

The Concept of Universal Design in the Independent City Life of Disabled Individuals

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Abstract : The aim of the study is to analyze the concept of universal design and accessibility to make the city which allows equality and independence for individuals. In the content of the study, literature researches and observations of samples in Istanbul, Turkey are analyzed. As a result proposals are going to be developed to create the cities which are designed for everyone. In globalization process, in cities, population have been increasing dramatically with social and economic activities. Medical developments have been effective in prolonging human life and the disability that comes with aging has also increased in parallel with the disabled population. Nowadays disability is an important phenomenon. Because approximately 1 billion people live with disabilities. The heterogeneous structure formed by the rapid gathering of individuals with different social, economic and physical characteristics in the cities creates great spatial diversity and richness in the cities with different needs brought together. Unlike the cultural and physical wealth in these places and the potential to integrate and diversify the urban people, unfortunately, the designs in practice cause the urban areas to break apart, the urbanities to tear themselves apart, to interfere with their communication and interactions. The social and physical structure of the city is important to feel belonging to the urban society. In most cities when an observation is made, obstructions for people with disabilities can be seen in urban physical structure and design. With these obstructions, people with disabilities cannot live in urban space, and they are desolated in urban life. The city, which offers equal opportunity, the relation between economic development, social justice and built environment must be planned synchronous. Isolation and stigmatization must be abolished by regulations, activities of awareness and universal urban design. Without regard to social, economical and physical features every individual has the same right, which is using the freedom of movement. Supporting freedom of movement of every individual may be ensured by universal design and its principles. So urban spaces are going to be for every individual. For equal opportunity in urban services, urban design must be the focus on every individual including people with disabilities. In built environment practices, democratic suitable spaces should be created. In this respect, urban planners, architects, political decision-makers and other relevant actors should work together and should think very versatile.

Keywords : disability, equality, universal design, urban design

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