to include these stakeholders in supervision mechanisms, and to conduct transparent processes. Social participation and communication environment has the potential to serve as a social support in the prevention of public conflicts and social and economic disagreements that create problems in transformation processes and to allow the acceptance of transformation projects in democratic environments where authority and decision-making mechanisms are shared with the public. Thus, in the communication and participation-oriented model, recommendations that could be adapted to single building/apartment scale transformations where the architect and the contractor are more active were presented, and a different model could be developed with recommendations for block/neighborhood scale transformations including TOKI and municipality projects could be developed in future studies. The proposed model supports user - architect - authority interaction and reconciliation from the preliminary evaluation process within the scope of different steps, prioritizes the user requests at the agreement stage, and includes the user requests in the process of making spatial organization decisions by the architect. It is recommended to provide flexible and constructive solutions and user intervention both in the architectural and economic planning stages, and to support the organization of the house and its environment within the framework of user needs and preferences. Thus, it is foreseen that the expectations of the user will be met and the risk of not adapting to the house and its environment will be reduced.

Public cooperation is a significant dimension in transforming the cities into the future, and laws that govern urban transformation, which is an important policy for sustainable urbanization, should encourage social collaboration and establish a structure that promotes social participation. The fact that a people who do not care about their own habitat and cities would lose their sense of belonging in time could seriously endanger social sustainability. The proposed transformation model, developed based current dynamics, aims to provide a basis for the development of new perspectives on the implementation of resident participation in urban transformation and to create new physical, social or economic perspectives based on different disciplines, fields, social structures and local differences to enable sustainable transformation projects. Through participation, which is an adequate instrument where the limited material resources and time could be utilized with creative and rational methods, urban transformations could be conducted with the goal of increasing the urban quality of life of the resident and the society.

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