Explore Community Perception in Decision-Making Processes towards Adaptive Reusing of Alsaqaf Palace for the Sustainability of the Built Heritage and Decision-Making Processes

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ABSTRACT

Adaptive reuse for existing historic and abandoned buildings has become a dominant strategy for integrating sustainable function. It is a fast-growing strategy and common in developed countries to conserve ancient and redundant landmark buildings, especially those with historical and heritage meaning to save them for coming generations. Meanwhile, the properties are continuously ignored, abandoned, or even destroyed due to possible redundancy of function or injudicious or improvising decision-making. At the same time, core communities have the right to their physical environment connected with the built forms surrounding them for centuries with solid bond attachment. Indeed, the core communities possess the right to assign meanings and values to their attached building with cultural significance, not only by the expert. Hence, this paper aimed to devise empirical feedback from the core communities associated with the redundant Alsaqaf Palace and to explore their perception of reusing the old Palace. A qualitative closing-ended questionnaire method was conducted with 274 samples from residents to explore future new building use with an appropriate adaptation process to suit their environment.

Keywords:
Adaptive reuse;community participation;
heritage conservation; Alsaqaf Palace

1. Introduction

Historic buildings are a national treasure because of the historical and cultural meanings they carry for nations [1]. These pieces of history play a markabal role in economic and social toword development of countries. Socily, these buildings gives cities sense of place by portraying the identity of a place. Moreover, these buildings describe the way and quality of life for the people who lived in and built it in the past eras, and in the same taim they are the foundation for the now civilization that we living in and depended at. Therefor these building it should be sustain them with optimum decision-making to enhance a harmonious decision-making process and to have an effective operational social environment [2,3]. Meanwhile, adaptive reuse decision-making comprises a complex set of considerations, including unresolved identified factors, point of references and justification. Noticeably, the decision making processes for reuse adapting public building contains multi decision-makers like the owners, government agents, architects and historical architectural,

developers, and engineers. However, the community's perception (the primary users) are often less considered, ignored or disregarded during the decision-making process[4]. In the meantime, adaptive reuse is the contemporary strategic tool adapted in carrying forward the useful life of old buildings sustainable to future generations after improvising decision-making. However, the community-centred approach in devising the bottom-top approach as an underpinning framework for decision-making in redundant public buildings is less considered and often disregarded. Thereby ignoring the cultural and social significances and dimensions. Whereas, communities provide enhanced strategies for adapting a building into an appropriate new use with suitable functions to blend with their environment as they are the ones associated with the building and not the experts [4,5]. Economic and aesthetic viability of the new function of the reuse of an adapting building's are the most concerned for the community. Indeed, communities are the primary stakeholders in implementing a development in their set-up by government or non-government organisation. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the range of threats to communities with a view to understand how urban conservation can be developed and efficiently act against the current negative forces to generate livable communities [6]. Community anxiety is linked to the situation that contemporary community gives for the sustainment of society culture. Besides, several disciplines, including architecture, urban design, facility and construction management, engineering, have contributed to reviewing the advantages and concepts of flexible reuse of ancient buildings [7,8].

Essentially, Asian countries, including Saudi Arabia, are enriched with heritage properties embraced with legacy and juxtaposed with architectural relics embodied with historical and aesthetical values. These depicts the identity of a place, embracing the sense of place and attachment within ancient cities and they deserve to be conserved to future generations [5]. Furthermore, one of the future goals for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 is to save historical and heritage places and make them eligible to functional [9]. Hence, the government of Saudi Arabia, particularly the Makkah province will certainly benefit from the paper findings by exploring the publics' opinion in the adaptive reuse project of the Alsaqaf old Palace. The determined public perception will benefit the experts in harnessing a substantial framework that can improve the quality life of its people and the world at large. The revitalisation of the old Palace will enhance its performance into an effective one with a "new life" .

2. Methodology

In this paper, quantitative methods with closing ended questions were used. The structured questionnaire was used online questionnaire via a google-form application. This method has adopted the pragmatic way to collect data regrad the community perception for the Alsaqaf Palace during the Coved19 pandemic. By using this method, we gained to get a random answers from different community parts. Furthermore, the collected data that came from random symbols from around the city were analysed with SPSS. There ware 274 respondents from around the Holy City and The analysed result has been discussed and recommended. Some respondents came from other cities, but at the same time, the respondents know the Palace and have been lived before in the city. In advantage, this method gave a different perception from the community for the way of the future uses for the heritage building.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Literature Review

Recently, the adaptive reuse for evacwated buildings; by changing their old functional to meet the new uses function; has turned to become a particular science in the field of historic conservation and architecture.These Heritage Buildins carry the history of the past eras and link them with the future, and in the same time it shap our built environment [1]. Essentially, Plevoets and Sowińska-Heim [4] emphasises on the significant of community social inclusion as an alternative to the formal top-down approach towards decision-making in adaptive reuses of old buildings. Aigwi et al., [10] emphasises the success of every sustainable development in a country both at national and local level is the basis stakeholders or community's opinion being integrated in decision-making process. Indeed, there is usually an occurrence of conflicting beliefs, opinions, interests, and resources in decision making when communities among stakeholders are ignored [11]. Therefore, it will be beneficial for the process of decision-making to understand the community "real users" perceptions. [12].

Furthermore, involving the stakeholders in the decisition-making it will increase the awareness in the community for their responsibility for their society [13]. By enclouding the user's expectations and needs in the decision making by policymakers it will enhance the decision for the adaptive reuse for buildings. Accordingly, Aigwi et al., [10] *"assert that having a collaborative social inclusion with communities as part of the users of a place will promote a better understanding of the characteristics of major adaptive reuse decision makers through: 1) active participation of the stakeholders for future adaptive reuse prioritisation exercises; 2) public consciousness and knowledge regarding adaptive reuse issues; 3) transparency and accountability among the stakeholders; 4) trust and organised networking among the stakeholders; 5) legitimacy and quality of adaptive reuse decisions"*. For this reason, experts, governments and non-government organisations should incorporate community's decision-making and perception as they possess the spirit, notion, values, connectedness and crucial interdependences to their cultural heritage formation [14].
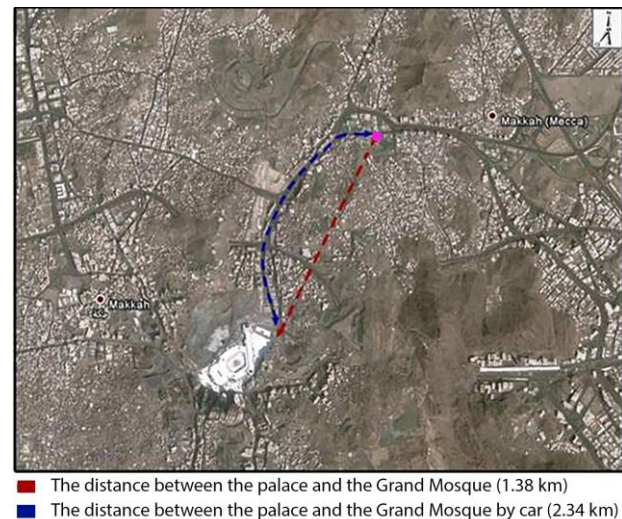
Contemporarily, Community heritage decision-making are best ensured an primary basis of community development process [8]. Community members are the best in improvising decisions obviously to safeguard and manage the historical assets around them. Acknowledging their role is paramount as they turn out to be the primary stakeholders. Essentially, community participation elevates and revives sense of place of an area [1].

3.2 Alsaqaf Palase

There are many names for this Palace, like Albayadiya Palace, Almaabadeh Palace, and Palace Alhokom "The Royal Palace ". But the most popular name is Alsaqaf Palace, " referring to the second

owner for the Palace or the name for the main street in the north of the Palace[15]. The Palace is located 1.38 km north of the Holy Grand Mosque[16], and the distance from the Grand Mosque to the Palace is 2.34km (Figer 1).

Moreover, the length of the north side of the Palace is 146.30M, and the south side is 152.25M. Also, the East side of the Palace is 114.30M, and the west side is 123.44M, and it covered around 2500M2 [16,17] (Figer 2). In addition, this heritage building was built in 1795 by the governor of Makkah Al-Sharif Ghalib bin Musaed, and he sold it for Muhammad bin Omar Alsaqaf. In 1805 one of the leaders in the first Saudi era, Prince Saud bin Abdulaziz lived in it. In 1924 King Abdulaziz, "the founder of the second Saudi era lived in it and became the King house

Fig.1. Alsaqaf Palace location in the Holy City of Makkah
Source: [15], adding by the Authors

and the Saudi government place in the Holy City of Makkah. This Palace witnessed many historical events until it readapted to be the location of the Muslim World League. In 2013 this Palace was announced as a heritage building and became one of the essential future projects for the Royal Commission for Makkah and the Holy Sites.

Fig. 2. Alsaqaf Palace location in the Holy City of Makkah
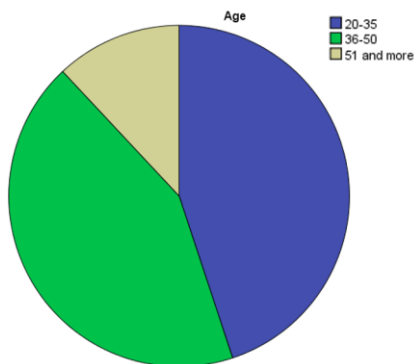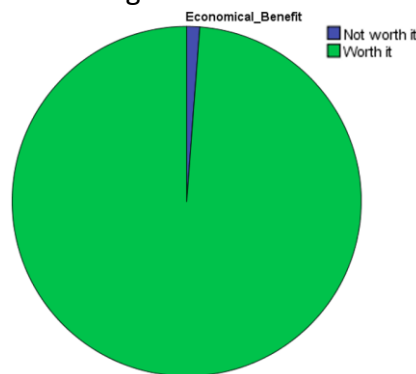Source: [15], adding by the Authors

3.3 Survey Results and Analyses

The questionnaire result showed that most of the participants were male, representing 92.2 percent representing 154 respondents of the total 167 respondents; and 7.8 percent of female respondents. Also, the highest number of respondents are located between 20 to 35 years old with 75 respondents. Meanwhile, finding shows that second highest presentage 43.1% is for 36 to 50 years old with 72 respondents. The finding also shows 20 respondent who reach the age of 51 years old and above. The age ranges of subjects who took part in the completion of the questionnaires are also seen. The percentage in a graph in Figer 3 indicates that bias was in no way affected by the distribution of questionnaires to different classes. It is a good representation of the impartiality of the investigator in the distribution of questionnaires. Furthermore, In an online survey, the level of academic achievement is the most appropriate way for assessing the respondents' talent, abilities, and level of knowledge. The highest level of academic success among respondents was the postgraduate degree 70.1%, followed by the *bachelor's* degree 24.6%. The minimum level of academic achievement was *high school* 5.4% for the minority of the respondents. Also, The economic
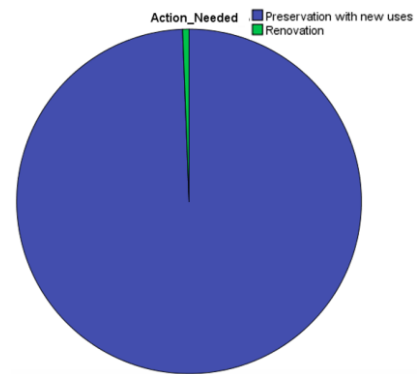
benefit status of the respondents is as shown in Figure 4. Most of the participants were selectd the economic benefits of readopted use for the palace , representing 98.8 percent representing 165 of the total 167 respondents in this study. Figure 4 shows that 98.8 percent of respondents select the "it is worth to reuse the palace", and 1.2 percent of selected respondents "not worth reuse it" . Figure 5 shows that most of the respondents' cited *preservation with new uses* 99.4%. The least of respondent's marks Renovation and Nothing .6%.

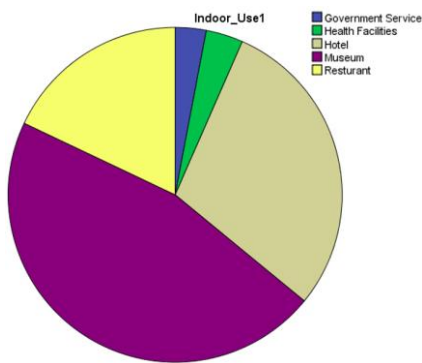**Fig.3** Respondents' age group breakdown

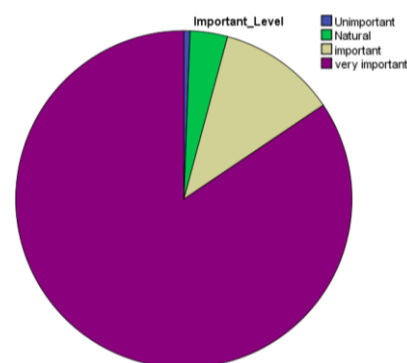**Fig.4** Number of Respondents based on economical benefit

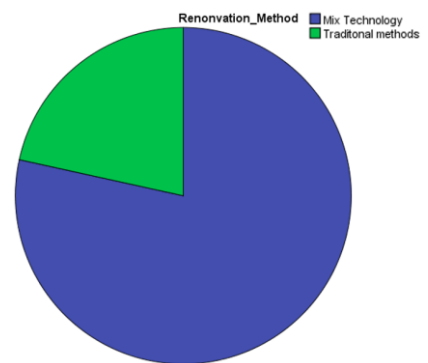**Fig.5** Number of respondents based on action needed.

In addition, Figure 6 shows the indoor use which had answered the questionnaires. The data obtained shows that most of the respondents marked museums and hotels representing 46.1% and 29.3%, respectively, and the least of respondent's noted government service 3.0%. In regards to the importance level, the data obtained show Figure 7 that most of the respondents identified very important, representing 84.4%. The least of respondent's markeds unimportant and less important were 0.6%. Besides, Figure 8 shows the responses to aspects of the renovation method and the data obtained show that most of the respondents' choices are the mixed technology method, representing 78.4%. The least of respondent's choices in reference to traditional methods were 21.6%.

Fig.6 Number of respondents based on indoor use

Fig.7 Number of respondents based on importance level

Fig.8 Number of Respondents based on renovation method

4. Results and Discussion

The findings show a significant role played by the community towards adaptive reusing built heritage monuments. Indeed, the community decision-making framework can be incorporated by the government in its decision-making process towards adaptive reusing the old Palace by extending the useful life of the building. Essentially, incorporating the community's decision will give new life to the building is according to the meaning and notion of the community, improve the quality of their lives.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this exploration has led to the result that there are importances of maintaining the heritage buildings in The Holy City of Makkah, especially from the core community of the city. Also, it showed the usefulness of these Buildings as tourism attractions and community resources in the Holy City. In any case, the need asset of information and openness to general society on any protection endeavours all through the country, particularly the historical area like downtown the Holy City of Makkah, is to be investigated. Furthermore, Public mindfulness and association ought to be bridled through advancements and training throughout the country. At the same time, ceaseless improvement ought to be held through broad communications to make more mindfulness among all degrees of society about these Heritage Buildings. Also, instructive courses and workshops on building preservation are supported, particularly among the younger ages, with the cooperation and interest from both government and non-government associations. In addition, the proficiency of legacy building use is by and by imperative to guarantee an immediate use by people in general and especially from the core community. However, this research showed the significant degree of mindfulness from the core community on saving historic properties and landmarks in the Holy City of Makkah.

Acknowledgement

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