Children psychology and outdoor play areas in Istanbul: Bakırköy & Beylikdüzü cases

Abstract

City contains a heterogeneous structure with the different profiles with different needs. Study at hand, this wide range of “child” section will be examined. The child’s relationship with the city is limited because it depends on the conditions that can move between users of the city. In recent years, cities have become virtually uninhabitable for children, especially in metropolitan density of buildings, traffic, vulnerability, such as the timelessness of the main obstacles almost confront the situation of children made them cannot face to city. However, the most basic need of the child’s social environment needed for the game and self-recognition is expected to meet in urban space.

In this context, urban areas, public open spaces designed for children, children’s playgrounds will be elaborated. For the child, the child’s current status with the design of these spaces will be considered. In this sense, the area selected as the study area, such as Istanbul’s fast-growing (built) and contains a significant portion of the housing stock in urban districts; Bakirkoy and Beylikdüzü. At this point, proposed as hypotheses, observations made on the basis of certain criteria, these two towns on the existing areas of public open spaces lack with the basic problem that does not meet the need for quality care.

In the study, definitions of a child and user will be made, and 2-6 years of age children will be the reference due to they are on a new period of relations with the external environment.

Keywords
Child, City, Open play spaces, Affordance concept, Child friendly spaces.
1. Introduction
Although children represent a large group in city population they are still considered at least possibly assets in whole urban design process. However, as the contents of this study will be a ‘child-friendly city’ points out that the city is a platform to lead children to be an individual with features that support physical and social development of his city in the future (Barre, 1984). Having a relationship, socializing and expressing himself better, which are the basic needs an individual since early childhood, are strongly based on the ability of rendering life in outer space, than it is so important that the urban design process to respond the expectations of fiction depends on the context of relationship building. By that way, urban design process is the primary condition to provide a healthy environment.

Thus, considering the subject in the case of children, the situation becomes more rigorous and comprehensive. It is not only important for building a healthy mental and social future for children, but also considered an equally important for the continuity of urban space. The existence of a living, sustainable urban space depends on people’s comfort, mobility, freedom and motivation, live in the city.

In this study, the major target is to uncover the children’s basic needs by examining their motor, physical and social development periods and it is so important to define the role and effects of present urban space; especially open playgrounds on the children’s life and the periods of their development.

2. The aim and the scope of the research
In this study, Piaget’s “children's perception of space” concept is taken as primary reference and in the light of recent studies in this field, the effects of place in children's perception is examined. Firstly, the “child” must be characterized and the relationship between child and urban space is searched and the nature of sample outdoor play areas was carried out on all over the world. By that way some design criteria could be pointed out and then these criteria would be searched in Beylikdüzü and Bakırköy; case study areas that would help to find out if these places are child friendly or not (Piaget, 1955).

3. Theoretical base, material and the method
Method for the study is to observe James J. Gibson’s defined “affordance” concept through the concept of child-friendly environments and various examples from around the world to examine and evaluate the case. Affordance concept, firstly used in 1966, is nearly most popular approach in environmental perception psychology (Chatterjee, 2006).

The most common description of affordance is the set of observations of the environment in a residential area perceived by the individuals. Although the concept of affordance varies from person to person, when generalized, it has equal potential for everyone in.

How much the concept of affordance is offered to society has a great importance. To ensure the same opportunities and potentials for all children is the premise of the social condition of a community. Affordances are perceived by motion and physical activity and utilized by person’s own physical providers (arms, eyes, legs, etc.)

In this context, the concept of affordance can be described as a holistic system nested with a sequential plot (Bærentse, 2002). All these motions and activities period both reveals the affordance and seems to be an instrument to perceive consecutive several affordances. By the way, every affordance is followed by another activity and every activity becomes a provider of the perception of a new affordance. Affordances are not only classified as based on their content of potential, can be detected, received and shaped, but also separated positive and negative and calibrated as useful, more useful, etc.

When we relate the data with the content of this study, the affordances of outdoor playgrounds concept has been gotten a social dimension and distinguished Field of Free Action (FFA) and Fields of Promoted Action (FPA) (Kytta, 2003).

Affordance concept could appear if only any public sanctions and applications are set up, and so they could be...
detected and shaped by these authorities. However, Kytta (2003), points out that it is possible not only to actively promote the actualization of affordances, but also to actively restrict the process and refers to this subset of potential affordances as the field of constrained action (FCA).

Lastly, it must be also examined as a separate parameter.

All these studies provide child-related and the environmental data that would shed light on designing open playgrounds. Thus an assessment model for a child-friendly environment was constructed in 2003, which comprises two central criteria for environmental child friendliness: children’s possibilities for independent mobility and their opportunities to actualize affordances (Gibson, 1977). There are four models planned; Bullerby, Wasteland, Cell and Glasshouse (See Figure 1).

Main purpose of establishing these models is to classify the city part according to the nature of the space and to take the design decisions with a participatory approach (Figure 2).

Bullerby model has been derived from the study and “child friendly environment” criteria have been investigated. Design criteria of open playgrounds are to be determined and these community spaces are to become qualified, has a fictional setup beyond a single type of standard equipment which leads out child’s imagination and creativity.

Eventually, children’s open playgrounds are becoming increasingly more important in today’s cities and we are committed to provide children more than a couple of standard equipment as playgrounds. The equipment and open playground areas could only be designed by the help of reasoned and certain criteria.

In this context, the scope of work safety, function, age grouping, comfort, materials, and maintenance of social communication are defined as important design criteria. If and only a working method that takes into account these criteria with the children’s physical, emotional, social and intellectual development could be supported. (See Figure 3.)

In all studies, it is emphasized that
the basis of emotional and personal development is highly dependent on environmental factors and loyalty, loyalty to the earth, and so on curative effect on human psychology (Şener, 2001).

The child-friendly environment makes the child to be an individual with features that can support the development of its physical and social environment. The city with all its parts should be a place to make children feel safe and comfortable in the physical sense, and in the symbolic sense, well designed urban areas should transmit the message, both children and adults as a part of it and equal to other members of the community. What is important here is to organize urban space itself to support children's physical and social development.

To make the observations, the two selected part of İstanbul are predominantly residential settlements; Bakırköy and Beylikdüzü. Surveys and assessments were made based on observations of these two districts.

4. Conclusion and evaluation

It is aimed to determine the general negative and positive affordances in Istanbul with the evaluation of the observation and the questionnaires. Firstly, the question of whether there have been enough open playgrounds near the housing estate in the urban scale and the physical conditions of these areas are investigated.

The two regions; Beylikdüzü and Bakırköy where the results are mostly seen, are emphasized. For these regions the criteria of CFC are sought. The question of “what kind of positive and negative effects do the open areas included open playgrounds have on pre-process children?” is tried to be understood. The questionnaire has been carried out with parents since it will not work with pre-process children. In this study, it is aimed to interpret the areas in terms of being available and detectable.

In Bakırköy, an old residential area, children's outdoor activities are restricted because of the population growth, overflow traffic and the degeneration of the neighbourhood relations. However, in Beylikdüzü, while it is expected to develop in a more planned and ordered way compared to old ones, the same restrictions are experienced.

In Beylikdüzü, the typology of the settlement is generally composed of ten or more floored buildings. They consist of indoor and outdoor car parks. Since the housing estates are designed mostly as closed units, they have implemented the constitutional recreation areas as playgrounds and sitting benches. Even though this situation has an impression of ‘designed for kids’ at first glance, in fact it doesn't answer to the description of an outdoor playground with its typical closed position. In terms of equality, parents and children can only have a playground with the scope of the type of their houses. Some of the housing estates may not have this opportunity so the children may have to play among the buildings, on the concrete floor, in the vehicular areas and in the construction sites. In this regard, the affordances are observed to be positive for some people while negative for the others.

In Bakırköy, as based on the research, a typical outdoor playground is generally placed in a district of 2-5 floored buildings and streets. This kind of playgrounds has an important role in carrying out the social control. In the neighbourhood, parents can sit on the benches nearby and spend time together with their children. Therefore, the security system for the children on the playground is automatically obtained (Figure 4 and 5).

On the other hand, according to the observations in Beylikdüzü, the standard typology is too far from being a public outdoor area.

In the site, remaining free space, ex-
cept for outdoor car parks, has been turned into playgrounds replacing game equipment. The number of children playing in the playgrounds is very few. Well-qualified forestation is not in existence. Shading system has been provided by multi-storey buildings. However, out of the site, public outdoor areas where children can play and socialise with their peers are almost none.

According to the questionnaire carried out with 50 parents (from Bakırköy and Beylikdüzü 25-25), parents mostly prefer spending time with their children in outdoor playgrounds. The most preferred ones are by the sea or surrounded by greenery. However, some parents prefer going indoor shopping centres just because of the security and hygiene of them under any weather conditions. According to the answers of the parents; the most important reasons for them not to want to take their children to a playground are listed as; heavy traffic, security problems, air and noise pollution, having limited time to be with children, lack of playground nearby.

It is obvious that the outdoor playgrounds are in good condition in Bakırköy in terms of equipment and external fittings such as trees, bushes, ponds and sitting benches. However, they are still not safe enough for children because of the traffic, lack of the car parks and the security problems. On the other hand, there are no planned and designed public playgrounds nearby in Beylikdüzü. According to the observations made by the parents in Beylikdüzü, they constantly need to control their children while playing outdoor because of the lack of security.

In Bakırköy, the situation is more different. In established neighbourhoods, parents participated in the questionnaire stated that they may be care-free when their children play outside thanks to their neighbours. Everybody looks after each other’s child as they know them.

Moreover, these parents emphasize that there are neither toilets nor changing rooms around the playgrounds. They mention about the lack of the units they can satisfy their children’s needs.

In this study, when we try to classify two districts of investigation area Bakırköy and Beylikdüzü, with Kyutta’s models, Beylikdüzü more close to the Glasshouse and Cell models. In this context, FCAs takes an absolutely intense area. On the other hand, Bakırköy still seems to be in Bullerby Model with its neighbourhood pattern. In Bakırköy, there has still a sense of neighbourhood unit and so it is closer to Bullerby model.

In this study, the neighbourhood housing typologies in three to four-storey buildings and on the other hand gated communities are taken to make an assessment. The evaluation does not include the whole of the city but the two districts where residents have optimal income level choose to move in after they have children. It is clear that both of the settlements could not offer the opportunity of free movement which is the primary requirement of Bullerby Model. On the other hand, although Bakırköy is an older a place, allows this sense more than Beylikdüzi and it seems to has a balance of positive and negative affordances in a profile in Bakırköy. Here in Bakırköy, the street appears to be FCA and breaks and vehicular traffic streets, and parking arrangements have to be considered revising the needs of children. In Beylikdüzü multi-storey buildings and its gated profile make the district closer to the model Glasshouse model.

Figure 5. Open playground areas in Beylikdüzü (Selçuk Kirazoğlu, 2012).
It is commonly found that where the quantitative values of affordances increase, than the qualitative values start to decrease. Within each complex, there are one or more “private” open playgrounds and mostly they have no used because of unqualified position they have. These open playgrounds should be set in a manner for qualified oversight of 3-5 closer residential complexes and thus, they could gain increased activities. In that case, firstly governments, NGOs, designers and then parents have great roles. To expand the children open playground areas there must be more open spaces left in residential areas and these spaces must be well organized, arranged in such a way that allows children to use their creativity. These designs should be evaluated taking into account the different age groups and gender. In this context, the most important equipment for children, places for outdoor play and learning.In these places;

Half-open and closed units should be designed in the structures. Changes in weather conditions affect children. In enclosed spaces should be considered in the different activity areas generated for the winter. (Pictures, music, indoor environment, sports, folk dance, dance courses, etc.). Care should be taken to the use of ground materials in open playgrounds, materials used in compliance with the standards for different activities.

Access to the children's play area in a safe manner. This is also very important. It should be easy to transport. There should not be any the busy main roads, heavy traffic, unsafe, uncontrolled regions between house districts and open playground areas.

There must be hidden places, spaces where the children collectively play to generate their imaginary.

Equipment used in the playgrounds should be creative, assembly of parts and the child brought into blocks away offers an alternative game consists of toys not standard. (slide, swing, seesaw, etc.)

In most open playground areas children have limited opportunity to move freely, by the buildings, walls, streets, fences, etc.

This study aims to establish a basis for further studies on the subject. First of all, about the relationship between child development and the physical environment in the light of the fundamental review of the literature is presented, an then a wide research about the primary meeting places children with the city; open playground areas has been done and it is tried to determine the design criteria for open playground areas. The following step is to examine the concept of a child-friendly environment. However, monitoring and evaluation not completed this study, further research to expand the study with more parameters (parents’ education level, income level, geographical location, etc.). This further evaluation is very important to carry out studies.

References


Çocuk psikolojisi ve İstanbul dış mekan oyun alanları: Bakırköy & Beylikdüzü örnekleri

Kent, genel olarak toplumların ve bireylerin varlığına sahne olan mekanıdır. Kentin oluşumunda temel oluşturan açık kamusal alanlar, her türlü sosyal sınıf, kültürel topluluk ve farklı yaş grupları, cinsiyetlerden insani barındıracak. Bireyin çocukluğundan itibaren temel gereksinimlerinden olan ilişkili kurmak, sosyallaşmak ve kendini iyi ifade edebilmek, dış mekan yanışını oluşturmaktadır, yani tasarımında mekansal kurgunun ilişkili kurmaca beklenenleri cevap verebilmese de, bu durumunda kent mekanlarından ziyade "çocuk" bölümü incelenecektir.

N. Schulz, kenti insanların bir araya geldiği bir "karşılama yeri" ve insanların saran, yakınlaştıran bir "micromos" olarak tanımlamaktadır.

Sosyo-kültürel yaşantı, kentsel fiziksel çevre kurgusu içerisinde, kamusal açık alanlarda yoğun olarak gerçekleşmektedir. İnsanın fiziksel çevre ve topluluk ilişkilerini kapsayan dış mekan yaşantısının sağlıklı ve çekici olması, kentsel fiziksel çevre kurgusunun detaydan bütünle ve kent ölçüne kadar sağlıklı işleyışine, açık mekan yaşantısı ile ilgili beklenlerde cevap verecek şekilde tasarlanmasına bağlıdır.

Birey, sosyo-kültürel yaşantısını, kentsel fiziksel çevre kurgusu içerisinde, kente kamusal açık mekanlardan sürdürümektedir.

Bu bağlamda, kent mekânının şekillenmesinde, mekân kullanıcısının fiziksel çevre ile ilişkileri, mekân algılamaları ve bi fiziksel çevre içerisindeki davranışları önemlidir.

Toplumda, cinsiyet, yaş aralığı, etnik köken, fiziksel, zihinsel yetenek, doyurucu, etkileşim, işleyiş ve yeterlilik özelliklerinin her bir bireyin özgürce kent mekânından faydalanabilmesi esasaktır. Kentsel ve kamusal açık alanlar, birey ve toplumun bir arada bulunanarak, sosyal etkileşime girdiği, toplumun heterojen yapısını ortak paydada buluşurabilen mekanlardır. Bu bağlamda, kentsel mekânın sağlıklı bir biçimde tasarlanması,bireye sağlıklı bir ortam oluştururken öncelikli koşuldur.

Kent içerisinde farklı profilde, farklı gereksinimleri bulunan ve heterojen yapı gösteren bir topluluk, bu geniş yelpazeye "çocuk" bölümü incelenecektir.doğrudan, kent kullanıcıları arasında koşullara bağlı hareket edebilen, bu davranışa bağlı olarak nedeniyle kent bireyin arası ilişkisi sınırlıdır.


0-2 yaş döneminde görülen duysal-devinimsel mekan anlayışı o dönemde en önemli zihinsel kazanımlardan biridir. Deneysel mühendis, eylem ya da davranışlar sahne olan mekân hece zihinsel olarak canlandırılabile ve algoritma evresinde değildir. Yedeniden canlandırılan mekan kavramı ise yaklaşık 2 yaşında başlar, tam yetkin biçimine de yaklaşık 12 yaşlarında, işlemel düşünmenin yer aldığı somut eylemler döneminde ulaşır.

Piaget’in “mantıksal – matematiksel bilgi” diye isimlendirdiği ilişkiler, sınıflar, ölçüm ve sayım bilgilerinin oluşması, işlem öncesi dönemin ana amaçlarından biridir. Sınıflandırma (eşleştirme, arama, etiketleme), sıralama (karsşılaştırma ve koordine etme) ve sayı konseptini (eşitlik yaratma süreci) içerir. Bu süreci desteklemede çevresel faktörler ön koşuldur. Çevrede bu faaliyetlere davet edecek, araştırmaya, karşılaştırmaya, aramaya ve saymaya teşvik edecek araçlar bulunmalıdır. 


Çocuğun, günümüz kent mekanının, çocukun en temel ihtiyaç olarak oyun ve kendini tanıması için gereken sosyalleşme ortamını, en mekanının karsılıkaması beklenir. Bu bağlamda, kent, kamusal açık alanlarda çocukların, çocukların en temel ihtiyaç olarak oyun ve kendini tanıması için gereken sosyalleşme ortamını, en mekanının karsılıkaması beklenir. Bu bağlamda, kent, kamusal açık alanlarda çocukların, çocukların en temel ihtiyaç olarak oyun ve kendini tanıması için gereken sosyalleşme ortamını, en mekanının karsılıkaması beklenir. Bu bağlamda, kent, kamusal açık alanlarda çocukların, çocukların en temel ihtiyaç olarak oyun ve kendini tanıması için gereken sosyalleşme ortamını, en mekanının karsılıkaması beklenir.