"PUBLICNESS" OF THE SEAFRONT WITHIN RECENT URBAN INEQUALITIES IN IZMIR (TURKEY)

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Abstract

Based on my user survey, this research discusses how users of a main promenade/seafront in Izmir (a metropolitan city, Turkey) negotiate for this promenade's "publicness." It attempts to relate such negotiations to polarized discussions about urban public life and inequalities in Turkey, at which imaginations of Izmir play a significant role since 2000s. Izmir has a high rate of immigration since the 1990s especially with Kurdish people and other groups from Turkey's urban and rural areas. Given Izmir's Mediterranean climate, this promenade is widely used, although the activity areas are limited to a walkway. Interestingly, this promenade is attached to relatively better-off central and coastal neighbourhoods with long time dwellers but also has easy access for those neighbourhoods on the hills with middle and low income residents, including recent migrants. Yet survey results tell that this seafront is primarily used by those living in coastal and nearby neighbourhoods and has evolved mostly as "a kind of communal" public space of a "decent district"—Goztepe, which is known as representing the "modern" life style. Surveys are analysed to see whether and to what degree the users negotiate the "publicness" of this seafront, given the users' socio-economic and demographic characteristics, habits of using urban public spaces, the quality of their neighbourhood life and the physical conditions of users' dwelling. The results suggest that especially the site design favours middle-age working people over older people, children, women, teenagers and those who want to socialize.

1. Introduction

Economic shifts taking place in the late 20th Century have changed and accelerated the discussions about public space as part of political sphere and of built space. Although most of these discussions of public sphere and urban public spaces have evolved as isolated from each other, we must consider them together (Blomley, 2001; Schmidt & Nemeth, 2010). An examination of "publicness" with a consideration of access, agent/control, and interest (Benn & Gaus, 1983), for instance, cannot be separated from the examination of conditions for political participation. Compartmentalizing such examinations leaves urban designers, planners and others dealing with the improvement of built environment in an apolitical position with limited tools of implementation.

This paper is driven from two arguments: First, any analysis and design implementation of urban public spaces should relate to the issues of urban justice and equity. Here *ideally* public spaces are taken as "open" or "accessible" parts of the built environment for all people with different socio-economic and demographic characteristics. They are necessary for providing communication and socializing opportunities for their users and thus, for improving social ties and sense of comfort and safety in the society (Burgess et al., 1988; Boone et al., 2009; Howard et al., 2002; Madanipour, 1999). Also, such opportunities for meeting with those different from the "self" and for representing of identities with differences within community and society can give the individuals and groups a ground for claiming to be a part of "the publics." Thus, for the continuity of public life and public sphere, public spaces as actual built environment are necessary (Mitchell, 1995; Mitchell & Staeheli 2005). Besides, those spaces containing and/or relating to natural environment and advantageous climatic conditions also add to the users' health.

Given these benefits, especially public open spaces should be considered as a part of "*environmental amenities"* (Boone et al., 2009**)**. Similar to the distance from "environmental disamenities," being/living in close proximity to environmental amenities are necessary for individuals' health and life quality. Similarly, public open spaces should be taken as public service areas (usually) developed by public resources. Thus, the distribution of public spaces in the city and their design should be considered as the distribution of opportunities for getting access to public services and resources (Byrne & Wolch 2009; Talen & Anselin 2001; Talen 2001; Wolch et al., 2005).

However, access to the environmental amenities and public service areas is not "equitably" available for all neighbourhoods and city dwellers, which is a serious planning and design problem (Boone et al., 2009; Sister et al., 2010; Heynen, 2006; Swyngedouw & Heynen 2003). Similarly, access to and design of some public spaces might favour certain advantaged social groups over others or disfavour the disadvantaged groups further, and thus, cause or perpetuate urban inequalities (Harvey 1973; Sister et al. 2010; Wolch et al. 2005). Consequently, analysis, planning and designing of public spaces must be part of the discussions about urban and environmental justice, especially within the neoliberal context of urban policies that encourage the development of public spaces as consumption spaces and even discourage their uses as spaces for public representation (Low & Smith, 2013; Mitchell, 1995; 2003).

The second argument tells that any analysis of urban public space should take these built spaces as part of multiple spatial relations. Here, plan and design and use of public spaces are mediated by the interplays of multiple contexts of individuals, communities, places and cities—that is, by users' position in the webs of socio-economic, political and spatial relations and also by these built spaces' macro contexts defined by the state, civil society and the market. Everyday practices in and for public spaces should be taken as the spatialized power relations reified and unfolded through the local practices in these built spaces.

2. Study Context and Site

Izmir is the third biggest metropolitan city of Turkey with 4 million people within its provincial boundaries (Figure 1 & 2). To understand the "publicness" of a public open space in Izmir, it is necessary to outline how public discourses and public life in Izmir have been shaped by the economic changes and political context of the country including the urbanization trends based on immigration and polarized and defensive camps between "modern versus Islamic" "dominant-way-of-life."

In the 1980s, Turkey shifted towards liberal economic policies relying on international market forces, following a military *coup*. The gross national product (GNP) per capita doubled between 1980 & 1998 and then continued to increase with a smaller rate, facing with economic crises in 2001 and in 2008 (TUIK, 2014). However, the disproportionate share of the national income between different income groups and urban inequalities has got worse. Besides the redistribution and agricultural policies of its neoliberal government, Turkey has its own conditions that have worsened such inequalities. Turkey has always an urbanization trend supported mostly by immigration to cities, especially with the first peak in 1960s-1970s along with the mechanization of agriculture and labour-intensive industrial production. The state then had relative tolerance of the illegal housing areas mostly by rural migrants, which provided the migrants with upward mobility and ability to escape poverty and exclusion. This tolerance and migrants' coping mechanisms disappeared after the mid-1980s, because urban land has become a primary source of rent for the private sector and the number of "urban transformation projects" and of laws and regulations supporting such projects has increased tremendously (Ataöv & Eraydın, 2011). In the 1990s, the rate of immigration especially from the east regions to western metropolitan cities (primarily, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir) was the highest, along with new agricultural policies and the armed conflict between PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) and Turkish State forces on the east and southeast of the country.

Meanwhile, after the 1980s, there was a considerable growth of civic associations including Islamic ones[1]. Next to global forces and influences, the Islamist groups' increasing power in party politics and civil society since the 1990s has made the discussions about multiple identities more intense and even polarized and defensive. Especially in the 2000s, the debates about "the Turkish national identity" got intense. The Turkish national identity was established during the early Republican Era of Turkey (1923-1945) along with various westernized "modernization" and "nation building" projects, which was realized by suppressing various identities based on ethnicity, religion and other characteristics (Keyman, 200?). Questioning of this ideology has been supported by the government held by the Justice and Development Party (AKP) that has an origin on the Islamic right and now "a representative of the new liberal-conservative trend in politics" (Tosun &Tosun, 2008) and has won the national elections since the 2000s, following the Islamist parties winning of municipal elections for metropolitan cities of Istanbul and Ankara and others (except Izmir) in the 1990s. Turkey has had on-going tensioned discussions and practices about secularism and "modernization versus Islam" as "the dominant-way" of life and of the state-operating.

Figure 1 & 2: Turkey and Izmir.

Interestingly, within this political context, certain metropolitan cities in Turkey (namely, Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Diyarbakır) got certain symbolic but also politicized images. *Istanbul* and *Ankara* had rivalry and conflicting symbols when building the modern Turkish national identity. Istanbul was the old capital and the most affluent city of Ottoman Empire with a multicultural but traditional (non-western) life to be left behind by the establishment of Turkish Republic. Ankara was the capital of new and young Republic built upon a "modern" and "national" identity (Tekeli 2000, cited by Erkip 2006). This conflict is softened (even disappeared) since the 2000s with the increasing economic investments of both central and local governments held by AKP to Istanbul as the main city open to international economic links and to Ankara as the capital city with major governmental institutions. Within this context, however, *Diyarbakır* and *Izmir* have emerged with strong symbolized and politicized positions. Izmir has been the representative and protective of the Turkish national identity and "the dominant-way" of life and of the state operating, whereas Diyarbakır has been the "fortress" of Kurdish identity. Such images have been supported mostly through the media and politicians at both right and left-wing, although the municipalities in Izmir have been held by the leftist/ social democrat parties only since the late-1990s.

[1] Some has accepted this growth as a sign for the "emergence' of civil society and "new citizenship" in Turkey with the history of the dominant patrimonial state and "de-politicization" by the military coup of 1980 (Wedel, 1997) or as part of the 1970s' associative movement (Hersant & Toumarkine, 2005:7) that influenced by new international agreements in the post-1990s including the European Union for which Turkey has as a long-standing candidacy for membership.

Now two contrasting views about Izmir, a "fortress" of the Republican ideas with its "modern" dominant-way-of-life *versus* Izmir as the racist-fascist city, has been circulated especially by media and politicians. On the one hand, given that Izmir is also known with its *past* cosmopolitan identity (with its "enlightened," "civilized," "democratic" and "modern" urban life style and "educated" or "civic minded" locals) mostly for being a trade port between 18th-20th century and that Izmir had street protests against AKP-government's policies, it is fair to say that most people of Izmir (Izmirli) are proud of their city's identity as a fortress of "modern" life style defined usually according to urban middle class notions and to "the Turkish State as a secular social welfare state shaped by loyalty to Atatürk and his secularism" (Ataöv & Eraydın, 2011, pp.99). On the other hand, Izmir and the cities in West Anatolia (the hinterland of Izmir then) have had reactions to the threats to the Early Republican ideas about Turkish National identity (*mostly by Islamic trends*) and rising reactions against the Kurdish nationalism.

However, such polarized discourses in Turkey and about Izmir are shaped mainly by the declining economic and political power of Izmir with its hinterland after 1980s, in contrast to other metropolitan cities. Similarly, the local reactions might relate to nostalgia for those days with the economic power of Izmir (Yıldırım & Haspolat, 2010). Izmir has been a port city organizing its hinterland based on agriculture and mining since the 18th Century and also a banking centre of the Ottoman Empire until the early 20th century. During the late-20th Century, given its economic power with tourism sector and mild Mediterranean climate, Izmir attracted high rates of immigration originated in other parts of Turkey and also abroad, but also has lost its economic importance as port city similar to other port cities in the neoliberal era. Its share of GNP has decreased 10% since the early-2000s and also political power in Turkey's governance, in contrast to Istanbul and its nearby cities and also Ankara with its region with higher share of public investments and GNP (*add numbers*). Known with its rates of education level higher than national averages (26% and 14%), the city has an increasing unemployment rate after the economic crisis in 2008 especially by those with higher education level over the national averages (respectively, 44% and 39%) (TUIK, 2014). Its hinterland had loss of property in agriculture, whereas it also attracted immigrants from other rural parts of Turkey especially with Kurdish descents.

2.1. Study Site

Within the city of Izmir, there are spatialized differences shaped by various socio-economic and historical factors. At the end of the 19th Century, the city had two main settlements—Karsıyaka and Izmir (today's Goztepe district, where our study site is located). After 1950s with rapid urbanization rate supported by immigration rate, the city grew up along the bay area where these two settlements became central and coastal districts. Today a high percentage of city population live around Izmir Bay Area that is surrounded by hills beginning to rise suddenly after the seashore. Major urban public spaces (i.e., public squares and seafront with concrete promenades built on filled areas after 1980s, and also some major shopping malls) are located generally in coastal districts (Figure 3—to be added later).

Including Goztepe district, central and coastal neighbourhoods in Izmir are known as better-off districts where also social democrat parties got the majority of votes—regardless of whether people are there with social democrat ideology or the liberal, educated, middle-class, centre-right vision. In contrast, in 2002 and 2007 elections, AKP was strongest at the neighbourhoods away from the coast and at the outskirts of the city (Tosun & Tosun, 2008). The promenade, the study site along the seafront, is located in one of these old city district—Goztepe district, known with its middle- and upper-class locals born-and-raised here or with long residency and also place-ties with property ownership. Locals of Goztepe and Karsiyaka have claims that their district has been the major site for emergence and continuity of the public life style that "has made this city the City of Izmir" and people there "*Izmirli*s"—here the **"***urbanites*," rather than necessarily local dwellers, of Izmir (Senol, 2015; work-in-progress).

The section of the seafront chosen for this study is highly used especially in the evening hours during hot summer days of Izmir. Overall, the seafront extends for around 5 km. from a ferryboat pier to the city centre along (see Image 1). The study site is the part with the only pier until the city centre. As the seafront is separated from residential areas by a major road, the main entrance to the study site is through a pedestrian bridge. From the vehicular road to the sea, the seafront has a green surface (ca. 2 m.), a bicycle road (ca. 1.5 m.), a walkway (ca. 4m.) and concrete wall/sitting areas (Figure 4 & 5).

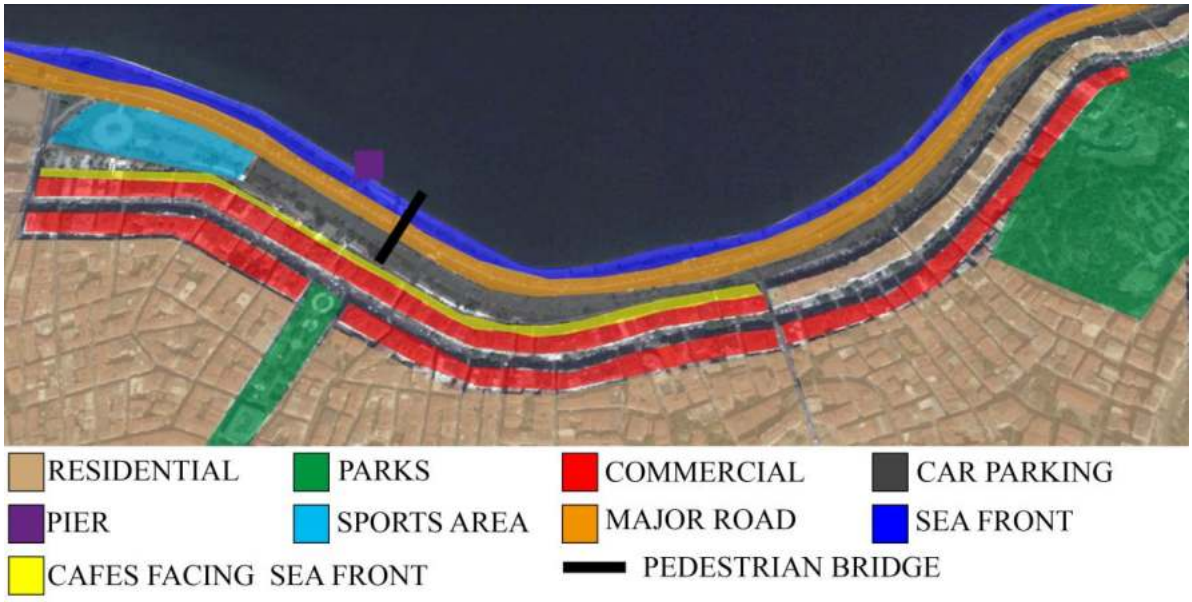

Figure 4: The study site (seafront) and its nearby surrounding.

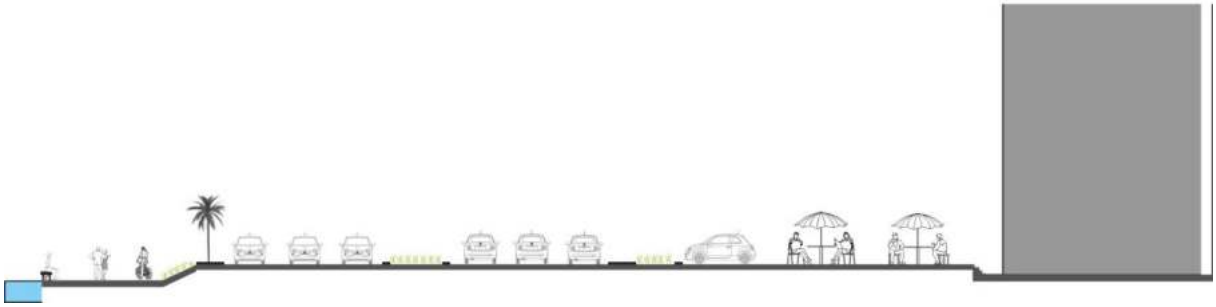

Figure 5: Cross-section of the seafront and its nearby surrounding (from left to right: sea, seafront, major road, car parking and cafes, buildings)

3. Study Methods, Analysis and Findings

To gather the main data for this study, I conducted a user survey (251 respondents) on the study site between 7.30—10.00pm on 3 days per week (including Saturday or Sunday) from mid-June to mid-September and. The themes of survey questions were about the respondent's **1)** use (frequency, density and kinds) of the seafront and nearby areas, **2)** socio-economic and demographic characteristics, **3)** perception of comfort and safety on the site, **4)** perception and habits of using public spaces in Izmir and also in their neighbourhood, and **5)** characteristics of their dwelling and household. To analyse the survey data, besides the descriptive analysis, we deployed regression model using the Ordinary Least Squares technique. The number of observations (N) is 251 respondents. The data gathered under Theme 1 above was the dependent variable (Y), whereas the Themes 2, 3, 4 and 5 constituted the independent variables (X).

In order to understand the determinant of Y, we refer to the following regression model: $Yi = \alpha + \beta 1\, X1\, i + \beta 2\, X2\, i + \beta 3\, X3\, i + ei$

> *i*: 1, 2….., 251 (the index notation for the individuals participated in the survey) and *e*: error terms which are assumed to follow a normally, identically and independently distributed residuals.

When evaluating the results of the regression analysis, this study underlines the variables (X) that has a positive/negative and significant coefficient at 5% significance level which actually means that for the respondents that have higher X1, we observe higher Y.

3.1. Profiles of the Respondents

Overall, according to their socio-economic characteristics, there appear two main groups. Of total 251 respondents, the first group is early-middle-age, working and married people. The second group is either young usually university students or upper-middle age and non-working people. Of all respondents, the majority holds or pursues university degrees (60.5% compared to 26% of Izmir) and is Izmir's "locals" who are born-and-raised or living here for more than 25 years, whereas a third has been in Izmir since the 1990s. Also, the majority lives in households with a medium[2] or upper income level and usually 2-3 breadwinners, except nearly one third with below-medium-level and with one or none breadwinner.

These characteristics can be detailed among female and male respondents, which would suggest various user profiles on the site (see Table 1). Accordingly, the majority of both male and female respondents are in the age groups of 26-45 (respectively, 76 out of 132 and 65 out of 119), usually with a paid-job, a university degree and a household with upper income level with at least 2 breadwinners. Yet the percentage with university degrees is higher for women. Relatively older men here are married with kids and the younger ones live in households usually with 3 breadwinners—*probably* with parents. Women in these age groups have different marital status but usually no kids. The largest share of women here (43 out of 65) is younger (25-35 years old), of which two third is single. Of the men in this group, nearly a half is born & raised here and a quarter is relatively newcomer to city with a residency of 5-15 years. In contrast, nearly half of these women have been here between 5-15 years.

Among female respondents, those with upper-middle ages (here, 45+) compose the second largest group (37 out of 119). They are usually housewives some of whom have university degrees and are married or widows older than 55. As the age among them increases, their household income generally decreases from upper- to below-levels. Interestingly, the majority of male respondents with the age of 46 and over (31 out of 132), usually with secondary school degrees, have no paid-job (probably retired and/or have income as landlords). They have *usually* one breadwinner in their households with a medium income level, except a quarter with upper-income level. Both groups have been in Izmir more than 25 years.

Those between the age of 18-25 of both female (17 out of 119) and male (25 out of 132) respondents have or pursue university degrees and are not working, single and living in households with three breadwinners and medium or upper income levels. More than half of this group have been in Izmir between 15-25 years, thus, come to Izmir as a child after 1990s.

3.2. How They Use the Seafront

Most of the respondents (57% of all) are the frequent users of the seafront with the visits daily or for a couple of times weekly, whereas a quarter visits a couple of times per month. At the seafront, the

[2] This study considered the household income level between 2501-3500 Turkish Lira as "medium".

majority of respondents stay for 1-2 hours (48%) or 4-5 hours (35%) majorly in the evening and early-night hours. They mainly exercise and walk/stroll and then rest/sit. Given the site's physical elements, the mostly used parts of seafront are walkways, and then seashore with sitting and less so the green surfaces and benches.

The results of the regression analysis suggest certain socio-economic characteristics, general habits of using urban public spaces and also neighbourhood characteristics have a statistically significant coefficient. Accordingly, it is no surprise that mostly the **frequent-users of urban public spaces** (i.e., open spaces or malls) come to the seafront often and also stay here longer (i.e., from 4-5 hrs to 1-2 hrs) than those less frequent users of public spaces. Interestingly, more **working people** use the seafront more often. Also, they use the seafront mostly for walking, strolling and exercising. The less frequent users are those without any paid-job (retirees, housewives and students); they usually sit and rest and meet somebody on the seafront.

There appear also **gender differences** in the use of this site. Mostly those with child care responsibilities at home use majorly green areas and also the walkway. 22% of respondents have childcare responsibilities. Mostly this group of respondents come to the site with a company. Yet other results make this gendered difference of site use interesting: More **women** tend to not-use green areas but use mostly walkways. In contrast, **men** mostly use the sitting areas including the green areas. Also, women stay here for shorter period (from 20-30 min. to 1-2 hrs), whereas men stay for longer period from 1-2 hours to 4-5 hours.

Given the physical setting of the seafront designed majorly with continuing stripes of green surface, bicycle paths and walkway and then concrete wall with sitting areas next to the sea, it is easy to understand how mainly active uses are performed here. This might also explain why the age groups of respondents concentrated at the age groups of 26-45—the group with a high percentage of working people—is highly represented among the respondents.

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Another significant finding relates to the respondents' use and perception of **public spaces in their neighbourhood**. Overall, in their neighbourhood, only less than a half of respondents have either a park, cafes, access to seafront or most of these places "*that they can use*." Of all respondents, most consider the quality of these places "average" (44%) or "good" (40%), but only 12% thinks that number of such places in their neighbourhood is enough. Similarly, more than a half (63.7 %) have neighbourhood parks in walking distance to their home, but only 26.3 % of all respondents use these parks. Asked about the reasons for not using these parks, non-users (37.5%) majorly underlined uncomfortable physical (e.g., park design only for kids) (12.1%) and social conditions (e.g, teenagers bothering them) (4.9%) or their dislike (7.7%) of these parks and/or their preference of using the seafront with wider horizon and size.

Interestingly, the regression analysis suggests that mostly the respondents with public places or cafes in their neighbourhood visit the seafront more often. Also, when choosing the activity areas on the site, understandably more respondents without any public places "that they can use" in their neighbourhood and also interestingly, more of those with a neighbourhood park nearby their home **use the green areas** at the seafront. These findings suggest that the presence of public areas in their neighbourhood does not guarantee the respondents' use or like of these places or none-use of other public spaces. Also, the purposes of using neighbourhood spaces might be different from using this relatively larger space next to sea with chances of meeting people other than their neighbours.

3.3. Sense of Comfort and Safety on the Site

Respondents' perception of comfort and safety of the seafront constitute other set of findings here. Overall, more than a half has been living in Izmir more than 25 years (65.4%), whereas 20% is here for less than 15 years. Nearly all respondents think that Izmir is a comfortable and safe city and has urban public spaces with a quality at average (41%) or above average (47%). More than a half of respondents (59%) goes primarily to open public spaces for relaxing in quiet and fresh air and for

exercising. The rest visits mainly shopping malls for shopping, entertainment and socialization with friends. Of all, a high percentage (73.7%) visit public spaces with a company—usually with a friend, then a family member or both.

Sense of Comfort: Of this seafront, most respondents (except a third) think as comfortable. A common emphasis is especially about positive aspects of the site location next to the sea and its size with wide space that gives the sense of relaxation and comfort. However, when asked specifically about the design, uses/activities and users of the seafront, slightly more than a half of them complained about mainly **the physical conditions** and less so **social conditions** there. Nearly all the negative aspects of physical conditions are related to practices of design (including the uses and activities) and the lack of climate-sensitive design of the seafront as a public space. These include mainly keeping the uses for bicycling, jogging and fishing on the same (narrow) site with relatively few sitting areas and without any protection from sun and the wind, and disturbance of traffic on the major road.

Complaints about the social environment of the site appeared much less than its appreciation, respectively 3% and 10%. Majority of complaints here relate to the users' attitudes (rather than socio-economic and demographic characters*)*—such as not keeping the area clean, dog fouling, those fishing on the site with long fishing rod,"some men" public drinking "next to the families/kids"). However, interestingly, the appreciation of social environment/ users talks mostly about how "people here are decent" and/or the "district is decent" and the site has people "like a family," pointing out Goztepe District. Also, interestingly when asked about which neighbourhood they live, the majority of respondents give the name of neighbourhoods attached to the seafront (Figure 6—to be added later). Majority lives in the neighbourhoods at the edge of the seafront, followed by those in walking distance around 15-20 minutes. Of the respondents, 90% come to the seafront on foot. Most of them (50%) walk here for 5-10 minute, and others (35%) for 10-20 minutes or for 20-30 minutes (10%).

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The regression analysis shows who (un)comfortable is with the conditions of the site. As such details might have more explaining power for urban design and planning, here we emphasize mostly characteristics of those respondents **uncomfortable** with certain aspects of the site. Primarily, the **older age groups** think of the seafront uncomfortable with its physical design. As mentioned earlier, the percentage of non-working population is higher for the age groups above 45, whereas mostly non-working respondents use the area for sitting, resting and meeting people.

Meanwhile, respondents' habits of using urban public spaces in general impact significantly the perception of comfort level on this site. The **frequent users of** urban public spaces and those who use urban public spaces for socialization take this site uncomfortable due to its urban design. Similarly, using urban public spaces with or without a company seems to affect the perception of comfort here. Overall, a third of the respondents visit other urban public spaces and also this seafront usually alone, while the rest come here mainly with a friend or then a family member. Regression analysis suggests that those visiting urban public spaces **with friends** consider the uses/ activities on this seafront uncomfortable. Also, those coming here **with family members** (kids…??) are not happy about the site design due to its lack of protection against climatic factors (e.g., wind, sun, rain and waves). Those who use urban public spaces **alone** are not comfortable about the site design and especially about the user profile here. When we examine to see who comes here alone, we can see that as the respondents' education and also age level increases, their tendency to come to the site alone increases.

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Nearly all respondents come to the seafront on foot, where most of them live in the neighbourhoods attached to the seafront or nearby neighbourhoods relatively with longer walking distance, detailed above (Figure 6). Thus, for most, this seafront might be imagined as part of their district/ neighbourhood. When examining the relationship between respondents' perception of comfort level of the site and of their neighbourhood characteristics, such close geographical and social proximities should be kept in mind.

According to the regression analysis, mostly the respondents living in neighbourhoods attached to the seafront (i.e., 5-10 min. walking distance) (4? %) are not happy about the uncomfortable design and

lack of protection from climatic factors at the seafront. However, more of those coming to the seafront on foot (90%) find the site's climatic comfort well. How to explain this? An explanation might relate simply to the relatively big differences among the senses of climate factors at neighbourhoods. Those living relatively far from the site (and thus, from open and wide space with sea breeze) might be comfortable at the seafront as that might be providing with climatic factors different from their neighbourhood spaces. Meanwhile, mostly the perception that their neighbourhood provides "good" living quality seem to impact the respondents' perception of the seafront as comfortable with its design and climate conditions but uncomfortable with its uses and activities.

Sense of Safety: More than a half of all respondents think that the site overall does not have safety concerns. When asked details, 131 out of 251 respondents detailed where and why are (un)safe along the seafront. Given the size of the area, the majority detailed that the crowded and well illuminated areas (usually concentrated around the cafes, elevated pedestrian bridge and the pier) are much safer (Image 3). Of respondents, 10% emphasized that the site is safe because people here are and the district/ neighbourhoods here are "good"/"decent." Similarly, for the unsafe areas on the site, 39% of 131 respondents pointed out the isolated areas with a few people and dark/without enough illumination, which extends at the both ends of the crowded area with pedestrian bridge and the pier. Also, nearly a half of respondents pointed two districts (Üçkuyular and KonaK-city centre) located at the both end of this promenade as too crowded with too many "different unknown" characters as unsafe areas.

The regression analysis tells that the habits of using other public spaces in the city affect significantly the respondents' sense of safety in this seafront but along with differences in the kind of habits and also in their emphasis of physical or social conditions of the site. Most of those going majorly to the malls especially for the purpose of socialization have a strong sense of safety in crowded areas (such as cafes) of the seafront. Yet for those visiting mostly open spaces and all public spaces for relaxation, the open areas at seafront are safer. Meanwhile, mostly those visiting urban public spaces with a company tend to find this seafront "safe because the district is decent," "people are nice/safe here" or "here is crowded," but unsafe due to the lack of design elements such as illumination and lack of activities that lead to isolated places especially at night time. In contrast, those enjoying urban public spaces in general alone find the site safe because of "its quietness" and "well-illuminated places" and unsafe because of user—characteristics -attitudes and certain places with a crowd of "too mixed of characters." Meanwhile, as the education level and also the age of respondents goes up, so does their tendency to come to the site alone.

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The survey also checked the respondents' sense of safety in this site by asking the question of "*whether it is safe for a man (or woman) to use the site alone*", a few said "unsafe" with a higher percentage for a woman alone than man (10,8% vs. 4,7%). Overall, their reasoning focused on the arguments—such as "nobody would bother anybody here" and "nothing bad happen, as it is crowded/well-illuminated"—which had a higher percentage for the question about woman's than man's safety (63,4 % vs. 59,5%) . Interestingly, also the presence of police power is given as a major response (17.3 %) but only for the woman's safety.

The results of the regression analysis tells that mostly those using public spaces for socialization say that "man alone" can use this space safely. Yet interestingly, with a lower significance, mostly those with a habit of using urban public spaces alone find this site for a woman alone, but not those who visit public spaces with a company. When giving reasons for why this site is safe, the responses change for the cases of "a woman or man alone." Mostly those visiting public spaces with a company and (with a lower significance) mostly female respondents say that the site is safe for a man alone mostly because "*man can defend himself*," "*there is police*" and "*because he is a man*." Male respondents mostly give reasons such as "*nobody would bother him*" and "*it is crowded and well-illuminated*." To explain why woman alone on the site is safe, mostly the respondents with higher household income level and also (with a lower significance) male respondents say that "*nobody would bother a woman"* and *"it is crowded here"* or *"she would defend herself*."

Similarly, those with lower income and also the frequent users of urban public spaces and (with a lower significance) and female respondents explain their reasons for why the area might be unsafe for a woman alone by saying that because *"she is woman"* and *"there might be some 'unsafe' people around,*" rather than "*nobody would bother him"* and *"it is crowded and well-illuminated.*"

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When asked about how to increase comfort and safety on the site, overall, more than a half of the respondents (61.2%) emphasized the need for design and planning implementations—such as well illumination, more and comfortable sitting areas with protected from wind and sun, separated bicycle-motorcycle roads and exercise areas from pedestrian walkways, places for children, measures for traffic calming on the major road next to the site. Of all, 10% emphasizes that people there need to care about the site and its uses, whereas a significant percentage (19.2%) ask for police surveillance.

The results of regression analysis suggest that most of those with longer stay in Izmir (born-and-raised or for more than 25 years) and of those who lived in another city more than 5 years believe that the site is already safe and if needed, users should solve the problems there, rather than any police or design control. Similarly, the probability of this answer emphasizing the social control to increase comfort and safety on the site is also high among those respondents whose neighbourhood has public spaces and also who live next to the site. Those with relatively shorter (less than 15 years) stay in Izmir and also most of working people argue for the need of police control, camera surveillance or urban design solutions on the site.

4. Evaluation and Conclusion

To be added later

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