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# The Role of Experiencing Image's City: Visual Sociological Research on the Youth in Istanbul

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## Abstract

This study aims to reveal the role of image in experiencing the city by revealing the current images of Istanbul from youths living in Kağıthane. The effect on image and experience of new transportation networks and the changing skyline in Istanbul are wondered about, together with studies being done on Istanbul's image. Additionally, working on photographs alongside study drawings is desired because taking photos occurs much more than ever before in everyday life.

The visual sociology method has been used together with the qualitative research method in this study. Interviews have been performed with 18 participants between the ages of 15-35; maps were drawn, photos clipped, and in-depth interviews performed. Maps and photos have been analyzed using visual sociology.

Findings from the image of Istanbul have been gathered under the headings of identity, structure, and meaning, which are identified as the three components in Kevin Lynch's definition of image. Regarding Istanbul's identity, the fact that it is mainly tourist sites, especially the Bosphorus and Suruchi regions, is not production; the fact that consumption locations are in the fore plan has been noted. The complex structure that Istanbul has, in spite of being expressed as two extremes, has been determined to not transform into an identity because no one identifies oneself as being one side. The fact that youths fit in to the rapidly changing structure of Istanbul has been observed in how they adjust to Istanbul's changing skyline. In the sense of Istanbul, they talk about the qualities that belong to the form of the greater Istanbul metropolis and some characteristics that the people of Istanbul have.

Through their images of Istanbul, the participants have been shown as very different from each other in their experiences. Tactics have also been encountered where the participants developed by experiencing the city, mentioning experiences specific to Istanbul like "eating a fish sandwich" and "enjoying the ferry, tea, and simit." What youths experience while attempting the city have emerged as an experience that does not overlap with the image. Experiences that have been seen together with image are encountered as locations through shopping malls and tombs. Additionally, taking photographs has been seen to have a great impact on discovering and experiencing the city.

**Keywords:** City images, experiences, photography, visual sociology

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