

Socially Sustainable Urban Rehabilitation Projects: Case Study of Ortahisar, Trabzon

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Abstract : Cultural, physical, socio-economic, or politic changes occurred in urban areas might be resulted in the decaying period which may cause social problems. As a solution to that, urban renewal projects have been used in European countries since World War II whereas they have gained importance in Turkey after the 1980s. The first attempts were mostly related to physical or economic aspects which caused negative effects on social pattern later. Thus, social concerns have also started to include in renewal processes in developed countries. This integrative approach combining social, physical, and economic aspects promotes creating more sustainable neighbourhoods for both current and future generations. However, it is still a new subject for developing countries like Turkey. Concentrating on Trabzon-Turkey, this study highlights the importance of socially sustainable urban renewal processes especially in historical neighbourhoods where protecting the urban identity of the area is vital, as well as social structure, to create sustainable environments. Being in the historic city centre and having remarkable traditional houses, Ortahisar is an important image for Trabzon. Because of the fact that architectural and historical pattern of the area is still visible but need rehabilitations, it is preferred to use 'urban rehabilitation' as a way of urban renewal method for this study. A project is developed by the local government to create a secondary city centre and a new landmark for the city. But it is still ambiguous if this project can provide social sustainability of area which is one of the concerns of the research. In the study, it is suggested that social sustainability of an area can be achieved by several factors. In order to determine the factors affecting the social sustainability of an urban rehabilitation project, previous studies have been analysed and some common features are attempted to define. To achieve this, firstly, several analyses are conducted to find out social structure of Ortahisar. Secondly, structured interviews are implemented to 150 local people which aims to measure satisfaction level, awareness, the expectation of them, and to learn their demographical background in detail. Those data are used to define the critical factors for a more socially sustainable neighbourhood in Ortahisar. Later, the priority of those factors is asked to 50 experts and 150 local people to compare their attitudes and to find common criterias. According to the results, it can be said that social sustainability of Ortahisar neighbourhood can be improved by considering various factors like quality of urban areas, demographical factors, public participation, social cohesion and harmony, proprietorial factors, facilities of education and employment. In the end, several suggestions are made for Ortahisar case to promote more socially sustainable urban neighbourhood. As a pilot study highlighting the importance of social sustainability, it is hoped that this attempt might be the contributory effect on achieving more socially sustainable urban rehabilitation projects in Turkey.

Keywords : urban rehabilitation, social sustainability, Trabzon, Turkey

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