



ELSEVIER

www.elsevier.com/locate/cities

doi:10.1016/j.cities.2004.10.001

Cities, Vol. 22, No. 2, p. 89–108, 2005

© 2004 Elsevier Ltd.

All rights reserved.

Printed in Great Britain

0264-2751/\$ - see front matter

The rise of the shopping mall in Turkey: the use and appeal of a mall in Ankara

Feyzan Erkip *

Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, Bilkent University, 06800 Bilkent, Ankara, Turkey

Available online 5 March 2005

The shopping mall as the site of contemporary consumption has long been attracting the attention of various researchers analyzing socio-spatial dynamics in different cultures. It is the focus of this study of recent transformations in Turkish metropolises, due to its primary influence on urban life. As an initial attempt to understand the Turkish situation, a field survey was carried out in Bilkent Shopping Center, a newly built shopping mall in a high-income suburban area of the capital city, Ankara. Some long-lasting assumptions about Western consumption trends and shopping mall development were tested to provide clues for dynamics in a developing country. In addition to statistical analyses of data obtained from structured interviews, various observations were used to enrich the survey. Although shopping mall development seems to be a part of a global trend, there exist socio-cultural influences creating local patterns in the use of the mall. These patterns differ with user characteristics, such as gender, age and occupation, as well as the time of visit. This paper suggests that shopping mall development poses a number of policy issues for planning bodies and these issues need to be addressed with an awareness of the local context.

© 2004 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Retailing, consumption, globalization, Turkey, Bilkent

Introduction

Shopping mall development is now well established in many countries, particularly in the USA and England. Thanks to influences making the world a “global village”, the malls are also now a part of the urban scene in many countries, including Turkey. The shopping mall, as a part of the recent transformations of the Turkish urban lifestyle, is the focus of this research. Characteristics of the mall that attract Turkish people and the various patterns created by different user groups are investigated and analyzed through a case in Ankara, the capital of Turkey.

This development in Ankara is particularly important, due to historical processes that made the city a prominent aspect of the nation-building project, fol-

lowing the establishment of the Republic in 1923. Bilkent Shopping Center, a newly established shopping mall near to an upper-income suburban area, has been the focus for the empirical part of this study. This shopping mall is an appropriate example of spatial transformations under the influence of global forces, which may also give clues about changes in the Turkish urban lifestyle.

Beginning from the mid-1980s, Turkish society has witnessed a rapid transformation in many aspects, due to economic restructuring. The structural reform in the economy, that placed an emphasis on a liberal, market-oriented, and outward-looking development strategy, resulted in the rise of corporate power and the introduction of foreign capital through partnerships with Turkish firms, which made possible the large investments required to meet new consumer demand. Increases in the average income, and organized financial support of consumption through bank credits, have added to the consumption potential

*Fax: +90 312 266 41 36; e-mail: feyzan@bilkent.edu.tr

of Turkish citizens.¹ Although this potential is disturbed by the frequent economic crises in Turkey, consumption patterns are expected to persist. (See *Table 1* for a general outlook of the Turkish economic structure and development in recent years.)

However, what the aggregate figures fail to indicate is the fact that the rich people in large cities have been associated with a disproportionate share of this increase in income. Income distribution figures indicate a salient inequality in large cities. The income share of the highest and the lowest quintiles in the two biggest metropolises—Istanbul and Ankara—with a population of more than 10 and 4 millions, respectively (according to the results of the 2000 census, *SIS, 2003*) was very disproportionate, even before the recent economic crisis.²

As a result of these income inequalities and increasing exposure to other cultures, higher income groups have constituted the basis of a new consumer culture and lifestyle under the influence of global consumption patterns. Higher levels of personal mobility—more car ownership, more foreign holidays and newly-introduced cellular phones—have been matched by a greater awareness of other cultures, with more international coverage on domestic television (including satellite TV), and more exposure to other lifestyles. Given that they are exposed to global products relatively late, Turkish people are eager to consume international brands, in shopping malls, as they have seen in Hollywood movies and in foreign countries.

There are also historical reasons of this quick adaptation.³ The demand to consume more products in a more leisurely environment has created a new

¹ GNP per capita has doubled between 1980 and 1998 (*SIS, 2003*). Average consumption expenditures have also increased particularly in urban Turkey (*SIS, 1997*). The number of credit cards and the share of credit in consumption expenditures have saliently increased since 1992, when credit cards were first issued (*BKM, 2001*). The share of payment in installments in total consumption expenditures has increased between 1994 and 2002 (*SIS, 2003*). The rate of private car ownership has also increased in large cities within the same period (*SIS, 2003*).

² According to the last official data (1994), the percentages were 4.2 for the lowest and 64.1 for the highest quintile in Istanbul and 6.3 and 46.0 in Ankara (*SIS, 1998*). Average consumption expenditures—again disproportionate across quintiles—in these two cities are seven times the amount in the remaining urban areas of Turkey (*SIS, 1997*). The total number of private cars in Ankara and Istanbul is double the national average (*SIS, 2003*).

³ Turkish people find the well-maintained comfort of the mall space convenient for daily life, particularly in crowded urban areas. Malls provide them with the modernity that has been lacking throughout the period of the Turkish Republic, despite the ideological importance of western style modernity for the urban elite. It is the required “public space” by many segments of urban society, including the suppressed groups such as traditional women, young people and people with an apparent Muslim identity who are excluded from urban public life due to the strict ideology of modernity of the Republican elite; (for a thorough discussion of these issues see *Erkip, 2003*).

Table 1 Recent indicators of Turkish economic structure and development^a

Years	1990	1993	1994	1995	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total Population	56,473,035						67,803,927		
Urban Population	33,326,351						44,006,274		
%	59.0						64.9		
GNP per capita (US \$)	2682	3004	2184	2759	3255	2879	2965	2123	2584
Gini coefficient ^b			0.49						0.44
Human development index (HDI)	0.681		0.14	0.54	5.16	11.40	22.20	0.734	33.50
Cellular subscribers ^c				0.712		3.02	3.71	26.60	6.18
Internet users ^c				0.54				5.11	
Number of private cars		2,619,852		3,058,511	3,838,238		4,422,180		

Source: *SIS, 2003; UNDP, 2003*.

^aYears selected to provide the maximum possible information. The data are not complete due to incompatible periods of different measures.

^bIndicates a slight change towards a more equal distribution. However, the change occurs in the urban areas whereas the rural distribution stays stable.

^cPer 100 population (%).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10489954>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10489954>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)