



The Sense Of Well Being On The Campus

Integrating University Brand to City Identity

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Abstract

Universities, as centers of knowledge, innovation and culture, create unique brands and reinterpret identity of their home towns. Hosting various educational, cultural and social facilities, in multiple buildings, campuses, cities and countries, these institutions are significant actors in organization of space. The aim of this paper is to analyse new spatiality of foundation universities, which have been established after 1990's in Istanbul, in terms of their integration to city identity. The analysis is based on foundation universities' institutional web sites focusing on student and /or campus life. Research questions are: (1) What are spatial attractors offered to candidates by new foundation universities? (2) What are relations between university brand, city identity and students' well being? From institutional web sites, a list of keywords defining spatial attractors for students well being, such as accessibility (prestigious location, water, transportation), physical environment (campus buildings, nature, disabled users), activities and facilities (technology, recreation, business, culture & art, sports) etc, are elicited. These spatial attractors are then evaluated by Brand Concept Maps technique (Brandt & Mortanges, 2011) with an importance graph in order to reveal the spatial projections of new campuses on city space.

Introduction

In today's world, due to liberalization and marketing policies in higher education, concepts of universities, institutions of profit-making firms and research centers have gained importance. (Aktan, 2007). Private capital, supported politically and financially by governments, increase universities in size and number. Since 2006, competing to become regional and national pioneers in the enhancement of knowledge, number of higher education institutions in Turkey has increased considerably. Today, only in Istanbul, the total number of universities is 49, including 9 state and 40 foundation universities. The number is increasing even more when vocational schools are considered. The case is also valid in other world cities where higher education has become a strategy for social, economic and political growth.

"Today the knowledge society is a central concept for both comprehending contemporary societies and planning their future. In the Baltic Sea region [for example] it has become the tag-mark of development. The whole region seems to understand, and aim towards, a future that, in one way or another, depends on information, knowledge and learning. ... The three key-words appear in many different public spaces: researchers attempt to for understand the

contemporary society with the help of these concepts, politicians build the future on them, and advertisements sell different products and services with them. (Hakapää 2002: 10)”

Castells and Hall (1994) wrote that universities, as major producers of knowledge, have the same role in the ‘information economy’ as coal mines had in the industrial economy. In this cultural political economy of competitiveness (Jessop, 2014), prospective students, as potential customers, have become the target group in universities’ array of marketing activities. Private, selective-admission colleges and universities are seeking effective means of making their services as tangible as possible. Their various marketing strategies include publicity on broadcasts, newspapers, brochures and web etc, social media, web applications, sponsored campus visits (Yost, 1995), info desks, and even promotional gifts etc (Figure 1). With the backlash against tuition increases, the explosion of online education, and increasing mobility of students, competition is going to become more of a fact of life than ever before in higher education (McKee,2008).



Figure 1. Marketing University Brands, in Public Space for Photo Taken in July 2014

Higher education branding and campus space

The concept of branding has gained increasing popularity in higher education institutions in the last decade. Universities and colleges from all over the world have begun a search to find a unique position and definition of what they are in order to differentiate themselves and attract students, academic staff and financial resources (Chapleo, 2004; Waeraas and Solbakk, 2009). In the contest for preference, besides promise of high standard academic programs, well-being of students and quality of physical environment has gained considerable importance.

According to Edwards, B. (2000), university architecture has a higher mission compared with other architecture. *“The design of buildings a cutting edge to which few other areas of architecture aspire. It is the fashioning of a dialogue through bricks and mortar, or more likely steel and glass, with intellectual mission in the broadest sense. Universities have the almost unique challenge of relating the built fabric to academic discourse ... the university environment is part of the learning experience and buildings need to be silent teachers.”*

Proper campus design involves various strategies necessary to create meaningful places, utilize density as a method to encourage interaction, encourage mixed-use development on campus, incorporate landscape and architecture design to enhance a sense of community, embrace environmental conditions, integrate technology and attempt "taming the automobile" to increase foot traffic. Hence a campus design plan can be tailored to meet an institution's individual needs, goals, and mission (Figure 2). On the other hand the use and design of space reflects the mission and goals of an organization. The identity an institution is apparent on its signature buildings which are generally commissioned to be designed by famous architects or via internationally and national competitions since *"The campus is perhaps the single most effective marketing tool"* (Kenney et al., 2005).

Figure 2. Institutional Identity Reflected on Campus Space (<http://www.sehir.edu.tr>, <http://www.ozyegin.edu.tr>)



Method

In the area of branding, a growing stream of research covers quantitative brand mapping techniques to study brand identity and how the information about the brand is stored in the consumers' long-term memory (Henderson et al, 1999; John et al, 2006). However, brand mapping and its applications are still in their infancy. Applying Brand Concept Maps (BCM) to city branding or place branding, where the competitive context creates a real need to define brand identities, has just initiated (Brandt et al, 2011) (Figure 3).

“Place marketing, (...), embraces [...] promoting the place’s values and image so that potential users are fully aware of the place’s distinctive advantages. (Kotler et. al., 1993)”

Place brand is a network of associations in consumers' minds based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design. (Zenker & Braun, 2010) This is why a measurement scale should try to understand 'who says what' about a given place. Therefore contemporary scales asks two questions: (i) what is measured? and (ii) how is it measured?

In this paper, what is measured as students' well being is the outcome of improved spatiality in campus as strategy of university branding. How it is measured is achieved via an in-depth investigation on institutional web sites focusing on student and/or campus life. From online texts, a list of keywords defining spatial attractors, such as accessibility (prestigious location, water, transportation), physical environment (campus buildings, nature, disabled users), activities and facilities (technology, recreation, business, culture & art, sports) etc, are elicited. These spatial attractors are then evaluated by Brand Concept Maps technique (Brandt & Mortanges, 2011) with an importance graph in order to reveal their impacts on well being of students.

A Brand Concept Map (BCM), is a graphical representation of a brand and its associations. A BCM not only identifies essential brand associations, but also conveys how these associations are connected to the brand and to each other (John et al., 2006). Although BCMs have been discussed in the marketing literature since the 1990's (Higie, Coultre & Zaltman, 1994, MacKay & Easley, 1996, Carbonara & Scozzi, 2006), mapping methods and their applications are still in their infancy. This paper broadens the scope of using BCM techniques to an architectural discourse, using it to analyse the association between brand identity and campus space of universities.

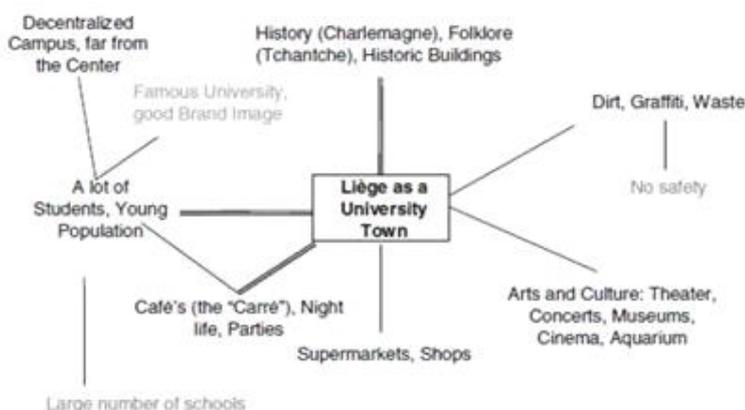


Figure 3. Consensus brand map for Liege as a university town (Brandt & Mortanges, 2011)

Brand Concept Maps: A New Technique to Measure Brand Associations

Brand network maps are important because they help answer the following questions with regard to brand assessment and protection (John, 2006):

- Which brand associations are more or less important?

- Which brand associations are directly linked to the brand and which are indirectly linked to the brand?
- How can stronger associations and inter-connections between associations be built?
- If a brand association changes in the network, how does it affect other associations?

Steps to Create Brand Concept Maps

There are three stages in the creation of brand concept maps:

- **Elicitation:** The elicitation stage involves eliciting brand associations from consumers and answers the question: “What is the list of associations consumers have with the brand?” Responses are open-ended and retained if stated by at least fifty percent of respondents.
- **Mapping:** In the mapping stage, consumers use the set of brand associations to make a network map of how they see the brand. Respondents view a concept board which contains a separate card for each association culled from the elicitation stage and are asked to select cards that, for them, represent the brand. Respondents are also able to add concepts that do not appear on the concept board by writing each additional association on a separate card. Respondents then connect the concepts, making a map of the set of concepts selected, using one, two, or three lines to indicate the perceived strength of that connection (where three lines indicate a very strong connection and one line a weaker one). Associations with direct connections to the brand (those that are physically and mentally seen as closest to the brand) are called first-order associations. Associations with indirect connections to the brand, less central to the brand mental map but nevertheless important, are called second-, third-, or fourth-order associations. Finally, respondents rate the brand on a 1-10 scale from very unfavorable to very favorable.
- **Aggregation:** The aggregation stage involves aggregating individual brand maps to produce a consensus map of how consumers see the brand. Two measures, in particular, are used to produce the consensus map: frequency of mention of each association and number of interconnections found between brand associations (John, Loken, Kim, and Monga, 2006)

Case: Applying BCM to Foundation Universities in Istanbul

The first step of this study is inspecting associations for BCM. As mentioned, surveying with prospective students, brand makers or authorities can be done in order to elicit ‘hidden’, unconscious information in consumers’ minds. However surveying method would require interviewers who are trained in cognitive psychology and participants who are willing and able to participate in several interviews and in the creation of the BCM.

Instead, elicitation of associations is done by analysing online home pages of each foundation university, total 40, in Istanbul. Spatial terminology describing campus space is inspected and most common keywords are elicited as associations. These may not be coming from consumer’s mind but information from institutional web pages is still relevant. Since they are associations imposed directly by institutions so that they reveal how foundation universities market their campus space and city of Istanbul.

All associations are arranged as a matrix table. The table includes all institutions, whose names are coded for confidentiality. Each cell of the matrix is given a value of 0 or 1, depending on whether that spatial attractor was either referred or not by the brand on the home web page (Table 1). Then each spatial attractor, as an ‘association’, is calculated to find a total value, indeed ‘the frequency of mention’. Mean values are also calculated so that the strength of interconnections between university brand and physical space can be illustrated by a BCM.

Spatial Attractors with Institutional Identity

Depending on terminology of university branding on web, spatial attractors with institutional identity are categorized as; Campus Area, Multi Campuses, Studios, Ateliers, Labs & Technical Infrastructure, Student Center, Social Clubs, Dormitories, Security, Health Center and Disabled Design (Table 3).

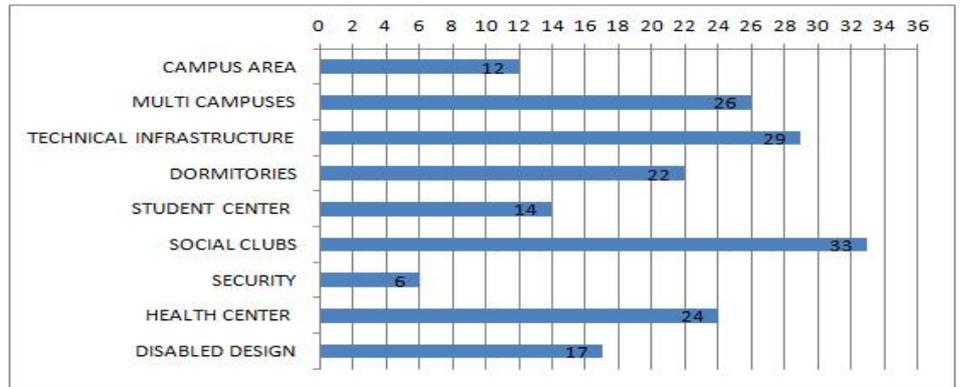
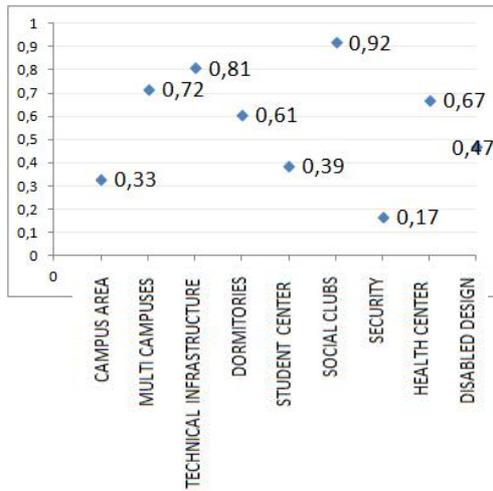


Table 3. Spatial Attractors with Institutional Identity for Marketing University Brand

Table 4. 'The Frequency of Mention' or Mean Values of Spatial Attractors with Institutional Identity

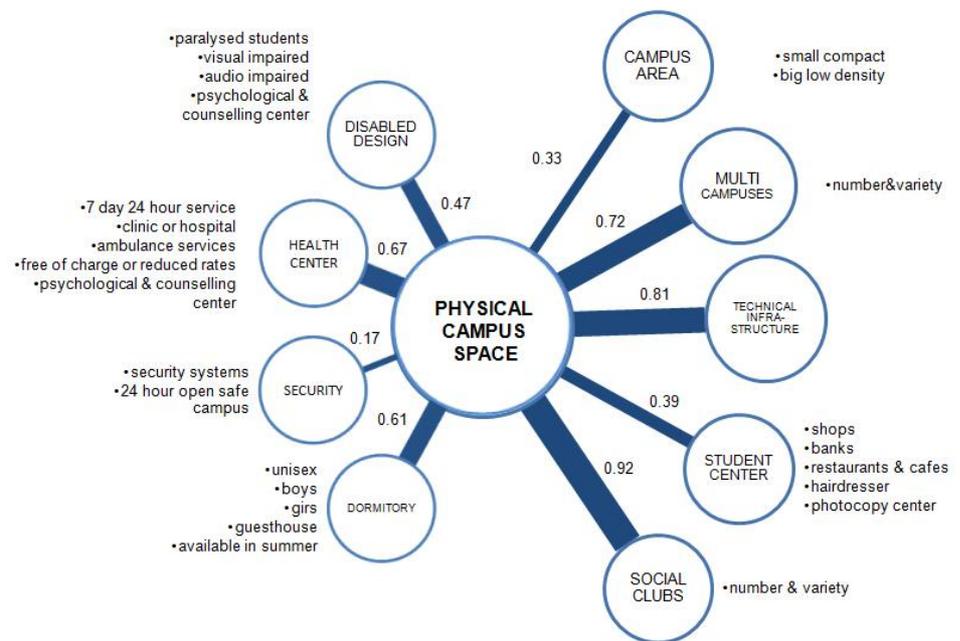


Table 5. BCM of Spatial Attractors with Institutional Identity for Marketing University Brand

The importance of brand associations with institutional identity are shown above (Table 3), where the most dominant spatial attractors are student clubs(33) followed by technical studios, ateliers, labs&high tech infrastructure(29) and multi campuses(26). Health center(24), dormitories(22) and disabled design(17) are available in more than half of brands whereas student center(14), campus area(12) and security(6) are rare. The BCM illustrates direct and indirect associations and strength of their links to the brand (Table 4 and 5).

The popularity of social clubs(33) is probably arising from the need of interaction and a sense of community between students, hence on web total number and variety of clubs are highlighted. These clubs may own small gathering places in campus however their social activities extend the physical borders of campus. The city becomes the space of visit or performance for ambitious university students. Prospective students are occasionally invited for guided campus tours and their outcomes are frequently released in publicity.

The majority of multi-campus(26) can be explained by lack of vast land, which is suitable for building large campuses, in city centers. Most institutions prefer to settle in city center due to several associations such as prestigious location, transportation, catering, health, security and museum & exhibition etc. Hence, universities separate their facilities, such as prep schools, faculties and



Figure 4. Buildings of a Foundation University in Different Districts of Istanbul, Photos Taken in July 2014

vocational schools, in parts and fit them into separate buildings available in the city center. Spatial irrelevancies mostly have to be ignored; such as locating by a highway, in district of business or high crime rate (Figure 4). However few universities choose to build campuses in suburban area reasoning to associations like large campus area, nature&landscape, sustainability, sports and dormitories etc. Such interconnections between brand associations are all waiting to be investigated in future research.

Studios, ateliers, labs and high tech infrastructure(29) support formal learning thus are indispensable for transforming educational spaces of information society.

Health centers(24) are obligatory as local safety measures. However their emphasis depends on the increasing popularity of medical science in Turkey. The academic and economic competition between universities and their recently opened individual university hospitals may have doubled its attraction for branding on web. The link between medical science, health sector and university branding is another subject of further investigation.

Dormitories(22) set the campus alive for 7 days 24 hours therefore require and interconnect to branding associations such as catering, transportation, student center, health center and safety.

Disabled design(17) is a legal obligation for disabled students as well as handicapped academic and executive staff. By law, institutions are obliged to employ a specific number of handicapped staff. Therefore in a university campus, spaces should be accessible and services of psychology and counselling should be provided. The attraction of disabled design for branding may further be explained by growing sensitivity towards environmental psychology and international design trends in a typical information society.

Student centers(14), campus area(12) are mostly referred in context of suburban campuses. City campuses physically are incapable of hosting various economic and social activities, such as shops, banks, photocopy, restaurant and cafeterias, in their limited boundaries. Students provide these services from neighbouring area, which transforms the urban pattern to a university district in time.

Security(6) is the least cited attractor for university branding, however it may be the most essential criteria for prospective students and their families. Special security guards are employed by institutions to protect campuses 7 days 24 hours. The priceless high tech infrastructure inside buildings, the students and staff studying or residing in campus makes it an indispensable association of branding. Security certainly became a central issue for campuses in Istanbul when social disorders appeared in city, just as Gezi Park protests in June, 2013 (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Security of Campus Became a Central Issue,in Gezi Parkı Protests, in June 2013 (http://birgunabone.net/actuels_index.php?news_code=1370076965&year=2013&month=06&day=01)

Spatial Attractors with City Identity

For university branding, spatial attractors refer from and refer to city identity are categorized as; Prestigious Location, Transportation, Library&Knowledge Center, Conference Center, Exhibition&Museum, Catering, Sports Facilities, Nature&Landscape and Sustainability (Table 6).

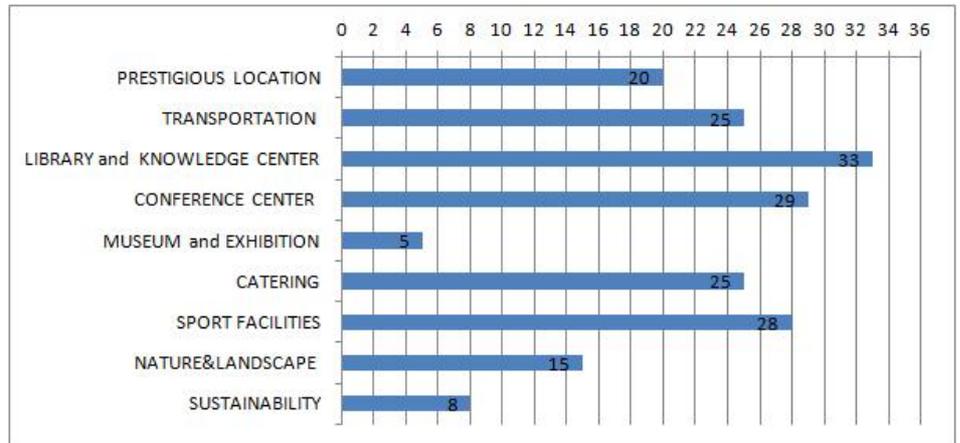
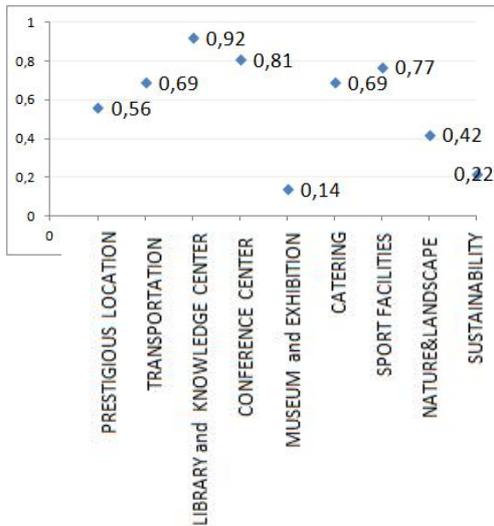


Table 6. Spatial Attractors with City Identity for Marketing University Brand

Table 7. 'The Frequency of Mention' or Mean Values of Spatial Attractors with City Identity

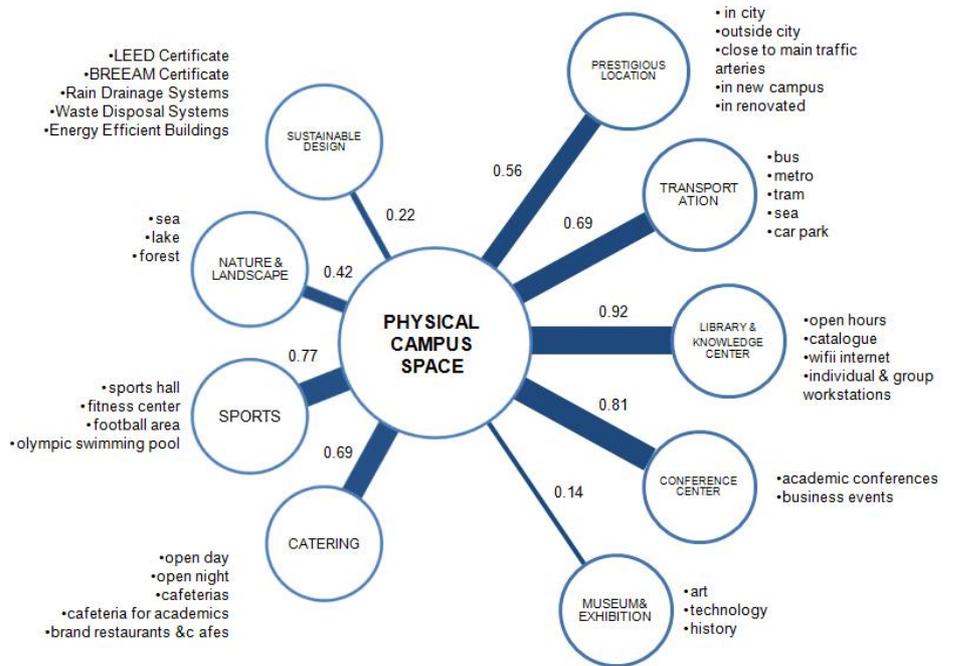


Table 8. BCM of Spatial Attractors with City Identity for Marketing University Brand

The importance of brand associations with city identity are shown above (Table 6). The most cited spatial attractors are library&knowledge center(33) followed by conference center(29) and sport facilities(28). Transportation(25), catering(25) and prestigious location(20) are available in more than half of brands. Nature&Landscape(15) and sustainability(8) are seldom. Finally museum&exhibition (5) are the least mentioned spatial attractors on web pages. Again a BCM illustrates direct and indirect associations and strength of their links to the brand (Table 7 and 8).

The dominance of library&knowledge center(33) and conference center(29) can be related to need of knowledge transfer in information society. Knowledge exists in different mediums; printed books, CDs, networks and in people: academics or business professionals and waits to be shared. Hosting scientific events, exhibitions, business and promotional meetings and art exhibitions etc. universities and so cities gain prestige, recognition and even income. The number and capacity of audience halls, admission of city dwellers and the press

make these occasions a marketing strategy for branding. These events also extend the duration of use in campus, provide security and develop transportation facilities.

The role of sport facilities(28) for marketing university brands is an issue of research. Sports have always been a weak point of Turkish community since only some specific branches; especially football for men and recently some pilates for women; have generated interest in society. Facilities are restricted with private enterprises since free open area reserved for sports and recreation are so limited. Therefore, providing sport facilities to students, city dwellers and hosting national and international contests have become a fact of prestige for university brands.

Transportation(25) is of critical importance for marketing any asset in Istanbul, hence for universities. Alternatives of public transportation, via land or sea, abundance of car parks are of critical importance for students as well as city dwellers. Urban and suburban campuses both have their pros and cons. Campuses in city center, require public transportation and private cars are troubling due to parking problems. However campuses in suburban area, require personal cars since public transportation is limited with a schedule and a figure of passengers. On the other hand, public transportation increases catering services at stations. It is obvious that transportation has interconnections with several other associations of brand.

Catering(25) services support recreation and extend hours of use in campus. Most foundation universities introduce their restaurants cafeterias and their organization principles: student, academic, mixed use. Some also emphasize the presence of famous brands in campus thereby marketing campus space as a regular extension of city space.

Prestigious location(20) can be treated in different meanings. The web search indicates that in city of Istanbul a strategic location means either, a renovated historical or a memorable contemporary building, a node by seaside or highway close to Bosphorus, a district close to business or natural environment. On the other hand undeveloped parts of city have developed significant transformations with new university campuses (Figure 6).

Nature&Landscape(15) and sustainability(8) are recent topics on the agenda when global warming is a threat for all cities worldwide. In Istanbul the advantages and disadvantages of building campuses in green rural areas have been argued since the only way to preserve forests from urbanization seems to possess their rights to universities (Bostanci and Sancar, 2012). Besides providing green areas for reservation and recreation, new campuses introduce their environmental sustainability (rain drainage systems, waste disposal systems, energy efficient buildings) and integrity (LEED, BREEAM Certificate etc.) on web to gain credits. With their sustainable buildings, some foundation universities have already become leaders in environmental friendly design trends in the overall city.

Museum and exhibition(5) are prestige spaces for private foundations and their universities. Art compels attention to the campus and becomes the reason for campus visits for city dwellers. Few universities which are settled in suburban area thus are difficult to access, have their individual exhibition spaces, Even though the total number is low, that limited space and the sponsorship of institutions have been enough to turn Istanbul to a global city in terms of artistic experience (Figure 7).

To sum, spatial planning and design criteria thus branding of university campuses should be based on its organic relation with city, In most cases either students, academic and executive staff, all become consumers of the city. On this account their spatial needs and expectations, briefly sense of well being, should be regarded on this duality.



Figure 6. Spatial Transformations in Urban Pattern, Dolapdere Before and After University, <http://www.emlakguncel.com/haber/dolapdereye-koc-muzesi/>

Figure 7. Art in University Museum & Exhibition Space, Monet in Istanbul, <http://www.urbanizma.com/kritik/sakip-sabanci-muzesi-monetnin-bahcesi-sergisi/>



Conclusions

In this research, the concept of well being is viewed from the perspective of foundation universities which promise superior opportunities of education and campus life to their students. The increasing competition among universities in national and global arena has turned higher education to a marketable product hence, branding strategies can be applied. Thus, in this paper BCM applications are employed to display the relation between the sense of well being and spatial characteristics of campus space. The research is focused on foundation universities in Istanbul, which have been established since early 1990's and have caused transformations in city space. The comprehensive spatial components and associations of campuses are discussed within their potential interconnections and direct/indirect links to university and city branding. Thereby BCM applications, intrinsic to marketing field, are employed to planning and architecture domain.

So far, place branding and university branding practices have welcomed contributions from several fields such as international relations, political science, marketing, and communication. Since the notion of space is opened to a multidisciplinary dialog, designers should be conscious of alternative definitions, methodologies and tools to measure and assess space. In the process of branding universities, cities and indeed any space with identity or vice versa building new brands for them, the critical look and professional skills of designers should be embraced.

Such a multidisciplinary planning vision is essential for Istanbul, which in recent years has been undergoing major spatial transformations triggered by geographic, political and economical factors. Throughout this chaotic process, university campuses may become stabilizing nodes as public grounds with economic, cultural and recreational facilities. Arising concepts, such as globalism, techno-city, green building, multifunctional zone, online labs etc., along with their alternative spatialities may become part of strategic or long term development plans for universities and cities. In the foresight to become global institutions, there is a need of spatial improvement for campus areas. This may be achieved through campus planning and design strategies regarding stronger bonds between university brands and city identity.

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