THE INFLUENCE OF THE EXISTING ATTRIBUTES OF DISTINCTIVE BUILDINGS ON THE RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF AL-KHUMS'S CITY IDENTITY

By

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This research is a case study that examines the concept of City Identity with an emphasis on the city image of Al-Khums, a coastal city of Libya. In this research, identity was defined as the attributes of a place that is recognized or recalled as being distinct by the people. Identity is a critical issue in Al-Khums. The city's overall image including similar forms, does not possess an identity. There is a lack of distinctive character within the recent developments in Al-Khums. The aim is to investigate the elements and attributes associated with identity of the Al-Khums city as perceived by the residents. Finding out the distinctive elements of the city was the primary objective of this study. Establishing the characteristics linked towards those distinctive elements was the second objective of this study. Discovering the variation between different residents and their identification of distinctive elements of the city were the third objective of this study. The last objective was to uncover the evaluation and feelings of residents toward the city. Mixed methodology such as quantitative and qualitative approaches in the collection and analysis of data are utilized in this research. A survey was utilized for the quantitative approach via a questionnaire that was developed on a sample of the residents of Al-Khums. 330 residents originating from various sections of the city were considered in the sample survey. Techniques such as interview, free sketch task and visual survey were adopted under the qualitative approach. The interview essentially involved twenty-seven professional architecture and urban

design residents. Using Microsoft Excelt 2013 and Statistic Package for the Social Sciences, the information were gathered and scrutinized. SmartPLS was also utilized to conduct a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach to run cross analysis and content analysis for convergence of both qualitative and quantitative information. There are four main findings of the research Firstly, The imageable buildings of Al-Khums were based on eleven identified buildings. Secondly, the Characteristics distinctive elements (buildings and structures) are influenced by physical appearance, activities and the meanings. The physical appearance has a dominant influence on the building's identity in Al-Khums. The third finding is that there are no significant differences between the genders (male and female) when it came to identifying the city elements. With regards to age, a significant difference was found between the age differences and their perceptions of buildings and structures. Finally, there are non-significant measurements of the dimensions. Furthermore, mentioned items talked about visual impression of the city image, relationship between traditional form and current form of building and Al-Khums's urban form is vivid, legible and memorable as focus of interest to the Al-Khums authority and environmental stakeholder on their decision and urban planning policy. This study fundamentally contributes to enhancing literature dedicated to urban design and architecture by identifying Al-Khums building and structure through different dimensions and items to bring about the easy sustainability of buildings and structures in the city. All the models were new and could contribute to the enhancement in the academic field as well as being the main guideline for the practitioners in making their decisions for future development to create the city's image and identity.

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APPROVAL

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations that have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur or at any other institutions.

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TABLE OF CONTENT **Page**

ABSTRACT **ii**
ACKNOWLDEGEMENT **iv**
APPROVAL **v**
DECLARATION **vi**
LIST OF TABLES **xii**
LIST OF FIGURES **xv**

CHAPTER
1 INTRODUCTION **1**
1.1 Introduction **1**
1.2 Problem Statement **2**
1.3 Research Gap **4**
1.4 Research Questions **5**
1.5 Research aim **5**
1.6 Research Objectives **5**
1.7 Preview on the Research Methodology Usage **6**
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Research **10**
1.9 Significance of the Study **10**
1.10 Structure of the thesis **11**

2 LITERATURE REVIEW **12**
2.1 Introduction **12**
2.2 Definition of related concepts **12**
2.2.1 Perception **13**
2.2.2 Image and Imageability **16**
2.2.2.1 Cognitive Mapping of the City's Image **19**
2.2.2.2 Skyline as Imageability of City **20**
2.2.2.3 Buildings and Imageability **22**
2.2.3 Identity **25**
2.2.3.1 Identity of Place **26**
2.2.3.2 Identity and imageability **28**
2.2.3.3 Identity as an Aspect Place Attachment and Place Satisfaction **29**

2.2.3.4 The Continuity of Identity **32**
2.3 Attributes Associated with Identity of City **33**
2.3.1 The Influence of Physical Environment Attributes on Perception of city's Identity **36**
2.3.2 The Influence of Meanings Attributes on Perception of city's Identity **38**
2.3.3 The Influence of Human activities Attributes on Perception of city's Identity **41**
2.4 Demographical Characteristics and the Perception of Identity **42**
2.4.1 Life Cycle and Identity Perception **43**
2.4.2 Gender Difference, Age and Identity Perception **43**
2.4.3 Residence Degree of Experience and identity perception **44**
2.5 Measurement of city's identity **46**
2.6 Summery **48**

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **51**
3.1 Introduction **51**
3.2 Nature of the Study and Research Procedure **52**
3.2.1 Research Nature **52**
3.2.2 Research Procedure **53**
3.2.3 Qualitative Method **58**
3.2.3.1 In-depth Interview **58**
3.2.3.2 Sketching **59**
3.2.3.3 Visual Survey **60**
3.2.4 Quantitative Method **61**
3.2.4.1 Questionnaires **62**
3.3 Respondents Selection **63**
3.4 Sampling Mechanism **66**
3.5 Data Collection Procedure **70**
3.5.1 Quantitative Data Collection **70**
3.5.2 Respondents' Characteristics **72**
3.5.3 Visual Image (Buildings and Structures) **72**
3.5.4 Environmental Attitudes **73**
3.5.5 Environmental Meanings **75**

3.6 Pilot Test of Measurements **75**
3.7 Qualitative data collection **77**
3.7.1 Interview **78**
3.7.2 Sketching **81**
3.7.3 Visual Survey **82**
3.7.4 Supported Secondary Data using Library Research **82**
3.8 Data Analysis Procedure **83**
3.9 Summary **85**

4 PROFILES OF AL-KHUMS CITY OF LIBYA 87
4.1 Introduction **87**
4.2 Geographical Location **87**
4.3 Evolution and Development of the City **88**
4.3.1 Evolution of the Old Al-Khums City **88**
4.3.2 Evolution of the Modern Al-Khmus City **91**
4.3.3 The City During the Italian Era 1911-1951 **93**
4.3.4 Al-Khums City after Independence 1951-2015 **97**
4.3.4.1 Al-Khmus City General Development Plan 1966-1988 **97**
4.3.4.2 All-out Plan of Al-Khmus City 2000: **99**
4.4 Construction and Constructional Identification in the City **101**
4.4.1 Al-Khmus City Constructional Breakdown **101**
4.5 Summary **105**

5 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 106
5.1 Introduction **106**
5.2 Profiles of Respondents **106**
5.3 Identification of distinctive building and structure of Al-Khums City **110**
5.4 Elements of People Associate with Al-Khums Identity (RO.1) **119**
5.5 Attributes of the Elements of Al-Khums Identity (RO.2) **124**
5.5.1 Religious Buildings **125**
5.5.2 Residential Buildings **129**
5.5.3 Commercial Buildings **132**

5.5.4 Accommodations Buildings **135**
5.5.5 Health Buildings **138**
5.5.6 Government Buildings **141**
5.5.7 Educational Buildings **143**
5.5.8 Recreational Places **145**
5.5.9 Urban Structure **149**
5.5.10 Summary on the Attributes of Buildings Elements **151**
5.6 Examination on the Relationship between Elements and Attributes among Residents (RO.3) **152**
5.6.1 Multigroup Analysis (MGA) of Demographic Profiles and Attributes **154**
5.6.2 Descriptive of Demographic and Qualifies Elements **170**
5.7 Analysis of the Value and Meanings of Built Environment (RO.4) **172**
5.8 Discussions of the Findings **174**
5.8.1 Achievement of Research Objectives **174**
5.8.2 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as Scientific Justifications **178**
5.8.3 Fundamental Findings **179**
5.9 Summary **179**

6 CONCLUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 181
6.1 Introduction **181**
6.2 Research Key Findings **181**
6.2.1 Identification of Distinctive Buildings **181**
6.2.2 Attributes Associated with City's Identity **183**
6.2.3 Demographical Characteristic and Environmental Perception **185**
6.2.4 Al-Khums's imageability and Identity **185**
6.3 Research limitations **186**
6.4 Research Contributions **187**
6.5 Suggestions for further research **188**
6.6 Conclusion **189**

REFERENCES 191

APPENDICES A **212**
APPENDICES B **224**

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1:	Attributes of Identity as Identified in the Literature Review	**36**
Table 3.1:	Quantitative, mixed, and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009)	**56**
Table 3.2:	Sample size required for various sampling at 95% confidence level	**69**
Table 3.3:	Distribution and Response Rate	**70**
Table 3.4:	Pilot Test of Environmental Attitude (N=30)	**77**
Table 3.5:	Pilot Test of Environmental Meaning (N=30)	**77**
Table 5.1:	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=330)	**107**
Table 5.2:	Cross-tabulation of Respondents Profiles Characteristics	**109**
Table 5.3a:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Al-Khums Building	**112**
Table 5.3b:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Al-Khums Building	**113**
Table 5.3c:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Al-Khums Building	**114**
Table 5.4a:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Religious Building/Structure	**114**
Table 5.4b:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Residential Building/Structure	**115**
Table 5.4c:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Commercial Building/Structure	**115**
Table 5.4d:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the AccommodationBuilding/Structure	**115**
Table 5.4e:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Health Building/Structure	**116**
Table 5.4f:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Government Building/Structure	**116**
Table 5.4g:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Recreational Places	**117**
Table 5.4h:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Educational Building/Structure	**117**
Table 5.4i:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Urban Building/Structure	**118**

Table 5.5:	Interview Results on the Building Identification (N=27)	**119**
Table 5.6:	Sketches Results on the Building Identification (N=178)	**120**
Table 5.7a:	Interview Category Results on the Building Identification (N=27)	**123**
Table 5.7b:	Sketches Category Results on the Building Identification (N=178)	**124**
Table 5.8a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Religious Buildings	**128**
Table 5.8b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Religious Buildings	**128**
Table 5.9a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Residential Buildings	**131**
Table 5.9b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Residential Buildings	**131**
Table 5.10a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Commercial Buildings	**134**
Table 5.10b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Commercial Buildings	**134**
Table 5.11a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Accommodation Buildings	**137**
Table 5.11b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Accommodation Buildings	**137**
Table 5.12a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Health Buildings	**140**
Table 5.12b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Health Buildings	**140**
Table 5.13a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Government Buildings	**142**
Table 5.13b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Government Buildings	**142**
Table 5.14a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Educational Buildings	**145**
Table 5.14b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Educational Buildings	**145**
Table 5.15a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Recreational Places	**148**
Table 5.15b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Recreational Places	**148**
Table 5.16a:	Factor Loading of Attributes Urban Structure	**150**
Table 5.16b:	Reliability and Validity of Attributes Urban Structure Buildings	**150**
Table 5.17:	Summary of R-Square among the Building Elements	**152**
Table 5.18a:	Demographic Profiles Based on Gender Category	**153**
Table 5.18b:	Demographic Profiles Based on Age Category	**153**
Table 5.18c:	Number of Respondents Categories on the Identification	**154**
Table 5.19a:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Al-Khums Building Based on Physical Attributes and Gender	**156**
Table 5.19b:	Rank Order of Respondents Identification on the Al-Khums BuildingBased on Age and Physical Attributes	**157**
Table 5.19c:	Rank Order Category of Gender and Meaning Attributes	**160**

Table 5.19d:	Rank Order Category of Age and Meaning Attributes	**161**
Table 5.19e:	Rank Order Category of Gender and Activities Attributes	**163**
Table 5.19f:	Rank Order Category of Age and Activities Attributes	**164**
Table 5.19g:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Gender Profiles (T-test)	**165**
Table 5.19h:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Gender Profiles (ANOVA)	**166**
Table 5.19i:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Age Profiles	**167**
Table 5.19j:	Relationship between Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes	**169**
Table 5.19k:	Comparison of Attributes based on the Residential Status	**170**
Table 5.20a:	Standardised Regressions Weight of Al-Khums Environmental Dimensions and Measurements	**173**
Table 5.20b:	Correlation between Environmental Attitude and Meaning	**174**

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1:	Research Framework	**9**
Figure 2.1:	Component of identity Reference: Relph, 1976	**34**
Figure 3.1:	Research Method	**57**
Figure 3.2:	Al-Khums city center and the four study sectors	**67**
Figure 3.3:	Five-level Scale of Measurements in Questionnaire Survey (De Vaus, 2013)	**75**
Figure 4.1:	General location of Al- Khums city	**88**
Figure 4.2:	Evolution of the Old Al-Khmus city.	**89**
Figure 4.3:	The Archaeological Lipda City .A Roman city located to the West of Al-Khmus city at 2 Km	**90**
Figure 4.4:	AlKhmus city in the Turkish Era The city in 1915 was a fenced city around the Commercial Port on the seas coast	**91**
Figure 4.5:	Al-Khums city downtown (The old port and Al-Basha Mosque which are referred to the Osmanli Turkish era appear).	**92**
Figure 4.6:	The Old Municipality Building An archaeological buildingestablished during the Osmanli era at the ends of nineteenth century 1890. The building has been transformed at present to a cultural house residency in AlKhums	**93**
Figure 4.7:	Al-Khmus city plan 1942, during the Italian era.	**94**
Figure 4.8:	Ezio Reisoli Street	**95**
Figure 4.9:	The old quarter, Al-Khmus The old quarter at Al-Khmus city center and some shops referring to the Italian era appear.	**96**
Figure 4.10:	The catholic Church Building	**96**
Figure 4.11:	The present status of the constructional plan of Al-Khmus city 1980	**99**
Figure 4.12:	All-out Al-Khmus plan 2000	**101**
Figure 4.13:	Al-Khums city Constructional Development	**105**
Figure 5.1a:	Descriptive Frequency of Length of Residence	**108**
Figure 5.1b:	Descriptive Frequency of Age	**108**
Figure 5.2a:	Sketch from Respondent Identification (Sample Object 1)	**120**
Figure 5.2b:	Sketch from Respondent Identification (Sample Object 2)	**121**
Figure 5.2c:	Sketch from Respondent Identification (Sample Object 3)	**121**

Figure 5.2d: Sketch from Respondent Identification (Sample Object 4) **122**
Figure 5.2e: Sketch from Respondent Identification (Sample Object 5) **122**

Figure 5.3a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Religious Buildings (Hypothesised Model Stage-1) **126**
Figure 5.3b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Religious Buildings (Re-Specified Model Stage2) **127**
Figure 5.4a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Residential Buildings (Hypothesised Model – Stage 1) **129**
Figure 5.4b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Residential Buildings (Re-Specified Model – Stage 2) **130**
Figure 5.5a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Commercial Buildings (Hypothesised Model – Stage 1) **132**
Figure 5.5b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Commercial Buildings (Re-Specified Model – Stage 2) **133**
Figure 5.6a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Accommodation Buildings (Hypothesised Model Stage 1) **135**
Figure 5.6b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Accommodation Buildings (Re-Specified Model – Stage 2) **136**
Figure 5.7a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Health Buildings (Hypothesised Model – Stage 1) **138**
Figure 5.7b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Health Buildings (Re-Specified Model – Stage 2) **139**
Figure 5.8: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Government Buildings (Re-Specified Model) **141**
Figure 5.9a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Educational Buildings (Hypothesised Model – Stage 1) **143**
Figure 5.9b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Educational Buildings (Re-Specified Model – Stage 2) **144**
Figure 5.10a: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Recreational Places (Hypothesised Model Stage 1) **146**
Figure 5.10b: 2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Recreational Places (Re-Specified Model Stage 2) **147**

Figure 5.11a:	2nd Order CFA Qualifies of Urban Structure (Re-Specified Model)	**149**
Figure 5.12a:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Gender Profiles (ANOVA)	**166**
Figure 5.12b:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Age Profiles (ANOVA)	**167**
Figure 5.12c:	Comparison of Physical, Meaning and Activities Attributes Based on Age Categories (ANOVA)	**168**
Figure 5.13a:	Respondents Identification on the Demographic and Elements	**171**
Figure 5.13b:	Respondents Identification on the Demographic and Elements	**171**
Figure 5.14:	2nd Order CFA of Environmental Meaning and Attitude	**172**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This research examines the concept of city identity of Al-Khums, the coastal city of Libya. The primary concern is to explore the elements and attributes that residents associated with the city's identity. Identity according to (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015; Khirfan, 2014) and support by Lynch is *"the extent which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places as having a vivid or unique or at least a particular character of its own"* (Lynch, 1981, p.131). Lynch's interpretation of identity was adopted by this study, in which the distinctiveness of the elements and the attributes that residents linked with the identity of the study was examined. These elements play a significant aspect in shaping the image of the city and people link them with identity in the city. Particular properties of the high imageable elements and elements linked with the identity of the city are also looked into in the research. In order to do so, the Al-Khums resident's opinions of the physical environment is studied via measurement of urban imageability and other form-making attributes (Physical, Activities and Meanings).

The general form of the study and the basis in which the results of the inquiry are presented are elaborated in this chapter. The first section will also point out the research problem while the following section gives an overview of the aims, objectives and research questions. The rearch agenda is explained in the third section followed by a presentation of the research methodology and techniques in the fourth section. Case studies are included in the fifth section while the limitations of this research are discussed in the sixth section. Lastly, the general structure of the thesis is presented in the final section.

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