

EVALUATION OF ELEMENTS OF URBAN EQUIPMENT IN RELATION TO THE IDENTITY OF THE CITY; THE CASE OF RİZE

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Abstract

The study aimed to assess the impact and contribution of urban enhancement elements (paving, seating, lighting, signage and information, boundaries, etc.) in Kuyumcular Street, Rize Square Park, Rize Square and Main Street in Rize town centre. For this purpose, urban enhancement elements in the study area were identified and photographed. In order to determine the contribution and impact of these reinforcing elements on the urban identity, similar studies on the subject were examined, evaluations and suggestions were made. The study found that the reinforcing elements in the city centre create a rural atmosphere rather than a modern urban atmosphere, contrary to the effect expected from the city and reflecting the identity of the city. It was observed that the urban reinforcements in the city do not comply with the standards, are not compatible with the environment and each other in terms of material and colour, do not provide integrity and do not have an original design. It was emphasised that the design principles that can support the purpose of the activities and provide functionality to the areas should be taken into consideration.

Keywords: *Urban Equipment Elements, Urban Identity, Design Principles, Rize*

KENTSEL DONATI ELEMANLARININ KENT KİMLİĞİ BAĞLAMINDA DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ: RİZE ÖRNEĞİ

Özet

Çalışma, Rize kent merkezindeki Kuyumcular Caddesi, Rize Meydan Parkı, Rize Meydanı ve Ana Cadde'deki kentsel donatı elemanlarının (kaldırım, oturma, aydınlatma, tabela ve bilgilendirme, sınırlar, vb) etkisini ve katkısını değerlendirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, çalışma alanındaki kentsel donatı elemanları tespit edilmiş ve fotoğraflanmıştır. Bu donatı elemanlarının kent kimliğine katkısı ve etkisini belirlemek amacıyla konuyla ilgili benzer çalışmalar incelenmiş, değerlendirmeler ve öneriler yapılmıştır. Çalışmada kent merkezindeki donatı elemanlarının kentten beklenen ve kentin kimliğini yansıtan etkinin aksine modern bir kent atmosferinden ziyade kırsal bir atmosfer yarattığı tespit edilmiştir. Kentteki kentsel donatıların standartlara uymadığı, malzeme ve renk açısından çevreyle ve birbirleriyle uyumlu olmadığı, bütünlük sağlamadığı ve özgün bir tasarıma sahip olmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmada faaliyetlerin amacını destekleyebilecek ve alanlara işlevsellik kazandırabilecek tasarım ilkelerinin dikkate alınması gerekliliği vurgulanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Kentsel Donatı Elemanları, Kentsel Kimlik, Tasarım İlkeleri, Rize*

1. INTRODUCTION

Just as all the features of the whole that make up a person can reveal the identity of that person, all the features carried by the spaces in cities also reveal the identity of that city. The squares in the centre of the city, the streets that integrate with the extensions of the squares and the streets between the buildings, and the cities they form as a whole, are places with identities. The identity of a city, reflecting the traces of the city from the past, revealing its history, culture, geographical and topographical features, the creatures that live in it and the civilisations that have been passed down from generation to generation, showing the characteristics of each segment, consisting of reflections of the city and urban spaces that reveal the most important features of the city (Seydioğulları, 2018). The priorities of these urban spaces are city squares and open green park areas. (Gürel, 2018). Streets and avenues integrate squares and urban spaces; these spaces, which increase the interaction of users within the city and increase the social activities and cultural interactions of people day by day, and which undergo many changes and evolutions with natural and cultural events over time, reveal their identities with different characteristics depending on the culture and lifestyle of the people. (Kır, 2009).

Urban enhancement elements, which are part of these spaces and make the city more liveable and perceptible, are considered important urban identity elements, both in terms of their users, the city, and in terms of defining the space in which they are located. In terms of people, urban strengthening elements are an important urban identity tool that establishes a linguistic integrity between the user and the space by forming a whole with the city (Bayraktar ve ark., 2008).

1.1. Urban Identity and The Components of Urban Identity

According to Lynch (1981), "identity is the clearly distinguishable uniqueness of an existing object in relation to other objects. In other words, identity is not equal to other objects, on the contrary, it is unique, original and special. The elements of urban identity are the main determinants of urban perception and image". Therefore, identity is integrated with the concept of uniqueness and distinctiveness, thus revealing the unique identities of places (Göncü, 2007).

The impact of individuals on urban identity, and the fact that they are the designers of unique products, is what makes them unique and original. Each unique design brings a unique structure with it these structures reveal a unique space and these spaces reveal a unique urban identity. It would therefore be more accurate to consider identity as a whole, rather than limiting it to individuals, structures or spaces. The commitments, cultural and economic characteristics, plants, animals and people who have lived in cities from the past to the present have a significant impact on urban identity. In short, urban identity is everything that distinguishes a city from other cities and makes it unique (Göncü, 2007).

The components of urban identity are analysed under two main headings: physical components and social components. Physical components are analysed under the headings of natural and artificial environment identity components (settlement and equipment scale) and social components are analysed under the headings of 'socio-cultural structure, socio-economic structure and functional characteristics of the city' under social environment identity components. Just as all cities and urban spaces have an identity, there are many factors that influence the formation of identity and elements of identity. These factors can be classified as historical, physical, social, cultural and functional factors.

Physical identity and historical identity are two important integrated concepts. Thanks to this integrated link between them, they develop in accordance with the identity elements that affect them. This evolution has a direct impact on identity, especially in relation to natural conditions. The geographical location, topography, climate, water, flora, etc. of the city are the most important facts that distinguish it from other cities. At the same time, these phenomena create the identity of the city by giving it a unique characteristic (Ocakçı, 1993; Deniz, 2004). In proportion to this, the silhouette effect created by the architectural textures on the city reflects the identity perception of this city to the city dwellers and the world in general. This relationship is a directly proportional relationship between physical identity and architectural identity (Karaaslan, 2010).

In terms of social factors, there is a very important mutual relationship between the social structure of the city and the identity of the city (Karaaslan, 2010). While the society, social life and social structure of a city reveal the identity of that city, at the same time, when we talk about the identity of that city, social factors come directly to mind. This mutual interaction underlines the importance of the relationship between them. For this reason, social factors are also very effective in the formation of identity.

The identity of a city cannot be separated from its cultural structure. Because the common element that enables the formation of cultural accumulation and the emergence of city identity is man. Man is one of the most important parts and values of culture. Therefore, it affects the city and the architectural structure of the city (Karaaslan, 2010). Thus, the identity of the city concerned is also formed in accordance with these factors. Therefore, cultural factors are very effective on identity. On the other hand, the identity of a city, which is formed by itself in accordance with its functional qualities, is formed by functional factors. These factors do not appear at once, but are the result of long processes. Generally speaking, the aspect of the city that reveals and develops the functional identity of the city is formed in terms of the economy, and over time the city gains a place in people's minds with this aspect (Karaaslan, 2010). In this type of cities, whose priority is the sustainability of urban life, there are usually a lot of business areas and density. Therefore, such cities have developed thanks to their business areas. Thus, it can be seen that the identities and identity characteristics of such cities emerge depending on the function (Çöl, 1998).

1.2. Elements of Urban Equipment

People need places where they can continue their social and cultural life. All these places are cities. Therefore, the city is a living phenomenon that bears the traces of history and is constantly developing, changing and shaping the future (Uludağ, 1990; Aksu, 1998; Aksu, 2012). Within the urban phenomenon, urban elements are the most important elements that give vitality and meaning to the city. According to Uludağ (1990); urban elements in cities are a great necessity in terms of social life, culture, history and life of a society. Urban furnishing elements or urban furniture are the elements that are part of urban elements. These elements provide the life of the individual in the city and society and at the same time the interaction of the individual with other individuals. In this context, urban furniture has emerged in accordance with the needs of urban life (Aksu, 1998). Elements designed to protect, rest, entertain, inform, etc. people in the city are defined as 'urban equipment elements' or 'urban furniture' (Anonymous, 1992; Bayazıt 2018).

Looking at urban enhancement elements in general, it can be seen that these elements include all living and non-living elements. Living urban reinforcement elements consist of natural cover and plant elements. These living plant elements are found and used in the city; in addition to their functional characteristics such as fencing, wall/barrier, boundary, emphasis, wind and noise protection, privacy, they are used to give meaning to the space, to make it look aesthetic and to reduce the increasing carbon emissions in urban centres. On the other hand, non-living urban furniture includes all non-living urban or street furniture used in the city as a whole. These elements used in cities are classified according to their functions, types, whether they are connected to infrastructure or not, and types of use, and are used in urban spaces. Seating units, lighting elements, signs, information and communication boards, litter bins, bus stops, kiosks, floor coverings, water elements, sculptures, fences and barriers, etc. are examples of urban furniture elements used in cities and urban spaces (Göncü, 2007) (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Urban Equipment Elements (National Association of City Transportation Officials, 2012; Najafidashtape, 2018)

Looking at the studies, different classifications have been made for urban strengthening elements. For example, they are classified according to their purpose and function in the urban space, according to their type, according to whether they are connected to infrastructure or not, or according to their type of use (Table 1).

Table 1. Classification of urban reinforcement elements (Çubuk, 1991; Yıldızcı, 2001; Akyol, 2006; Göncü, 2007; Güner, 2015; Najafidashtape, 2018).

According to their purpose and function	By type
Shelter: Canopies, tarpaulins, awnings, bus shelters,	- Floors/flooring (concrete, stone, wood, asphalt, brick, etc.)
For recreation and play: Recreational areas and equipment in children's playgrounds	- Seating elements (group seating, benches, camellias, etc.)
For sitting, resting: Benches, camellias, seating furniture,	- Lighting elements (space, street and plant lighting, etc.)
For lighting purposes: Street and outdoor lighting units	- Signs and information signs (location and direction signs, information communication signs, etc.)
For information purposes: Notice and advertising boards, information and communication signs, positioning and directional elements	- Demarcation elements (demarcation elements, traffic and pedestrian barriers, etc.)
Ornamental purposes: Flower boxes, artistic sculptures, monuments and fountains,	- Water elements (fountains, wells, ornamental basins, etc.)
For sales and shopping purposes: ticket offices, kiosks, ticket machines, vending machines,	- Roofing elements (pergolas, stalls, canopies, etc.)
Conservation: Traffic lights, traffic signs, lighting to regulate the use of roads in the city,	- Sales units (exhibition pavilions, kiosks, etc.)
For orientation purposes: Paving, road signs, underpasses and overpasses,	- Artistic elements (sculptures, monuments, etc.)
For containment purposes: Wire fences, iron railings, plants, walls, tree guards, pedestrian and traffic barriers,	- Playground elements
For cleaning purposes: Rubbish bins	- Other elements (litter bins, letter boxes, flower beds, bicycle stands, clocks, vegetation, flagpoles, etc.)
For communication purposes: Telephone booths, etc.	
By infrastructure dependency	
Infrastructure dependent	Non infrastructure dependent
- Lighting units	- Floor Coverings
- Information and signage	- Bins
- Telephone booths	- Planters
- Public transport stops	- Cover articles
- Hours of the square	Under tree guards
- Water element	- Cycle parks
- Sales units	- Playground elements
- Maintenance covers for substructures	- Plastic objects
By usage type	
Temporary use: Curbs and paving stones, etc.	
Permanent use: cover elements, seating and resting elements, shopping centers	
Functional use: communication, physiological, visual and social information functions	
Ancillary uses: organizational services, maintenance services, security services	

It is possible to create spaces that reflect the identity of the city, are of high quality and meet human needs and satisfaction with urban enhancement elements. Urban enhancement elements, which have a very large user mass and have social, cultural and economic values, should be designed to meet user needs within the framework of all these values, should be selected according to the space, should be positioned in a sufficient

amount of space and should be in harmony with each other and their surroundings. There is a need for some approaches that reflect the identity of urban enhancement elements and ensure that they are in perfect harmony with the urban spaces in which they are located (Bayraktar et al., 2008). Therefore, these elements should primarily reflect the identity of the city and the space, and at the same time they should support both the space and the city in which it is located by giving meaning to the space through its functionality (Göncü, 2007).

When creating the design of urban reinforcing elements, the same language should be used among the reinforcing elements to avoid confusion. Reinforcement elements should be designed that are far from chaos, reflect the identity and are compatible with the space and each other. In the design and implementation stages of urban reinforcing elements, the type, shape, colour, texture, form, size, visibility, sustainability, ease of maintenance and use, durability and ergonomics, etc. of the material should be taken into consideration (Göncü, 2007). At the same time, urban strengthening elements should be produced in such a way that they respond to the uses and expectations appropriate to the place where they will be used in accordance with their functional, aesthetic and economic qualities (Yıldırım, 2004).

1.3. Relationship Between Urban Design Elements and Urban Identity

The most important objects that add beauty and aesthetics to cities and reflect their identity are urban enhancement elements. These elements are also the elements that reflect the identity elements of the city. These elements are influenced by natural factors within the framework of social and cultural characteristics (Özer et al., 2010). Urban enhancement elements are among the structural elements that reveal the identity of the city by reflecting the identity elements, texture and the city. Urban enhancement elements facilitate the life of users living in the city by meeting their needs. At the same time, they add a perceptual and functional dimension to the space by enhancing the interaction between individuals and society (Özgeriş, 2018). In addition to these, it has many different functional characteristics; it is an element that protects, defines, highlights, beautifies, limits, entertains, guides and informs the space (Şişman & Yetim, 2004). In this respect, the fact that it is highly functional positively influences and directs users. At the same time, urban enhancement elements give meaning to the space in the functional dimension by meeting the expectations of urban users in accordance with their social, cultural, aesthetic and perceptual value judgements. Urban enhancement elements are formed and developed thanks to the meanings attributed to them. The products that emerge from this development are given meaning primarily in accordance with the purpose of their function. It is imperative that the reinforcing elements, which are related to the urban identity, have distinctive characteristics within the city, are technically suitable for their intended use and support sustainability. The aim of this sustainability is to be part of a general system that covers the whole city and to be in a unity of language that can be easily understood and used by everyone. Therefore, in addition to their relationship with the urban identity, the importance of the reinforcing elements in terms of understanding and making sense of the city, in line with their functional responsibilities, and contributing to the enrichment of the city, in order to emphasise their importance, is obvious (Bayrakçı, 1991; Taylor, 1999; Bayraktar ve ark., 2008; Öztürk ve ark., 2020). It is inevitable that urban equipment elements should be part of a systematic approach in order to be compatible with urban spaces and their surroundings, to emphasise the place where they are located and to provide convenience in the lives of users (Şatır, 2001; Bayraktar et al., 2008). Thus, this approach also has a positive effect on urban identity. Urban reinforcing elements, which have a great function in reducing the city to the human scale of its users and in shaping its physical and cultural qualities, interact with the urban landscape to create meaningful relationships (Bayrakçı, 1991). While these elements in the city contribute to the urban landscape, they can also cause problems. If these elements are adapted to the space, if wrong choices and wrong uses are made, it creates a great chaos in the city and paves the way for the formation of visual pollution. For this reason, in order to achieve a modern and high quality urban appearance, the selection and use of the elements should be done correctly (Şişman and Yetim, 2004).

In the urban landscape, the design of urban reinforcing elements with landscape design is very important in terms of creating a meaningful relationship between the reinforcement and the landscape. However, it is not enough just to design; at the same time, the production of the designed reinforcing elements and how they should be positioned in the space should be planned in detail (Yücel, 2006; Öztürk et al., 2020). It should not be ignored which type and material should be used to reflect the identity of this space by paying attention to the reinforcement preferences of the reinforcement elements, especially in the design and application stages. Of course, when evaluating these stages, it is necessary to consider the reinforcements as a whole in order to

create a better design process and ensure the sustainability of the urban fabric, rather than considering the reinforcements individually.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study aims to investigate the impact of urban enhancement elements (seating elements, cover elements, lighting elements, litter bins, flower/plant boxes, signs and information boards, water elements, public transport stops, artistic objects) on urban identity in squares, streets, parks and avenues in Rize city centre. The main material of the study consists of urban equipment/furniture used in outdoor urban spaces in Kuyumcular Street, Rize Meydan Park, Rize Square and Main Street (Figure 2) in Rize city centre. As part of the study, photographs were taken of the existing urban equipment elements in the study areas. In order to determine the contribution of these reinforcing elements to the urban identity, similar studies on the subject were reviewed and evaluations were made for the reinforcing elements in the study area.

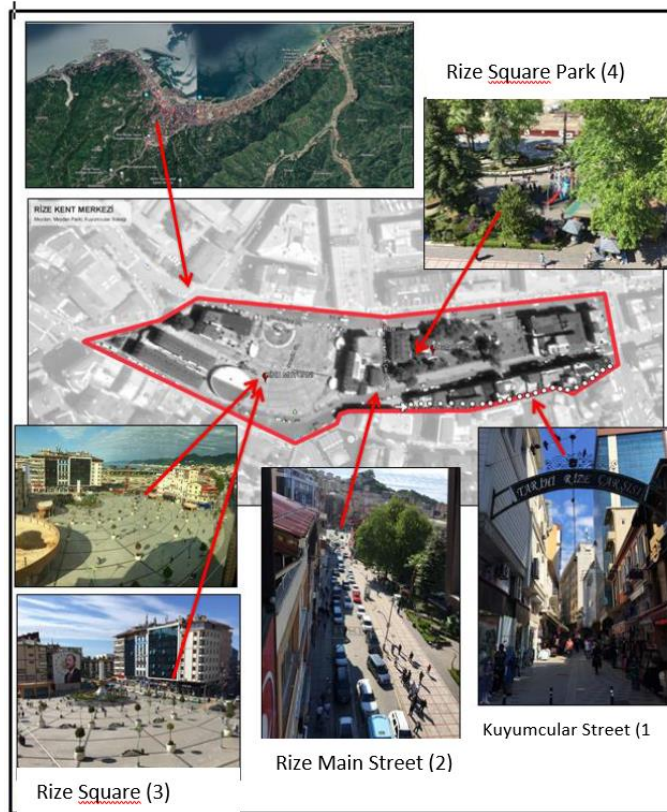


Figure 2. Study area

2.1. Natural and Cultural Values of the Study Area

One of the most important factors influencing the establishment of a city is its location. The location of a city is the most important factor that reveals its relationship with the place where it was founded and its environment. In this context, when we look at cities, topography, soil characteristics, climate and all other environmental conditions (transport, proximity to water, safety, health, recreational activities, etc.) are taken into consideration and developed in this direction. Rize is a province that has other means of transport (land, sea), can make economic gains from both sea and land, and has land that is very suitable for agriculture in terms of climate. Rize Province is located in the easternmost part of the Black Sea region, bordering the Eastern Black Sea region and bordering the Black Sea to the north, Artvin to the east, Trabzon to the west and Erzurum to the south. The province of Rize is a province consisting of high mountains, springs, stone bridges, enthusiastic flowing streams, seranders, waterfalls, tea plantations, stone and wooden houses reflecting Rize architecture and reflecting the identity of the city. The most important factor reflecting this identity is the "tea" factor. Tea has been cultivated in Rize for many years and has helped to shape the town's identity through its proliferation. In addition, with its natural and cultural features, it is an important city that reflects cultural identity. The Black Sea climate prevails in the region of Rize. This climate is characterised by cool summers

and mild winters. The city receives abundant rainfall due to its geographical location. The main reason for this is that the mountains run parallel to the coast. Rize is the wettest province in Turkey. In Rize, rainfall is evenly distributed in all seasons and there is no dry season. Therefore, it has a dense and lush natural vegetation. Since it has a mountainous and rugged land structure, there is no flat area within the areas outside the valleys and coastal areas. The topography is therefore mountainous and rugged. There is a difference in plant species with increasing altitude. Above and below the forest, plant species are quite abundant. Tea (*Camellia sinensis*), which is grown throughout the city and has become a source of livelihood, is one of the most important plant species grown in this region. The ruggedness of the city centre, with the exception of the coastal areas, and the mountainous areas, which are partly divided by rivers or streams, affect transport, urban settlement and the living conditions of the people. For this reason, the regions with the highest density of urban settlements are generally those with an altitude of 0-500 m, which cover the narrow coastline. Rize has a very rich hydrographic structure thanks to its rainy climate and numerous underground water resources (Güner ve ark., 1987; Korgavuş, 2012; Koday ve Erhan, 2013; DOKAP Raporu, 2018; Anonim, 2019; Haznedar, 2022; MGM, 2022).

Our knowledge about the archaeological researches on the prehistoric ages in the province of Rize is limited. The first data obtained as a result of the researches belong to the Stone Age. It is believed that the first settlements in and around Rize began after this period. The name of the city has not been sufficiently researched. Rhizion, Rhizos, Riso, Risum, Risum, Risso, which are mentioned in the introductory book of Rize published by the Ministry of Culture, Rihizos means rice in Greek, Rihiza means foothills and the name Rize used today means broken and spilled in Persian. Although arable land is limited in the province, agriculture is the main source of livelihood. Tea production forms the basis of Rize's economy. The tea industry has contributed greatly to the economy of the region by building factories in the region and processing the products. In the Eastern Black Sea region, a large part of the population tends to live between the village and the city or both, maintaining both rural and urban lifestyles. These conditions, which have a strong impact on urbanisation, can be listed as factors such as sloping land structure, landslides due to excessive rainfall. Due to the rugged topography, construction is mostly concentrated in the coastal area. It can be seen that the density of construction decreases as one goes higher and urbanisation becomes more hori (Korgavuş, 2012; Üçok, 2019).

3. RESULTS

Within the framework of our research, the following urban furniture elements were examined on site: seating elements, covering elements, lighting elements, litter bins, flower/plant boxes, signs and information boards, water elements, public transport stops, artistic objects in Kuyumcular Street, Rize Square Park, Rize Square and Main Street, and it was evaluated whether the urban furniture used was appropriate in terms of urban culture and urban design. This research, carried out with the use of reinforcing elements, which are recognised as an important tool in the formation of urban identity, identified many problem areas related to the theme. Below is information about the study areas, visuals related to the reinforcements identified in these areas, evaluations of the reinforcements and their relationship to/contribution to urban identity.

Kuyumcular Street (Historical Rize Bazaar)

In addition, Kazım Karabekir Street, which is closed to traffic, has for years been known as the busiest street in Rize. This name has survived to the present day as the street is mainly lined with jewellery shops. There are also clothing and fabric shops, tailors, kiosks, photo studios, spectacle and watch shops. Souvenirs and ornaments that reflect the urban identity of Rize and the traditions of the region are also sold here. The photographs and locations of the facilities in the area are marked on the map (Figure 3). In addition, Kazım Karabekir Street, which is closed to traffic, has been the busiest street in Rize for years.

Main Street (Cumhuriyet and Atatürk Streets)

The two 'main streets', which are integrated into the square within the study area, form the connections between the square and the streets. On the main road there are litter bins, signs, directional signs, street lighting poles, advertising signs and footpaths for the visually impaired. At the same time, the density of both vehicles and people on the main road axis is very high. Observations made in the area show that traffic is blocked at these points, especially during the morning commute and evening rush hour (Figure 3)



Figure 3. Photographs of the reinforcing elements identified on Kuyumcular Street (Historic Rize Bazaar) and Main Street (Cumhuriyet and Atatürk Streets).

Rize Square (15 July Democracy and Republic Square)

It can be seen that there is a lot of hard flooring material throughout Rize Square in the study area. There is a huge monument that resembles a tea leaf and carries the traces of the past. Tea plants have been planted around this monument and are supported by seats. On the north side of the monument there is an ornamental pool. However, the number of days the pool is full during the year is negligible. At the same time, the lighting in the square resembles the symbol of the tea plant. There are also large and small plant boxes, plastic objects and a walkway for the visually impaired (Figure 4).

Rize Square Park (Tuzcuoglu Memişağa Park)

There is a wide variety of features throughout the square park. There are fountains and ornamental pools as water features, monuments, human and falcon-shaped photo sculptures as plastic objects. In addition, there are sitting and resting areas, children's playgrounds, various lighting and litter facilities, a taxi stand, a cafeteria, a tea garden, tea vending areas, and walking paths for the disabled. In addition, the sustainability of greenery is very much in evidence in this park (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Photographs of Reinforcement Elements Identified in Rize Square and Rize Square Park (Tuzcuoğlu Memişağa Park)

As a result of the investigations, the lighting elements in the sample areas were determined. It was found that the lighting elements used in Kuyumcular Street (Historical Rize Bazaar) and Main Street (Cumhuriyet and Atatürk Streets), which are the study areas, do not have an original and area-enhancing effect and do not show integrity in terms of size, form and material. Considering the intensity of use of both areas, it was found that the lighting is insufficient and does not have an attractive appearance. In addition, it was noted that there is no unity of language between the lighting elements, they do not create integrity with other reinforcing elements and they do not make a sufficient contribution to the areas in which they are located, both in terms of aesthetics and functionality. The fact that the lighting elements in Rize Square and Rize Square Park (Tuzcuoğlu Memişağa Park) have a design reminiscent of the leaf of the tea plant is considered to contribute to identity in terms of referring to the main element of the city. However, they do not show integrity in terms of size and material. In addition, when considering the intensity of use of both areas, it is noted that the lighting is inadequate.

It was found that a common language could not be created in the seating units throughout the study area, that they were incorrectly positioned, and that the right choices were not made in terms of the materials used, given the climatic conditions of the region. In addition, it was found that these four areas could not adapt to their specific area fiction, they are incompatible with the urban texture, they are not able to reflect the identity of the city and they are not treated with contemporary and aesthetic solutions.

During the investigations, it was found that the flooring materials in Kuyumcular Street (Historical Rize Bazaar) and Rize Square Park (Tuzcuoğlu Memişağa Park) were in a state of disrepair. In the main street (Cumhuriyet and Atatürk Streets) and Rize Square, confusion was caused by the juxtaposition of very different materials in the hard paving. There were also deficiencies in the flooring for the physically, acoustically and visually impaired in all areas.

It has been found that the garbage bins in Kuyumcular Street (Historic Rize Bazaar), Main Street (Cumhuriyet and Atatürk Streets), Rize Square and Rize Square Park (Tuzcuoğlu Memişağa Park) are not sufficient considering the intensity of use of the areas, that the integrity of the area cannot be achieved due to the different shapes of the garbage bins, that they disturb the visibility of the city, create perceptual confusion and have difficulties in use due to the examples of different designs. It has been observed that the places where they are placed in the intensively used pedestrian areas are not correct, and that they are not only open in terms of the health of the users, but also cause environmental and visual pollution.

It was found that the plant boxes placed haphazardly in Rize's town square do not take into account criteria such as rhythm, balance and harmony, are not original, do not reflect the town's identity, are inappropriate and force pedestrians into the places where they are placed. In addition, although many different types of materials have been used, incompatibilities between the elements have been noted and it has been noted that aesthetics and principles of use have not been taken into consideration.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of the human-vehicle-environment system, they are also recognised as cultural elements. On the other hand, as part of the built environment, each element has a characteristic that defines its location, a visual object for users and a symbolic meaning for the city. They are one of the most important components of urban spaces and they are the elements that add meaning, define, complement and make spaces useful in terms of aesthetics and function within the uses of the urban area. For this reason, it is important that the reinforcing elements are sufficient in number, resistant to external factors, perform the expected function correctly, meet the expectations of the users, have characteristics that contribute to the urban identity, integrate and harmonise with the environment, in order to create liveable environments. In addition, the strengthening elements, which are exposed to many external factors, should be placed correctly and in sufficient numbers, and should be well maintained. Due to their functional similarities, urban strengthening elements need to have a common language. Because of this common language, the strengthening elements are seen as a means of continuity and integrity within the city, and as identity elements that make the city more liveable and perceptible, contributing spatially and spatially to the identity of the city.

The reinforcing element should be seen as a work of art. The aesthetic character of the feature can define the character of the area. Furnishings in town centres can give the area a modern or rural feel through their materials and design. Furnishings have the ability to directly determine the style of the area.

In the city, applications that allow people to move, to breathe, to see, to walk, to stop, to have a safe relationship with traffic, to find their way easily and to read signs must meet aesthetic conditions that are more important than any ornamentation or artificial design. However, aesthetic perception in the city changes and is shaped according to the characteristics of the user group. This shaping has a major impact on the quality and character of the city. Urban areas and features, which are part of the character of cities, are shaped according to natural and socio-cultural factors.

The reinforcing elements in the city centre of Rize are the kind of reinforcing elements that we can see everywhere, far from originality, rather than having the characteristics of art objects. It can be seen that the reinforcing elements in the town centre create the effect of a rural area out of a modern urban atmosphere, contrary to the effect expected from the town, which will reflect the identity of the town. The urban equipment in the city should comply with the standards, be compatible with the environment and each other in terms of material and colour, provide integrity and have a unique design. They should interact with the identity and integrity of the design, they should add functionality to the area by supporting the activities carried out in the areas, they should be positioned in such a way that the spaces created for people to rest, meet and chat look meaningful, and attention should be paid to their harmony with the environment in terms of material and colour, taking into account the design principles.

As a result, urban facilities are very effective in terms of urban aesthetics and identity. Aesthetic and functional value and originality should be considered in the design, use, maintenance and repair of urban facilities. For the urban identity and aesthetic value of urban facilities, it is important for local governments to ensure cooperation and linguistic unity among themselves and with public institutions. However, in the context of the human-environment relationship of this area, it is necessary to create suitable spaces for people to perceive the space in which they are located and to meet their needs as a result of this perception. This study has emphasised that the urban facilities designed should not be the best design product or only designed to meet needs; the main purpose should be products that support and harmonise the urban identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND INFORMATION

This study was produced from part of the Master's thesis entitled "Determination of Sufficiency Levels of Urban Equipment Elements": "Rize Example" was produced from part of his Master's thesis.

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