

Place Attachment and Female Identity in Traditional Souk Wajif:  
Implications for Interior Design

A Dissertation

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## **Dedication**

For Leen, my pride and joy.

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## Abstract

Traditional markets were and still are the backbone of any Islamic city. They are effective on the formation of the collective identity and emotional bond between the citizens, historic places and culture. Kuwaiti traditional markets experienced intense changes these past few decades. Architectural and technological advances are clashing with the character of traditional interior spaces and women traders are caught in the midst of this change and have to navigate tradition and modernity. This thesis focuses on women traders in traditional markets in Kuwait City and explores their attempts to construct identity through traditional public space, particularly, inside women's market known as *Souk Wajif*. This exploration will help interior designers to better understand how places are produced and how materials, textures, and spatial layouts influence place attachment and relate to personal identity.

Place attachment describes the positive bonds between people to physical and social settings, which support their identity and psychological needs. The concept of place attachment may serve as a defense mechanism against identity crises in the periods of transitions between major developmental stages in Kuwaiti society and it can contribute to preserving traditional architecture from identity loss. The study elaborates on the theory-base aspect of place attachment as well as the interior design field by identifying a cluster of social and physical characteristics such as social and physical characteristics associated with traditional spaces that influence women's identity and psychological needs.

This study will examine the impact of renovating a Kuwaiti traditional market on place attachment and identity of women sellers. Mixed methodology was implemented to

conduct survey and interviews of 20 women sellers in Souk Wajif in Kuwait, while personal observations were used as a supplementing data source through visual documentation of the Souk's interior space, which assisted in understanding the spatial dynamics of Souk Wajif.

Findings that emerged from the study of 20 women sellers showed that social attachment is heavily influenced by physical attachment. Also, the degree of attachment varied with age, personal experiences, and length of settlement in the Souk.

This study broadens the knowledge of interior design practice and education based on traditional architectural concepts by identifying a cluster of design traits implemented in traditional spaces that influence Kuwaiti female's identity. Also, this study identifies ways to address women traders' needs and spatial requirements of the stalls inside the Souk, and proposes thoughtful design solutions that are culturally responsive. This will provide a helpful guideline for the government and policy makers for future developments to similar traditional public environments.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

“Bonding is central to the human experience. We necessarily form meaningful connections with particular people, groups, objects and places. These many ties secure us in broader social and physical environments, connect us to the past, and influence future behaviors.” (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013, p. 23)

People need associations with significant places, typically ones with historic character to become attached to and to maintain their cultural identity (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010). A clear representation of such spaces can be found inside Kuwaiti traditional souks. In the middle of the traditional market, Souk Wajif, a strip of enclosed booths massed-together to sell traditional goods, which creates an interesting path of colors, textures, and patterns for people to enjoy interacting with through their senses, and form a favorite cultural spot for locals and tourists. The Harem Market (Souk Wajif) offers invaluable insights into the local culture and old trade traditions of Kuwait.

Traditional souks are a form of place making manifested from cultural practices. Culture has enormous implications for people’s conception of self through physical and social qualities inside traditional souks, which influence the notion of place attachment and identity. Continuity through the city’s urban fabric, irregular passages, centrality, unity and light are notions and elements of the bazaar concept in traditional Islamic architecture (Mortada, 2003), where the social and physical environment always remains preserved under the mystery of old historic places.

In a larger sense, traditional interior design is practiced as a design approach based on shaping spatial experience that reflects local needs, customs and symbols of culture. It's a powerful, essential part of people's daily lives and has a significant affect how they live, work, socialize, and even heal (Fardous & Bennadji, 2016). The role of interior spaces in making authentic connection between users and their past is of substantial importance for the reinforcement of self-identity. Nonetheless, the revival of traditional interior spaces must be strengthened through careful consideration of the way a space's must be functional, safe, and visually appealing to its users, that is by determining physical, social and cultural requirements and selecting decorative elements, architectural references, colors, lighting, and building materials inspired from local culture (Amro & Bahauddin, 2015).

One of the intriguing concepts in traditional Islamic architecture is the void – or the absence of space – that usually known as the negative spaces that results from being enveloped by architectural elements. When void is located as a central space, it becomes the positive space where most significant activities take place. The void becomes the intangible space that truly sets forth a unique spatial experience that one is willing to remember, preserve and praise (Farjami, 2015). Particularly, this concept when implemented inside traditional Souks stimulates excitement and strengthens the emotional bonds between people and physical environment.

The void as a negative space has the power to construct the Souk's interior environment through an overlap of physical surfaces, social constructs and material culture. The occurrence of tangible and intangible aspects of personal identity inside the Souk was perceived as void's production of place. Aspects such as social interaction

between sellers and visitors, physical interaction with place and material culture, emotional bond, and identity expression intertwine to form a matchless sociocultural experience inside the Souk.

In Souk Wajif, Kuwait, the presence of traditional women sellers influenced the cultural experience through their symbolic presence and traditional character of their stalls (Hussein, 2003). The fabrication of traditional character and the contrast of gender roles produced a spatial discourse of identity and power, where men sellers' shops surround female sellers stalls to create a secured zone of feminine cluster. That cluster was defined by the visual interplay of material culture occupied the Souk's central void. In this study, the focus will be on traditional women sellers of Souk Wajif (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* The central void inside Souk Wajif before and after the development plan, Al Mubarakiya, Kuwait. (Jamal, 2004).

Under those influences, the Souk became the vital part of the old city of Kuwait and the common ground for women to practice culture in the form of trade. Women from the middle and lower class contributed to the economy of the old city and established businesses in the markets. Women traders became independent because they have some degree of access to the public sphere and are able to interact with male dominated spaces such as seen inside Souk Wajif (Women's Market), where the cultural identity of the place becomes an extension of women traders' self identity (Moghadam, 1993).



*Figure 2.* The old layout of Souk Wajif in the past. (Jamal, 2004).

Most compelling evidence about people's attachment to traditional Souks is manifested through the way people bring stories to places they bond with, love or hate. Each story is an intersection of place, time and human experience (Manzo, 2013). With this in mind, Souk Wajif offers a fenestrated moment of time that allows feminine engagement in a traditional society usually dominated by men (Figure 2). That moment

is the conversion from being socially overshadowed to being an active member in the Souk's sociocultural pattern.

To place this concept in its proper context; during the day, the natural daylight penetrates the inner space inside Souk Wajif to bring life and create a welcoming atmosphere. Metaphorically, the light tunnel signifies the threshold that takes women out of the shadows into the public sphere, the marketplace, social life and the world in large. The shadow mimics their seclusion under social constraints of society that governs women's presence in public, which overshadows women's practices in their daily lives. The light tunnel inside Souk Wajif is an unrivaled portrayal of the transitional phase women traders went from being socially marginalized to being centralized in the Souk. It becomes a spiritual source of power, confidence and optimism for women traders; it confirms their presence during the day as liberated identities and the curators of traditional Kuwaiti culture.

For this reason, women traders associate their identity with the Souks' cultural identity (Al-Sabah, 2001); it is the only legacy left for them to sell in the Souk as an inherited cultural practice through generations. In this case, women traders inside Souk Wajif need to be attached to it to maintain their sense of pride and place making. Their social existence is tied to the physical appearance in the market. Yet, there are forces that challenge their daily practice inside the Souk and might interfere with their social and physical attachment. With this in mind, the notion of place-making in a traditional environment such as the Souk is significant in understanding how a place becomes an extension of one's self-identity and the society as a whole (Lewicka, 2010). Therefore, preserving the traditional character of physical environments in public sphere has a

significant role in reinforcing place attachment and identity, particularly, to women traders in Souk Wajif and visitors from both genders.

Although there are numerous studies on the topic, the literature pays little attention to commercial interior settings, in particular to traditional Souks in the Middle Eastern architecture. That is because traditional Souks symbolize the life of the city (Smith, 2005); they become an extension of peoples' identity (Asadpour, 2011) amidst globalization. It is important to realize how the speed of urbanization becomes the major phenomenon that defines the Kuwaiti society in terms of lifestyle, architecture and culture, and the Middle East as a whole, leaving little room to preserve historic places with great emotional attachment and meaning to its users.

For this reason, having a better understanding of how Kuwaiti women produce space and identity in traditional markets as sellers, how to experience place and interact with it will allow interior design and architectural practices to better understand and assess female needs in traditional spaces, and of course, preserve the authenticity of such historic places. One approach is to consider this trajectory as the outcome of a complex interweaving of individual needs, identity expression and environmental change.

All in all, traditional Souks have an irreplaceable historical value and emotional connection with the past. Yet, modernization puts traditional spaces in challenge to both attract and to retain social and cultural activities, which can contribute to the well-being of a place and its users. This chapter defines key concepts and ideas of importance to this thesis; the concepts will be further discussed in-depth later in chapter two.

## **Key Definitions**

**Place.** Several place attachment authors, such as Jelley (2013), Lewicka (2010) and Davenport and Anderson (2005) have described the concept of place to include three key dimensions: (a) physical (form and space), (b) functional (activities), and (c) psychological (emotion/cognition). Physical place or location includes the spatial distribution of social and economic activities (Jelley, 2013). Functional place is the setting for everyday routines and interactions, while psychological place is the sense of identification with a place emotionally (Lewicka, 2005).

**Attachment.** Attachment is “affection that binds one to another person or to a thing” (Bernard, 2003. p. 53).

**Place attachment.** Place attachments are the positive bonds to physical and social settings that support and provide other psychological benefits (Perkins & Brown 2003). The role of place attachment as an “effective bond or link between people and specific places” (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2010, p. 274) is significant in understanding how place forms personal experiences and memories. A number of definitions of place attachment will be further discussed in the literature review section.

However, place attachment as a concept for research has been neglected as a potential strength in surviving historical and traditional markets. The decline of traditional markets involves both social and physical aspects, yet little known about how that decline relates to the women traders’ bond with their stalls inside traditional markets. Based on Scannel and Gifford’s (2010) tripartite model and Waxman’s (2006) organizational model, a new model is developed to fit the parameters of this study. Aspects such as time, social and physical factors were added to assist in measuring

women traders' perception of place attachment in traditional markets (Figure 3).

Accordingly, place in the new model represents the traditional market and splits into social and physical characteristics.

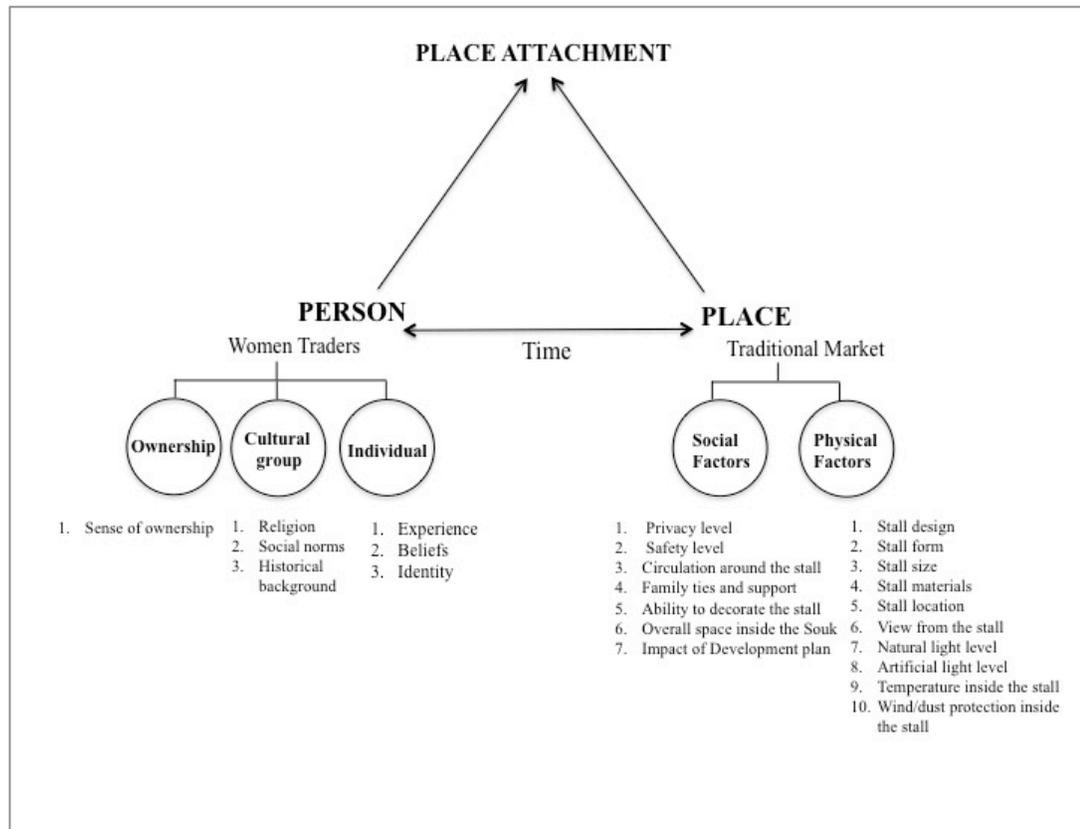


Figure 3. The Model of Place Attachment in Traditional Markets (Dashti, 2014).

Those characteristics will form the main criteria to conduct the study, which will investigate how women traders in Souk Wajif act upon place attachment and manifest cultural identity, mainly, after the recent development plan.

**The Issue - The Current Condition of Souk Wajif – Al Mubarakiya**

Several complaints were raised by women traders and visitors of Souk Wajif (Women's Market) regarding the new development plan, which was implemented by the Kuwaiti government to restore the Souk's interior space after the major fire in 2013 (Al-

Qabas, 2013) (Figure 4). Major issues such as the Souk's fixed layout, the compact concrete structure of women stalls and the odd use of materials inside Souk Wajif were raised lately as a reaction against the government's inconsiderate renovation plan. The local media highlighted the current conditions of Souk Wajif through its deteriorating condition and how the drastic fire seriously affected the Souk's major function and its historical structure.



*Figure 4.* The great loss of Souk Wajif's fire in 2013. (Al-Qabas, 2013).

Accordingly, the essence of space was lost not only due to the destruction, but also due to the new development plan by the government that transformed how the spaces used to be. Women's stalls, which were spontaneously arranged by their female owners, now reside in modern modular structures.

As can be seen, Souk Wajif is a dynamic component within the traditional fabric of Souk Al- Mubarakiya in Kuwait City; both are well kept with great historical and cultural values. Yet, their current condition was deteriorating and needed immediate intervention, which recently led to a governmental involvement to restore its architectural character and renovate the interior spaces of the Souk (Al-Rai, 2013). This study will test whether the new compact design impacted women traders' sense of ownership and

attachment to their past in the Souk as part of their cultural identity. There is a big difference in how the Souk's layout and stalls are created and how the new design changed the essence of that experience; both aspects will be discussed in this section.

To begin with, Souk Wajif is a major historical and social hub for cultural exchange; the original spatial layout of the Souk was created by an unplanned and spontaneous way, developing almost like a living organism until the present day. In the past, Souk Wajif occupied the central space surrounded by two rows of linear shops that specialized in men's goods. The significance of such a space was its unique nature that was constructed by gender roles, where local women only sold female goods and men's goods were displayed in the surrounding shops owned by local men traders. Although the space was confined and experienced a dense circulation of market visitors, each gender practiced its role within conventional social boundaries.

Inside Souk Wajif, women gained a field of power in the experiences as economic and cultural brokers (Jamal, 2004). The interconnection between physical space and the use of material culture created a fortified personal space that offered them territory, control for social interaction and identity expression (Al-Hajji, 2004). Given these points, the study explores how the changes of the physical space may have affected female sellers' identity expression and the notion of place attachment.

## The Traditional Souk Environment and the Redesign of Women's Stalls

The development plan implemented by the Kuwaiti government built fixed-design concrete stalls in modular layout (Al-Qabas, 2013). The design outcome resulted in compact stalls that transformed the whole shopping experience for both female sellers and visitors. The physical characteristics of the stalls are currently under question. The new stall design and layout is confined, repetitive and equally divided regardless of the needs of female sellers, which could affect the mechanism of social interaction and the dynamics of physical space inside the Souk (Ahmadi, 2011).



*Figure 5.* Interior space of women stalls in Souk Wajif before the development plan. (Smith, 2005).

The stalls used to be physically dynamic and offered women sellers larger, flexible room arranged by personal preferences, which enhanced their communication with each other and customers (Figure 5). Now, the newly developed fixed stalls created a rigid layout that confined women sellers and forced them, unwillingly, to conduct their business under restricted social interaction (Figure 6). In addition, the improper use of

space and materiality could jeopardize the traditional identity of female sellers by obstructing their notion of place making that is relevant to the identity of traditional Kuwaiti markets.



*Figure 6.* The Interplay Of Visual Architectural Elements, Textures And Materials. (Dashti, 2014).

In the past, Kuwaiti female sellers used to carve their niche inside Souk Wajif and conquered the central space through a transient process. Daily, women arrived with their goods and settled in the central space of the Souk; the way each woman arranged her goods created a personal defined space. In particular, the irregular display of goods formed the transient nature of the space, which assigned a unique identity and defined the visual character of the place. At the end of the day, female sellers packed their goods and return home leaving the place empty. This tradition established a sense of ownership and flexibility that enabled women sellers to display their goods according to preferred

location next to each other within the central space. Such transience lost its essence by the forced physical space. The permanency of the stalls removed the transient nature of the female seller building their own territory through the display of materials, textures and color (Figure 7). The idea of place making through confined space could have affected the previous sense of ownership and identity of female sellers and the overall experience of visitors (Al-Zaid, 2003).



*Figure 7.* The Contrast between the old stall's materials and the redesigned one. (Dashti, 2014).

## **Research Questions**

1. How place attachment is constructed in a redesigned Kuwaiti traditional market?

Drawing from the literature on place attachment, this thesis will take Scannel and Gifford's (2010) tripartite model for place attachment a step further by identifying the aspects and design characteristics of the stalls and the ways they influence place attachment within three measures: person, place and time.

- (1) What design characteristics come into play in this process?

- (2) How does material culture relate to place attachment?

2. What are the implications of this process for women sellers' social interaction and sense of ownership, and identity?

In addition to examining the impact on women seller's social interaction, sense of ownership of the current designed stalls, this study will draw from the current literature on place attachment to explore other factors that might influence the persistence of women seller's identity in relation to the new stall design. This research will examine a set of design traits to evaluate the new design of women stalls to better understand the physical and social aspects of traditional spaces.

## **Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to gain an understanding of, and measure, place attachment in traditional markets, and how women sellers produce space and express identity under the recent urban development. At the same time, this study will shed light over the importance of the role of women traders as the preservers of culture; their identity and persistence in the Souk represent the only authentic cultural practice

that is surviving through the modern lifestyle of Kuwait City. Their presence as a historic strip in the heart of at Kuwait City's traditional markets becomes a powerful statement of cultural identity, without their cultural presence, the Souk as well as the society will lose an irreplaceable entity of its history, culture and traditional architecture.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the new design of the women's stalls in Kuwaiti traditional market (Souk Wajif) to determine if it meets the needs of the women traders' in terms of function, privacy, social interaction, and aesthetic preferences, as well as its connection to the past. To this end, a case study will be conducted in a Kuwaiti traditional Souk, which includes architectural and interior elements that are commonly considered in evaluating traditional spaces, such as stall design & aesthetics, degree of space efficiency, building materials, quality of light, and circulation around the stall.

### **Research Implications**

This study broadens the knowledge of interior design practice and education based on traditional architectural concepts by identifying a cluster of design traits implemented in traditional spaces that influence Kuwaiti female's identity. Also, this study identifies ways to address women traders' needs and spatial requirements of the stalls inside the Souk, and proposes thoughtful design solutions that are culturally responsive. This will provide a helpful guideline for the government and policy makers for future developments to similar traditional public environments.

Besides demonstrating the impact of the new design of women stalls in in Souk Wajif on women traders' spatial needs and sense of ownership, this study generates a better understanding for the interior design profession on how to restore historic places

through addressing particular needs for users without eliminating their cultural identity, sense of ownership or their emotional connection with the past.

To conclude, the study investigates how Kuwaiti female traders feel about the new stall design, their adaptation process that maintains the production of place through physical and emotional bonds with space inside traditional markets. It will shed light on the new possibilities for understanding the transformation of personal boundaries and identity in traditional marketplaces that were redefined by its permanent structure after the development plan in year 2013. As a result, the overlap of material culture, physical design characteristics of the stalls and social interaction mold experience into symbols that communicate the basic dynamics of women's traditional identity in Kuwaiti culture.

This research will add to the literature on interior design, traditional architecture and identity, meaning of place, and place attachment. The purpose is to discuss the use of gender identity, space and material culture as significant, integral components of the built environment and the production of place, its meaning and sense of attachment. The next chapter will be a literature review and will cover various topics related to the study of place attachment and traditional markets in Kuwait.

### **Significance of The Study**

As a researcher, there is a need to know that the study is valid and that all aspects of the study—such as the research methods and design of the interview—will actually capture the data that the researcher was looking for as outlined in the problem statement.

Over the past century, there has been a major decline in preserving historical sites with great cultural significance in Kuwait City. One of the major development plans was

the restoration of Souk Al-Mubarkiyah including Souk Wajif. The development plan might fail to consider many aspects in designing the new stalls for women traders (Al-rai, 2013). Until now, little importance has been given to women traders' needs and spatial requirements in traditional Souk Wajif. Women traders are the authentic face of Kuwaiti culture, therefore, it is important for Bedouin women traders to preserve their identity and attachment in the Souk, so the Souk's essence is authentically well kept of. Souk Wajif would never exist without Bedouin women as traders, selling in traditional stalls became a practice that passed through generations, hence became an extension of their identity. Their physical existence is tied to how the design of Souk Wajif is well preserved for future generations.

This author hopes to demonstrate its effectiveness in addressing women traders' needs and spatial requirements of the stalls inside the Souk by focusing on the thoughtful design solutions women traders came up with as an adapting strategy to the current stall design. This will provide a helpful guideline for the government and policy makers for future developments to similar traditional public environments. Besides, this study will generate a better understanding for the interior design profession of how to restore historic places through emphasizing the importance of involving the user in planning processes.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

A considerable amount of literature has been published on place attachment. It demonstrated that people develop emotional and symbolic bonds with their social and physical environment (Debenedetti et al., 2014). What the literature did not cover in terms of space and identity is how physical space is experienced inside traditional markets and its role in the architectural manifestation of culture. Studies have also shown that people are willing to donate substantial amount of time, money, or effort to the preservation or protection of places they treasure (Halpenny, 2010).

Interior design is a dynamic concept and ephemeral in nature, the physical environment is molded to fit users' needs and tasks. Once its function changes, the environment completely transforms to fit users' new occupation, requirement's and functional comfort. According to Yildirim (2016), walls, floors, furniture, and materials are only the infrastructure of interior space. Users are at the core of interior spaces, spatial design and quality of space. There are some distinctive factors defining space quality such as; form, texture, light and color. Subsequently, space quality is influenced by physical and psychological techniques that help to increase people's sense of comfort and belonging.

This chapter will be structured according to the literature of place attachment and the theoretical models associated with it, which will be under three major sections: Place Attachment, Place, and Person. The first section will cover the theoretical background on place attachment. The overview of Place literature is followed to cover topics related to place meaning and place identity, followed by traditional markets in Kuwait. Last, the

Person literature covers human behavior and space and gender roles as these relate to the scope of the study, and to women traders.

## **Place Attachment Theory**

### **Overview**

Place attachment is understood as the relationship that develops through one's strong emotional bond with a specific location (Debenedetti et al., 2014). This relationship promotes and provides stability, familiarity, and security. The degree of place attachment might change as individuals and physical environments develop, the environment ages, or any changes that interfere with the social and physical activities in place (Brown, Perkins & Brown, 2003). It is significant to understand how female traders in traditional Souks maintain their identity and survive through modernity, changing sociocultural standards and overwhelming alteration of traditional spaces.

Place attachment is constructed as a result of people's interaction with a particular physical environment and its attached meaning (Arefi, 1999). In the field of environmental theory, researchers such as Gifford (2002) described the notion of place attachment as the feelings people acquire toward places with great familiarity and sense of belonging. Through time, people become attached to a place, and start identifying themselves with that place based on self-concepts (Guiliani, 2003).

According to Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, Heidari & Behdadfar (2013), place attachment is defined as "the emotional impact of a particular place that people become attached to it by its emotional and cultural bonds" (P.856). This creates a sense of belonging through cultural exchange and social communication. Here, experience is

based on behavioral and cognitive interactions (Stedman, 2003). The interaction happens both on a conscious and subconscious level among people, social groups and social-physical spaces. It is important to realize that the concept of place attachment is not static; if one considers how places and feelings for places shift over time. If one's place has changed in some way, people may experience some degree of emotional distress ranging from temporary annoyance to sadness, regret, worry, depression, anger, fear, or grief (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013).

Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, Heidari, and Behdadfar (2013) have defined place attachment as emotional dependency to a particular place that transforms into an element of place identity. In addition, understanding a place as an activity that merges through psychological and social processes among its users and the physical characteristics of space help people to make sense of place and assign meanings to it. Making sense of place strengthens peoples' sense of belonging, ownership, and dependence.

Manzo and Devine-Wright (2013) have explored the concept of place attachment from a phenomenological perspective. From their viewpoint, place is not the physical environment that is separate from people associated with it, but rather, the individual, normally unnoticed phenomenon of person-experience –place. In this sense, one can identify and measure some degree of place attachment by identifying predictive factors such as age, social status, physical features and time spent in place.

Kopec (2006) discussed the concept of place attachment from a psychological perspective. He defined place attachment as the person's bond with the social and physical environments of a place to maintain psychological benefits (Kopec, 2006). There are settings that have deep meaning for people because their identities are

intricately woven into those places. In the environmental psychology theory, the notion of place attachment serves as a restorative environment due to the way it defines who we are and supports our self-image and most importantly gives us a sense of belonging, freedom or both (psychological security).

Despite the many definitions and reflections on place attachment found in the literature, most concepts suggest that the emotional bond and the nature of interaction between people and the build environment contribute in the formation of self and group identity. To emphasize this concept, Gifford (2002) highlighted the emotional bond that keeps people attached to certain places through time factor. Also, Yazdanfar (2013) explained the same concept within a cultural perspective, while Hashemnezhad et al.'s (2013), Manzo and Devine-Wright's (2013) and Kopec's (2006) interpretation of place attachment have the most relevant concepts to this study, due to the fact that people's activity in place merges into physical and psychological processes, which in this case, transform women sellers inside traditional markets into elements of a place's identity.

With this in mind, traditional markets are perceived as a social and cultural container with both functional and emotional attachment; they influence how female sellers construct their identity and identify with the overall character of the Souk. The key aspect relative to this study is to focus on the functional attachment (Ujang & Dola, 2007), which is developed when a place feels significant to its users in order to fulfill their needs. Users need to interact with an appealing environment that supports their behavioral and social interactions in order to fulfill their functional needs (Smaldone, 2005).

In order to understand the concept of place attachment as a dynamic relationship, one must be aware that there are factors that influence the nature and level of place attachment, which has a significant impact on the creation of place and its embedded meaning to its users.

### **Factors Influencing Place Attachment**

Many studies in the literature of architecture and urban design, particularly in the field of environmental psychology, discussed the concept of place attachment, sense of place, meaning of place and place identity from different perspectives. In order to better understand how space is created, it is important to classify factors that influence the creation of place attachment and facilitate meaningfulness, according to (Yazdanfar, 2013):

- **Physical Factors:** Such as spatial layout, place setting, architectural elements, place status in urban setting, and its relationship to the surrounding environment.
- **Social Factors:** A positive relationship between the physical factors of a place and people's satisfaction is created through social communication. Positive social communication facilitates meaningfulness for place to its users.
- **Cultural Factors:** Place attachment is based on people's participation and social networking. Cultural interaction is a dynamic and influential factor in place attachment. People from similar social groups usually participate in social activities according to their sense of place.
- **Personal Factors:** People select and feel attached to a particular place due to conscious and unconscious tendencies and personal characteristics. Since place reflects identities, personal preferences and intimacy in social interaction

empowers mental identities. So, mental identity about a place is overlapped with individual identity, which is based on gender, class, race, cultural background, power, liberty and common interest.

- **Memories and Experiences:** When people experience a place for long period of time, a place becomes a symbol of that experience, while memories and communication are a large part of that experience. Feelings that took place within a particular setting become a reflection of the experience and strengthen emotional communication. A person-place relationship is an interaction process rather than cause and effect.
- **Place Satisfaction:** Place satisfaction depends heavily on person's perception of place, quality and security (physical, social and emotional security). People's perception is conscious, unconscious, objective, subjective, personal or social. The resulting satisfaction of place is based on meeting people's expectations and needs.
- **Interaction and Activity Features:** Activities and interaction in place are classified as human-place and human-human processes. They play an important role in the promotion of place attachment. The interaction with physical and social place can be seen in the form of meaning, behavioral, emotional and cognitive interactions. Activities in place can be culturally or socially oriented such as festivals, periodic celebrations, cultural and religious celebrations.
- **Time Factor:** Time is a big factor in strengthening the relationship between people and places. Residency in long periods of time increases place attachment and rootedness.

Another key point that is significant to consider for understanding the emotional connection between people and places is through the six processes of place attachment. Those processes explain the comfort level developed after people's involvement with place, which determines the level of attachment and interaction with place.

### **The Six Processes of Place Attachment**

Manzo (2013) delved deeper into the notion of place attachment and explained the comfort level experienced by individuals in public space. She assigned two psychological behaviors that express the degree of comfort by people while being active in public space, the inwardness and outwardness feelings. It means the insiderness and outsiderness of oneself and refers to the degree of comfort and "in-place-ness" or discomfort and "out-place-ness" felt by the experiencer in a public place. Here, experiences are entirely considered 'unselfconscious' in public place.

Place as defined by its inward and outward aspects requires consideration of the possible ways by which a place does or does not connect itself with and responds to the larger world of which it is a part. In this sense, the inward nature of the traditional market exaggerates the inward nature of women's stalls by being surrounded with wall-to-wall shops. The inward emphasis may evoke a strong sense of insiderness, security and ownership. However, the strong sense of outsiderness formed by the Souk's open layout allows the women sellers to feel the outsiderness of the place with which they exchange and interact.

Given these points, this type of traditional built environment not only supports a strong sense of inwardness (e.g. women sellers from common race, ethnicity, or lifestyle) but also allows for outwardness (sellers and customers from different backgrounds

intermingling in the market). This balancing act reinforces both physical and social attachment to place.

Manzo (2013) brought attention to the generative aspects of place through six processes, which explain what places are and how they work as follows:

1. **Place Interaction:** It is the regular actions, behaviors, situations and events that unfold in the typical days or seasons in place. Manzo (2013) considers interaction as a vital factor because it is the major engine through which individuals carry their everyday lives and the place gains activity through an environmental presence.
2. **Place Identity:** It is the process by which people are associated with certain places, they consider that place as a significant part of their world and identity and self-worth.
3. **Place Release:** It involves the unexpected experiences, encounters and events in a place. Place release as a process undermines place when the pleasing nature of place becomes unsettled and offers enjoyable surprises and unexpectedness; like meeting accidentally old friends or enjoying live street performances and music.
4. **Place Realization:** Refers to the palpable presence of place, or the environmental ensemble of place (its particular physical constitution, building, furnishings) along with human activities and meanings, which evoke a distinctive place ambience and character.

Place realization as a process could also notice the inappropriate aspect of place, such as insensitive design, lack of care, or disruptive event, disorder or any action that works against place interaction and identity.

5. **Place Creation:** Refers to how human beings are active in relation to place, their actions and commitment to a particular place leads to better visualization and understanding of what are the real needs of a place. It can solve critical encounters such as misunderstanding of a place, thoughtless policies, designs or actions.
6. **Place Intensification:** Identifies the independent power of well-crafted policy, design and fabrication to revive and strengthen the place. In this sense, place is active in relation to people, since physical and spatial changes in place reconfigure human actions and experiences. The result is that place becomes better and well designed for example, redesigning wider sidewalks, creative storefronts, or dramatically enhancing street life.

In relating to the six processes of place attachment, one must emphasize that in well-used and liked places, all six processes are typically present and involved and all of them are equally important. Moreover, all six processes contribute to the modes and intensity of the emotional bonds people develop with a certain place. Also, place interaction and place identity add stronger emotional feelings, environmental experiences and meanings.

### **Models of Place Attachment**

Due to numerous varying opinions on the definition and components of place attachment, organizational models have been scarce until recent years. A noteworthy conceptual framework is the tripartite model, developed by Scannell and Gifford (2010), which defines the variables of place attachment as the three Ps: Person, Process, and Place.

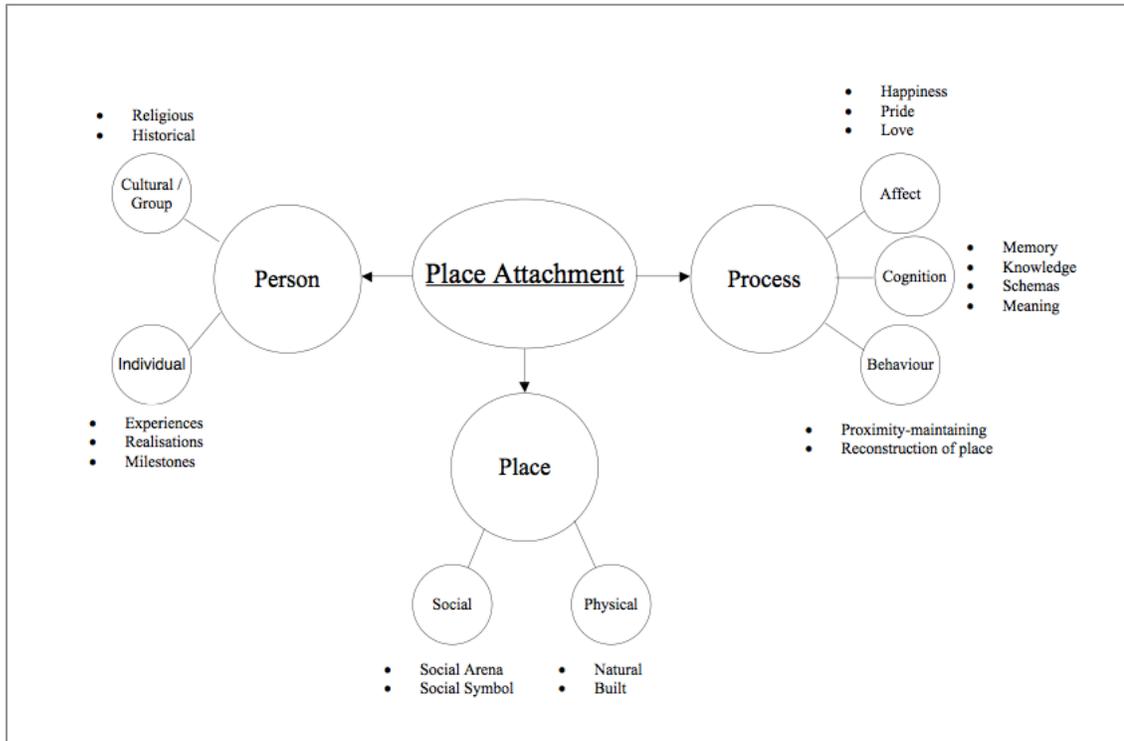


Figure 8. The tripartite model of place attachment. “From “Defining Place Attachment: A Tripartite organizing framework (Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Scannell and Gifford (2010) agreed there are two dimensions of place, the physical and the social (Figure 8). The person dimension includes both individual and group factors, and attempts to uncover “who is attached to?” and “to what extent is the attachment based on individually and collectively held meaning?” (Scannell & Gifford, 2010, p. 2). Within the ‘person factors’ are aspects such as religion, history, experience, realizations and milestones. The psychological process is concerned with “how are affect, cognition, and behavior manifested in the attachment?” (Scannell & Gifford, 2010, p. 2). The model also includes the way individuals relate to place and the nature of the interactions that occur in the environment.

Another organizational model done by Waxman (2006) in one of her studies of place attachment, explores how gathering behavior in coffee shops contributes to place

attachment. The model explores another layer of the concept of place attachment. It elaborates on the physical and social factors that influence place attachment in selected coffee shops (Figure 9).

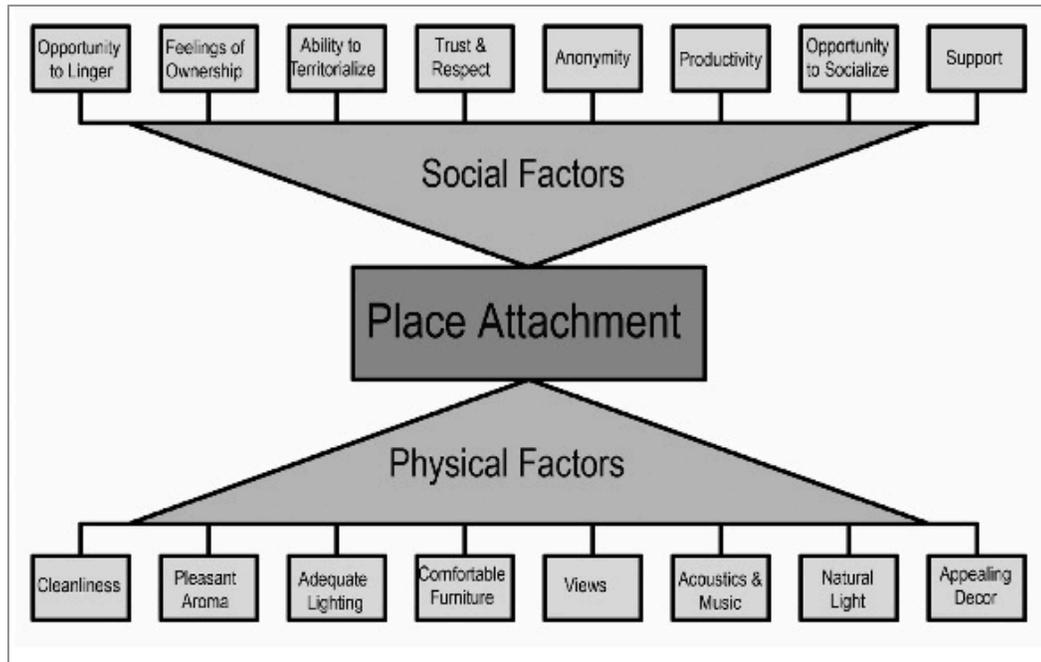


Figure 9. The place attachment model for coffee shops. “From Social and Physical Factors Influencing Place Attachment”, (Waxman, 2006).

Social factors include: opportunity to linger, feelings of ownership, ability to territorialize, trust and respect, anonymity, productivity, opportunity to socialize, and support. Physical factors include, cleanliness, pleasant aroma, adequate lighting, comfortable furniture, views, acoustics and music, natural light, and appealing décor (Waxman, 2006).

To summarize, place attachment has been identified in various ways and areas within the literature. In environmental psychology and anthropology, place attachment has been both theorized and measured. The interpretations of the authors of such works provide useful background information for this study and to identify knowledge gaps,

which are in need of attention, particularly, on how women traders establish self-identity and maintain a sense of belonging inside traditional markets after the major development. The organizational models of Scannel & Gifford (2010) and Waxman (2006) will set the parameters of the study and provide a useful approach in understanding female needs and spatial requirements in traditional spaces. To proceed, the literature review expands on the “place” and “person” parts of the model.

## **Place**

### **Overview of Concepts of Place and Sense of Place**

One of the significant goals of architecture is creating sense of place, which evolves as the unique experience people attain from interacting with a place’s distinctive characteristics. Places play an important role in constructing people's social and personal identity (Davenport & Anderson, 2005).

Architecturally speaking, physical environments influence human perception within two dimensions; physical and emotional (Yazdanfer, 2013). The physical dimension includes form and function of a setting, while the emotional aspect includes feelings, memories and meanings that people interpret through their interaction with place. When people's perception engages with these two dimensions, space becomes place (Cross, 2001).

Madanipour (2003) delved deeper into the concept of place and its embedded meaning. He sees space as an abstract concept where a place is part of space that is occupied by individuals and things. The interaction between people and space develops

value and meaning; and it is instant and dynamic, the resulting experience creates sense of place.

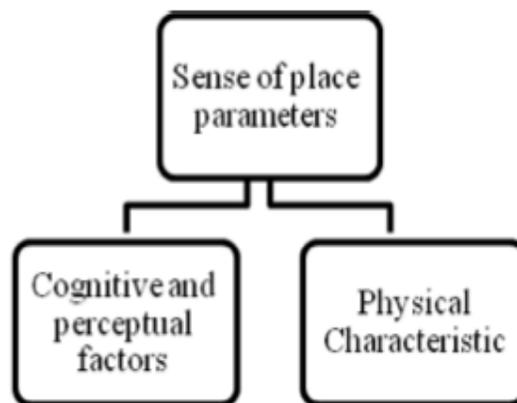
From a phenomenological point of view, sense of place is seen as people's connection to the place through symbols and daily social activities. It can be developed over time and become deeper as a supportive environment (Gustafson, 2001). People experience place through three merging factors of form, function and meaning to create sense of place, then, its identity.

Ujang and Dola (2007) defined sense of place as “the point where the physical activity and meaning are intertwined in the people experience of a place” (p. 59). Researchers did a lot of work regarding the influence of physical environment and activity on the meaning of place. However, the relationship between these three factors has not been adequately explored within traditional markets’ environment, particularly, in the Middle Eastern culture.

To emphasize, meaning of place is associated with the perceptual and the psychological aspects of environmental experience (Lobo, 2004). As a result, place attachment is formed as a connection between a person and the physical environment (Ujang & Dola, 2007). There are several factors that impact place attachment and cause change between the environment and its users. Factors such as development process, length of residence and change in function has a significant impact on the bond between physical space and people (Perkins & Long, 2002) and have been discussed earlier in this chapter.

Under those circumstances, sense of place is developed when a level of comfort and feeling of safety are associated with a particular space, which therefore translates into a sense of belonging. A place can be identified that generally provides (Kopec, 2006) :

- A sense of continuity,
- Reinforces self – identity,
- Enables users to get things done,
- Provides a sense of individuality (distinctiveness from others), and
- Provides a sense of belonging.



*Figure 10.* Sense of place. (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, Heidari, & Behdadfar, 2013).

Tracing the above aspects through the study will be significant to understand how sense of place is developed through time. As mentioned above, sense of place is a subjective experience of people about a particular environment that stimulates their senses and conscious feelings about places. There are three factors which create a sense of place: cognitive factors, perceptual factors and physical characteristics (Hashemnezhad Yazdanfar, Heidari, & Behdadfar, 2013; Figure 10).

According to Stedman (2002), sense of place is a collection of symbolic meanings, attachment and satisfactions with a particular spatial setting. He categorized this concept in different levels with respect to place and its physical and social activities. As shown in (Figure 11), sacrifice for a place is the highest point of sense of place with deepest commitment. A good example to explain it is during a war, citizens would sacrifice their lives to defend their country. Lack of sense of place is a level where people are familiar with a place but do not have any particular emotional connection with it, so they do not integrate themselves with that place.

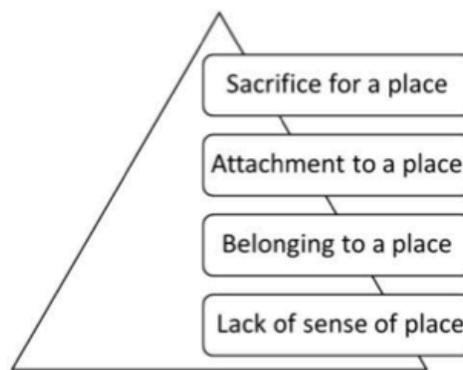


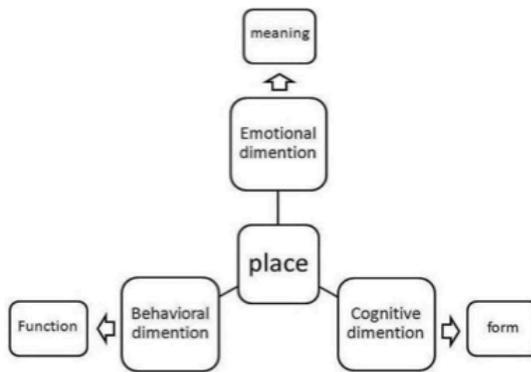
Figure 11. . . Different scales of sense of place. (Stedman, 2010)

According to Kopec (2006) the idea of place depends on how individuals conceptualize the world around them. In environmental psychology, the meaning of place encompasses the three notions of place identity, sense of place and place attachment; each determines a host of emotions that define the meaning of place within a physical environment. Meaning of place is produced when people see themselves in relation to others and a particular environment. Over time, people express emotional bonds that are developed to a particular place. The meaning of place can be represented between the

three poles of self, others and environment. In addition, a number of underlying dimensions of meaning emerge: distinction, valuation, continuity and change. Therefore, it is valuable to question how women traders relate to their space and build relationships through the material world as a form of communication with each other, the customers and the overall spatial layout of the new stall design.

Gifford (2002) described four processes relative to place meaning: attachment, ideological communication (an abstract concept a place or a building signifies), personal communication (what the site says about its occupants) and, architectural response (the building function is relative to its form or appearance) (Gifford, 2002). According to (Kopec, 2006) the way people relate to their experiences and perceptions of a setting will affect the level of attachment to it. Studies define the elements that attach people to place and affect their wellbeing evolve through their personal characteristics, the availability of facilities, opportunities, resources and lastly, their sense of belongings to a particular environment.

Jorgensen & Stedman (2001) defined three dimensions of place in his studies. The emotional dimension: people's feelings about place. The cognitive dimensions: people's beliefs about place. The behavioral dimension: people's function in place. Therefore, creating elements of a place as form, function and meaning correspond to cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions of place (Figure 12).



*Figure 12* Dimensions of creating places. (Jorgensen, 2001).

To conclude, researchers focus on three main aspects when investigating the sense of place concept; place attachment, sense of belonging, and place identity. These are needed in order to understand the spirit of the place, its character, and how people interact with it under particular conditions (Stedman, 2003). In this study, the concept of place attachment introduced a measurable dimension of sense of place to the female traders inside Souk Wajif. Their interaction with the market's social and physical environment defines its embedded meaning through time. Eventually, this connection will also influence the formation of self-identity and sense of ownership for women traders.

### **Meaning of Place and Place Identity**

According to the identity process theory (Speller, 2000), the formation of identity with respect to the physical environment is seen as a dynamic, social product of human interaction with place. Here, the formation process of self-identity is guided by different principles according to culture. In every culture, these principles vary according to time and context (Hauge, 2007).

Places represent personal memories, in particular, places located within socio-historical context (Twigger-Ross, Bonaiuto, & Brekwell, 2003); they also represent social memories (shared histories). The point to be made here is that places do not have permanent meaning, their meaning is reproduced continually, and therefore, their contribution to identity construction is never the same and always dynamic.

Place identity refers to how people incorporate a place into the larger concept of their own identities or sense of self. Place identity cognitions have two major functions: first, it defines who we are. Second, it is a defending /protecting mechanism from various settings and properties. A good example is when a cultural minority tries to express its cultural identity through the manifestation of physical space such as neighborhood, buildings or streets, the cultural expression of a particular space offers a greater sense of territory to claim that space by those cultural groups to fit within the larger social fabric (Hauge, 2007). On a cultural level, people may integrate a place into their cultural identity, such as how women traders are identified with Souk Wajif's environment and would not perfectly fit anywhere else outside the Souk's environment.

Twigger-Ross et al. (2003) defined place identity as the incorporation of place into the larger concept of self. People can maintain a positive self-esteem through their bonding with a particular place, and detach themselves from places with negative impact on their self-esteem.

According to Davenport and Anderson (2005), place identity refers to the composites of place characteristic, features and attributes of physical form that are defined by place activity, and the users' perception and interaction with those characteristics as a unique experience. Since meaning and attachment construct place

identity, a person's identity becomes an extension of place identity and expresses attachment through interplay of affects, emotions, knowledge and beliefs (Smaldone et al., 2005).

While place identity is a result of these components, the loss of meaning and attachment to a particular place have negative implications on an individual's psychological wellbeing and their bonding with the collective identity, memories and history of that particular place (Gieryn, 2000). With this in mind, this research will investigate how female sellers experience the change in their physical and social environment and its impact of their sense of ownership.

Traditional markets, as social and cultural places, have functional and emotional attachments that influence how female sellers perceive their identity. The key aspect relative to this study is to focus on the functional attachment (Ujang & Dola, 2007), which is developed when a place feels significant to its users in order to fulfill their needs. Users need to interact with an appealing environment that supports behavioral and social interaction in order to fulfill their functional needs (Smaldone et al., 2005).

Place identity is strongly associated with the emotional type of attachment (Ujang & Dola, 2007) that is formed by users' engagement and identification with a physical environment through activities that are associated with place, people and emotions (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). This is reflected on female sellers' desire to maintain their identity of their place by having special feelings, memories and traditions toward their area in the traditional market.

Therefore, it is significant to correlate between the notion of place identity, its embedded meaning and the forms of interaction between people and places. This

correlation enriches the relationship between people and places by incorporating the experience of place into the larger concept of self-identity.

### **Forms of Interaction Between Humans and Places**

In people’s relation to interior spaces, individuals can use varying degrees of their selves, physically, emotionally and mentally, particularly, in work performances, which has implications for both their wellbeing and personal experiences (Khan, 1990)

According to Hashemnezhad et al. (2013), the form of interaction between humans and spaces is developed in three dimensions: cognitive, behavioral and emotional dimension. Each aspect leads to a particular form of interaction within the physical environment (Table 1). The cognitive aspect of interacting with place helps users to understand the form of elements in space, geometry of space and orientation. The behavioral aspect allows users to perceive the capabilities a space holds to its users to function with efficiency. The emotional aspect represents the degree of attachment to place when users develop meaning and memories associated with it. All three aspects will guide the study in determining each type of relationship and how to be measured effectively with respect to the concept of place attachment.

Table 1. *Different Aspects of Human Interaction with the Environment and its Association with Different Components of Places* (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, Heidari & Behdadfar , 2013).

	<b>Type of Relationship</b>	<b>Details of of Relationship</b>	<b>Place components</b>
<b>interaction between humans and places</b>	Cognitive	General perception in order to understand the geometry of space and orientation	Form
	Behavioral	Perception of space capabilities to obviate the needs	Function
	Emotional	Perception of satisfaction and attachment to place	Meaning

Much of the interior design psychology literature assumes that human benefits increase automatically from improved interior environmental quality, particularly in working environments. Given that ambient preferences may be subject variation to personal needs as well as variability within a given person over time, it is likely that control over temperature, noise, air circulation, and quality of light are an important component of a healthy and effective work environment (Heerwagen, 2006).

### **Personal Dimensions of Being in Place**

Interior environments are far more than merely the physical spaces people inhabit. For most people, these environments nurture a sense of “being in place.” According to Gallimore and Lopez (2002), this concept has multiple overlapping and complexly interwoven dimensions. Frequently occupied interior spaces over time become physiologically familiar as repeated daily routines of use, which generate a ‘body awareness’ of the setting through a process of habituation and attachment. These dimensions are interwoven in creating the meanings of interior spaces and identity of its users (Rowles, Oswald & Hunter, 2003). Within this type of body awareness, the primary concern is with ways in which the environment might be modified to facilitate activities of daily living within socio-cultural context of interior spaces.

Relationships between immediate interior environmental settings and outcomes such as physical health, psychological well-being, and life quality become especially deserving of attention in determining the physical and social factors that impact the quality of interior space and its users, Heerwagen (2006)

discussed the aspects in which the quality of space is viewed in the context of changing circumstances (health, emotions, personal needs) influenced and shaped by evolving transactions of such interior environments. Emphasis is also placed on gender differences in the use and meaning of interior spaces to female and male users, which might evoke different meanings and use.

### **Memories**

Memory may serve as a facilitator of attachment to places both on a conscious and unconscious level; there are different forms of memory that may contribute to people's emotional bonds with places. Declarative memory (what, where and when something is remembered) is usually conscious and procedural; (I know how) is usually unconscious, where most people's emotional bonds with places are grounded (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013).

Memory can influence place continuity. Place continuity is one form of attachment where individuals connect the present to the past with the hope that this bond will continue in the future (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010). This sense of continuity can be obtained through the time of inhabiting a particular place and the associated emplaced experiences. Still, this sense of continuity can be achieved through symbolic means that involve intentional focus on the past, such as the personal past, family history, or the place itself. (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013) For example, by inquiring into the past of one's city, old neighborhood or one's family, they combine with the self and it will make oneself a part of their history.

According to Kenz (2006), place-related memories, particularly those that concern childhood places are an important source of personal identity and sense of

continuity in that particular place. So, the richer were place-related memories, the stronger the sense of belonging to the place will be. Not to forget that length of residence is a key factor in strengthening the relation between memories and sense of belonging to a place.

Nostalgia is a powerful psychological instrument to restore self-continuity, where people spontaneously rely on it mostly when the 'self' is disrupted by major life turns and traumatic life events (Farrar, 2011). Furthermore, recent research about the psychological functions of nostalgia by Sedickides, Wildchust, Gartner, Routledge, and Arndt (2008) revealed that nostalgia is an adaptive feeling, "it helps to put together broken parts, builds a bridge between past and present, increases self-esteem and life satisfaction, and reinforces social ties" (p. 64). Also it increases the ability to strengthen peoples' bond with the present inhabited place.

Still, a conscious focus on the past may be a successful means of restoring disrupted place continuity among people who are attached to particular historic places. As Lewicka (2013) described memory as a 'glue' that connects people to their places. In her discussion of 'In Search of Roots', memories can be acquired through living in places with a time factor to develop. With the direct emphasis on place attachment, there is an interest in the history of the place itself. People generally consider historical places as more personally meaningful to them than places with no history (Nowell, Berkowitz, Deacon, & Foster-Fishman, 2006).

## **Time**

Place attachment has a temporal dimension as Lewicka (2013) noted. It implies "anchoring" of one's emotions with a particular object or place, which strengthens one's

feeling of belonging, willingness to stay close, and wish to return back when away. Time, as a temporal connection to place is strongly influenced by Individualism, which has been established as the main influencer of place attachment (Kopec, 2006), yet there is a desire among researchers to create a list of concrete variables that account for differing extents of place attachment among individuals. At the forefront of proposed variables is time dependence (Perkins & Long, 2002). It is believed that increased length of residence in a location increases the attachment a person has to that location. Over extended periods of time, place identity can develop (Hauge, 2007). Place identity is defined as an individual's perception of self as a member of a particular environment (Speller, 2000). Other proposed positively correlated variables are ownership (i.e. of home, land, shops) and social interactions. Some inversely related variables that have been suggested are building size (Stedman, 2002) and age (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001) impact the relationship between individuals and places. With Souks being there for generations, time will be a factor to consider.

### **Sense of Community**

Lewicka (2013) identified sense of community as the feelings of association and belongingness to a group that are formed based on social bonding, which is developed as an emotional connection based on shared history, interests, or concerns of that particular group. It is important to clarify that there are core elements to sense of community that are directly tied to place attachment. Those elements include feeling of physical rootedness in the community, social bondedness with one's neighborhood, place identity and interdependence. All serve as effective elements in strengthening place attachment

and identity of individuals within the same group (Francis, Giles-Corti, Wood, & Knuiman, 2012).

### **Embodiment of Place**

The term *embodiment* has a phenomenological sense, which can refer to the things people consciously notice about the role of their bodies through acts of conscious reflection. The deliberation of those acts of conscious reflections aid in shaping people's self-identities, lived experiences and culture (Brandt, 2000).

Metaphorically, people become the living embodiment of space and gain the power to make their presence fade or blend through the living experience. While, psychologically, embodied space becomes symbolic particularly when the social and environmental influences are inseparable and form the experience as a whole (Rohrer, 2007).

This has found theoretic support from Merleau-Ponty's notion of embodiment that referred not only to the lived experience of our own bodies but also to the ways in which experience of other living bodies moving differs from our experiences of other moving objects in the physical world (Toadvine, 2009). It is more of two different experiences, the individual experience versus the other individuals in space experience, happening at once.

Kosslyn, Thompson, Wraga, and Alpert (2001) argued that embodiment means not just the psychological body, but also the body-in-space, the body as it interacts with the physical and social environment. Many of the objects people interact with everyday are in fact cognitive artifacts they have designed with their bodies in mind. Think about how the stall and *Abbaya* as cultural artifacts were spatially occupied by women sellers.

Such cultural artifacts perform a similar function in that they also embody generations of knowledge gleaned from socio-cultural practices. Physical artifacts became repositories of knowledge, and they were constructed from socio-cultural constructs so that they fit the physical context of the Souk at its proper form of embodiment. Furthermore, through the combination and superimposition of social constructs and cultural practice, artifacts such as the stall and the traditional dress came to embody kinds of knowledge that would be extremely difficult to represent mentally.

Continuing to examine literature on embodiment of place, Sen and Silverman (2014) delved deeper into the philosophy of making place, space and embodiment. The authors discussed the idea of place making by examining how people engage the material and social worlds of the urban environment. Such engagement usually happens through the rhythms of everyday life, and how bodily responses are implicated in the making and experiencing of place.

In this study, it is important to understand the historical context of the traditional market where female's identity is influenced by the variation of those aspects through different historical periods and time. The transformation of space might have a great impact on their sense of belonging, ownership and security from one aspect. The other aspect would be the change of the Souk's environment, which will have an impact on women traders' psychological health, social interaction and self-expression in the recently renovated traditional Souk. For this reason, the next section will include an overview of how traditional markets in Islamic cities evolved, what are their main design characteristics and influence on culture.

## **Traditional Markets**

**Traditional markets in Islamic cities.** The traditional Souks in Islamic culture have a spirit that gives the market experience its uniqueness. Inside traditional Souks, people exchange culture through functional, ritual activities and periodic festivities. Preserving the traditional character of physical environments in public sphere has a significant role in reinforcing place attachment and identity particularly to female traders in the women's market (Mortada, 2003).

A typical city cannot be defined without the existence of traditional marketplace. The market serves as the city's focal point with four major roles; social, economic, political and religious (Rejabi & Safahn, 2010) which became the factors for cultural exchange and economic progress in every society (Nejad, 2005). As a result, traditional markets became vital as a communication channel between citizens (Kazerooni & Pourjafar, 2014) by reinforcing social encouragement, traditions and cultural identity. Traditional markets can be seen as a symbol of religious and cultural harmony in Muslim society. They are also seen as political centers for protest against governmental systems, which helps civilians in practicing their rights (Pourjafar & Pourjafar, 2011).

Traditional Souks in a typical Islamic city are vital; they are considered as cultural containers for daily practice of beliefs, arts, music, food and social interaction (Kazerooni & Pourjafar 2014). The Souk plays various roles in shaping the society's political, religious, economic, social and cultural identity (Asadpour, 2011). In the past, traditional Souks ' also known as bazars' served as a common ground for daily happenings, which triggers people's interactions such as trade transactions and cultural activities (Ahmadi,

2011) forming social activities that expand cultural identity within the market by its users (Kazerooni & Pourjafar, 2014).

With attention to the urban integration that is generated by the Souk's evolving sociocultural fabric; traditional Souks have major influence on the growth of society in a holistic perspective. They became indispensable organs of the unified urban system. Therefore, traditional Souks create a sense of unity by merging the different layers of social class in Muslim society (Mezaheri, 2006). They provide a sense of cohesion and integrity among citizens, and the different parts of the Islamic City (Pourjafar & Pourjafar, 2011).

Hakim (1986) defined the traditional Souk as follows:

“ Souk or Suq (plural Aswaq), the term means the place for goods and necessities (i.e., market) and is used in place names for streets and other localities where there is a market. It usually precedes the market's commodity (i.g., Souk Al-Attarine- the Perfumer's market). The Souk is one of the three pre-requisites for an Arabic Islamic city. Its urban integration, development and characteristics are considered as a unique contribution to the development of the city.” (p. 80)

Economically, traditional Islamic cities evolved from small towns whose economic activities were either associated with the sea or desert, or other trading routes with nearby cities and regions. The most important characteristic of these cities is the comprehensive integration of various activities into the physical and architectural development patterns of the city, so as to create an intertwined social and economic fabric. As a result, the Souk became an important and significant functioning element in these traditional cities (Ahmadi, 2010).

In view of the architectural design of traditional Souks; interior spaces inside those Souks emerged from the same architectural principles implemented in the urban design of traditional Islamic cities. To illustrate, traditional city patterns evolved from concepts that maintained the city walls and defined the cities' positive shape in space. They maintained the concepts of the center as a single point in space that moves in time and created central paths within the city's urban fabric, which is similar to the linear element formed by the central space inside traditional Souk or bazaar (Figure 13). This reorientation towards a moving point introduced a more vital planning concept, which even today, accepts growth and change as natural phenomena of existence. Central to this system is the belief that humans exist most wholesomely within a physical environment that is analogous to them. Here, the city in its character is thought to mimic the human anatomy, social behavior and identity as a whole (Mezaheri, 2006).

As the Souk grows, the vital backbone of the city evolves, and the pedestrian streets leading into the city's body proper insert themselves as ribs. Within this structure and in proximity to the skeletal center, the vital organs of the city develop: bath houses, schools, caravansaries, granaries, bakeries, water cisterns, tea houses and the numerous stores of the merchants and craftsmen. This structural form represents the religious, political, financial and social integration of the traditional Islamic city.



*Figure 13.* Example of traditional bazaar space in Islamic architecture, Iran (Nejad, 2005).

Buildings were always grouped or clustered together in order to reduce as much as possible the area exposed to harsh climatic conditions. Streets were narrow, deep and irregular, designed to give minimum exposure to the hot sun at any time as well as reducing the effect of hot dry winds and sandstorms. Buildings along traditional accessways or pathways had high walls and shading devices to provide proper coverage and shade from the sun. Traditional Souks often had arcades that were designed with a variety of features unique to the region or locale. Souk arcades in older Islamic cities such as in

Isfahan or Tunis evolved into more sophisticated structures using brick vaulting or dome systems (Smith, 2005).

It is important to consider that each city maintain the essence of its traditional architecture by its unique design characteristics, social norms and cultural practices. The next section will illustrate major architectural principles of traditional Souks, which will assist in understanding how traditional Souks are designed to address social and physical daily needs.

### **The Architectural Principles of Traditional Souks**

The traditional Souk is considered as one of the most significant socio-spatial systems in Middle Eastern cities (Nejad, 2005). The study of traditional markets with respect to its spatial level as well as socio-cultural aspect is a key issue to understand how urban socio-cultural structure and spatial form interact with each other to construct cultural identity. Souk Wajif was and still is the center of the social and economic activities of Kuwait City, hence it is called socio-commercial bazaar (Nejad, 2005). The socio-commercial bazaars generally have a linear form and a row of shops on each side that are covered with elevated ceiling, which create a spacious void inside the market where it becomes the center of spatial configuration.

Mortada (2003) discussed the architectural design concepts of traditional markets and the environmental influences on its spatial design as follows:

- **Compaction of mass:** minimum external surface, maximum internal volume
- **Orientation of form:** orient building to cardinal directions. Minimize external openings and protect all openings with adequate shade and reduce glare.
- **Use of shadow:** use hard shadows from buildings and soft shadows from vegetation to provide needed shadow.

- **Use of wind and water:** provide cool air movement at low level over water through shaded atrium and draw hot air naturally at high level.
- **Use of light:** borrow light for rooms from glare proof and heat reduced central atriums of light. Quality vs. quantity of light takes great consideration in traditional markets
- **Building materials:** use local building materials for construction purposes such as clay, rock, sand, wood and twigs.
- **Texture & finishes:** to use paint, mosaic tiles and plaster to cover interior walls and floors to maximize durability and aesthetic qualities of space.
- **Furniture:** to use soft such as fabric partitions and upholstery, and hard furniture such as tables and chairs to make the interior space inside and around the shops suitable for work, rest or social exchange.
- **Decorative elements:** Ornamentation and elements that comprise attractive decorative and repetitive designs, which can enhance the interior atmosphere and reflect traditional identity.
- **Sense of Place:** the traditional Islamic sense of place is inward looking where space is the positive element, contrary to the Western space where the object is the positive element.
- **Circulation & Layout:** the way people move and navigate through and interact with the interior space of the souk, spatial layout allows continuous movement while minimizing the necessity to retrace one's step or block pedestrian flow.
- **Gateway:** the symbolic connection between a hidden interior and the manifest exterior is through the Gateway.

- **Courtyard or Atrium:** the “paradise garden” provides as sense of the oasis, sheltered from the oppressive climate.
- **Porch:** the porch, as a three-dimensional method of modulating the penetration of light into the building, is used to intensify the usability of semi-outdoor space.
- **Sense of privacy:** All openings are protected by screens to reduce glare, it provides air movement and privacy.
- **Pedestrian flow:** pedestrian flow in public space is directed and regulated by the level of pedestrian movement and density.

According to Hakim (1986), in his study of planning principles of building Arabic-Islamic cities, the traditional architectural development patterns of the traditional Souks are analyzed to help define major concepts of the Souk’s architectural design as follows:

- Souk activity can be clustered around a city’s major mosque, located near major access-ways or passageways in a linear, continuous or semi-continuous fashion.
- Souks can occur adjacent to major gates (bab) of the city as activity nodes.
- Souks can occur as weekly or seasonal markets using open areas, public squares or places.
- Linear and central Souks around city mosques occur within the core of the traditional Islamic city. There are complex variations involving basic elements of the shop, its various grouping possibilities and systems of arcades, covering or vaulting.
- The resulting physical arrangements create a visual variety of features within a simple unified design and organizational framework.

- Shaded walkways and passageways function as a unifying element connecting different parts of the Souk. Pedestrian movements and walkways will remain important elements in traditional Islamic cities and form the basis of the economic and commercial life in the Souk.
- The often irregular physical space of walkways in the Souk follows very strong social behavior patterns. For example, such pathways will often link established coffee houses and open space areas that are the centers of social activity. These pockets of activity often follow pathways that lead to a mosque. Pedestrian movements, therefore, need to be carefully considered since they represent important networks serving existing social activity patterns.

Above all, there is something intriguing about traditional Islamic architecture on how space is formed from the hierarchy of use and structural arrangements, which mainly focuses on the quality and centrality of space as a positive element to interact with.

Below is a further interpretation of this concept of inner space in traditional architecture that will determine the main design criteria proposed for this study.

### **The Concept of Inner Space and Positive Space Continuity**

The concept of space, not shape, should lead in the generation of the form. This is central to understanding the architectural tradition of Islamic architecture of the Middle East. In addition to the mystery element, other considerations dictate the primary role of space. Foremost, among these are the climatic conditions that make courtyard architecture necessary for healthy existence in the region (Assari, Mahesh, & Assari, 2012). In the conception of ‘place’, a central space is created by enveloping it with

walls. These boundary conditions may in time become ‘usable’ or ‘living’ walls, containing secondary spaces that are dependent upon the primary space for their light, air and view. The circumstances of the encounter of space with the ‘boundary shapes’ determine the particular architectural expression. Moving within the three-dimensional mass of the city, active, positive spaces interact with negative, passive shapes.

Light, is another space component that symbolically represent life and provides visual exposure and a known significant indicator of time in physical space. This concept is clearly manifested in traditional markets, where a central space is created by enveloping it with walls, then walls define the boundary of place and through time, the inwardness of space determines it as a positive element. Here, the void becomes another space component that is defined by the physical boundaries of an interior space. It has the power of creating another usable space within. This powerful concept of inner space, void and light produces mystery elements that empower sense of place and place attachment.

### **Meaning of Light In traditional architecture**

Light is considered as a major space component in traditional architecture, as well as a vital element to human visual perception. The conception of light depends profoundly on its quality and quantity, both aspects influence how matters, colors, patterns and spaces are perceived by humans (Ahani, 2011).

In view of light in traditional Islamic architecture, light is a powerful symbol that represents the essence of God; therefore it is considered sacred and respectful by all means, as it was said in the Holy Quran “God is the light of the earth and the sky, all the

lights originate from it” (Touman & Al-Ajmi, 2005). Consequently, traditional interior spaces were built around the sublimity of light. To emphasize, light is a metaphor of the divine, truth, hope and existence to Muslims. Light is used mystically to unfold mysteries of the spiritual realm, where it engenders metaphysical connotations, such as enlightenment and freedom (Ahani, 2011).

Architecturally speaking, light and shade are maintained for space perception. To traditional women traders, light is the absence of darkness, as one old women trader who struggled in her early years to establish her business due to strict family traditions, said wise words, “Light is awareness where once there was forgetfulness, bliss where once there was suppression, knowledge where once there was ignorance”.

Light is also perceived as a space transformer, the function of light in traditional architecture can be categorized in four aspects, including climatic, aesthetic, symbolic, and psychological impact (Kamal, 2014). Light has a good psychological effect on the human mind, as one woman trader who was in her mid-fifties lives on her own and never had children, expressed her joy being able to come to the Souk every morning and socialize with its visitors, where morning light brings her calmness and inner peace.

Traditional markets were often characterized by dramatic natural lighting via their roofs and shaded pathways, which were scattered to connect areas of the Souk then meet to form spaces for social interaction usually known as plazas or courtyards (Kamal, 2014). It is known that both walkways and social spaces are passively shaded and cooled due to the arid nature of the local climate. Spaces such as the walkways and social spaces were drastically influenced by lighting during the day and night. Natural daylight played a major role in creating a welcoming atmosphere in Souk Wajif; it illuminated the central

space through clerestories on each side of the building. Yet, latticed windows played with light to create pleading shadow patterns and shaded areas for people to repose under.

## **Traditional Souks in Kuwait City: Historic Characteristics**

### **Overview on Kuwait City**

Kuwait is a very small country located in the heart of the Middle East and surrounded by much larger neighbors: Iraq in the north and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the south and Southwest (Figure 14). Deserts cover most of the land with few sand dunes in the northeast. The harsh environment and scarce resources have influenced the old Kuwait City through its simple architectural style, the inwardness of its buildings and the unpretentious lifestyle of its citizens.

Historically, Kuwait was an ideal transit center for trade lines. This led Kuwait City to flourish by housing various markets specialized in certain commodities; thus it became a strategic trading port. The eastern border is open to the Persian Gulf, which always have been the primary access point for trade as well as being the primary source for seafood and drinking water (Jamal, 2004). The nomadic tribes known as Bedouin caravans moved freely over the desert of the Arabian Peninsula and passed through Kuwait City as one of the preferred transit centers for trade (Figure 15).



Figure 14. State of Kuwait map (O'Shea & M. Spilling, 2010).



Figure 15. The old Souks of Kuwait City (Jamal, 2004).

By the end of 19th century, the town had grown and became a vital port for caravans, trade and transportation with a population of 10,000 people, which ensured that Kuwaitis were exposed to various cultures. That exposure enriched their own local culture and helped them to foster their distinct identity. In 1938, oil was discovered in the deserts of Kuwait, which marked a boom in wealth and greatly affected Kuwait's economy and thereby, the education of its citizens and their social status. With globalization, the oil boom increased the opportunity for Kuwaiti society to be further exposed to other cultures (O'Shea & Spilling, 2010).

The old city of Kuwait grew as interwoven layers of sociocultural norms; one of them was the lively markets and their fondness as a common ground for daily interaction with the local culture. The residential area surrounded the markets that made the marketplace a safe environment due to its compactness (Figure 16) and particularly for women to mingle and sell without insecurity nor threat. Typically, the narrow residential alleys usually meet and end at the Souk's entrances, and offered a common ground for people and visitors to meet, socialize and shop daily (Al-Mutawa, 1994).

Al-Jassar described the transformation of Kuwait City in his dissertation (Al-Jassar 2009), as a drastic transformation that changed the urban fabric of the city and, in particular, the boundaries that controlled women's social life.

“This was Kuwait City before the modernization process; a traditional town with unpretentious houses, and neighborhoods built to serve the basic necessities of life [Figure 16]. While there were many difficulties living in the traditional environment, and in some cases unjustifiable restrictions on women dictated by tradition rather than religion, people were able to adapt and live congruently with their environment. All of this disappeared within one generation.” (Al Jassar, 2009, p. 130)



*Figure 16.* Old souks of Al-Mubarakiya, Kuwait City (Jamal,2004).

In a larger sense, the massive urban transformation of Kuwait City from a sun baked mud brick town inside the desert to a modern metropolis, with the most contemporary architecture and modern lifestyle, was a result of the economic boom due to the discovery of oil during 1930s. In the 1950s, the Kuwaiti government decided to transform the old city into an urban oasis, with master development assigned to international consultants to divide the city into public institutions, industrial zones, ports and residential areas or suburbs (El-Sheshtawy, 2008).

Farah Al-Naqib (2016) illustrated the sudden change in the social fabric after the oil era within three major phases: the move to the suburbs, the privatization of urban life, and the de-urbanization of the society. During the mid-1950s, modernization had an unavoidable power over the drastic shift on the architectural and cultural identity of the old city, when the government decided to develop the city by demolishing its old houses and historical buildings and make room for the new modernized city center and neighborhoods. With this in mind, the radical transformation of the traditional society distorted the sociocultural identity of old Kuwait and its people, particularly, after the oil

boom, women's identity was affected and distorted, particularly with the movement from the city to the suburbs.

During the 1960s, people started to feel the rapid change in modern Kuwait, and decided to embrace the modern lifestyles. The old mud walls of the city were demolished and replaced with modern multistory buildings in the international style (Figure 17).

Still, the gates of the old mud wall of Kuwait City were untouched and stood until present as a symbol of the past (Dipiazza, 2007).



*Figure 17.* Kuwait City under the development process during the 1960s. (El-Sheshtawy, 2008).

### **The Traditional Architectural Style of Old Kuwait City**

Traditionally, the old Kuwait city was built entirely from mud and surrounded by the mud walls with several gates to protect the country from enemies and control the passing caravans, traders and Bedouins through the city. As a matter of fact, the indigenous architectural style of the old Kuwait gave the city an unpretentious earthy flavor, which prevailed over the entire city. Typically, houses were attached in groups forming small neighborhoods according to clan and kinship. Visibly, all buildings looked

similar with the same geometric architectural style and minimal exteriors. By focusing on interior spaces more than exteriors, buildings became introverted and appeared uninviting, secretive and inwards facing courtyards, as the central space for women's daily lives (Al-Enezy, 2007).

Similar to Middle Eastern architecture, the traditional house and public buildings in old Kuwait City consisted of a central courtyard a central space, with a series of rooms built around this open yard. Traditional style buildings were compact in shape and introverted, which reflected the influence of harsh climate and strict social norms at that time The floor plan is simple and consists of a courtyard surrounded with rooms; in most houses there is more than one courtyard as a form of spatial hierarchy and sense of privacy that allowed women to move freely and work away from strangers. Building materials were indigenous and local, such Sun-dried mud pellets or seashore rocks were mortared with mud to construct the walls that were eventually plastered with mud, limestone, and gypsum were widely used to construct the adobe houses Although some elements were imported from India such as wood and bamboo (*Basjeel* and *chandal*) used to construct the ceiling that are brought from Africa (Al-Enazy.2007).

### **Traditional Architecture and Use of Modern Space**

With time of oil boom, the compact design of traditional homes became old fashioned to Kuwaitis and quickly transformed by the government into a multistory modern international design. With the development of the first Master plan of Kuwait city in 1950, the old city with its narrow alleys and courtyard houses were suddenly replaced with wider street and detached tall villas (Al-Sheshtawy, 2008) The modern house is no longer introverted and small, with an eclectic character, houses were build

with technology, provided with electricity, air conditioning systems and modern building materials (Figure 18).

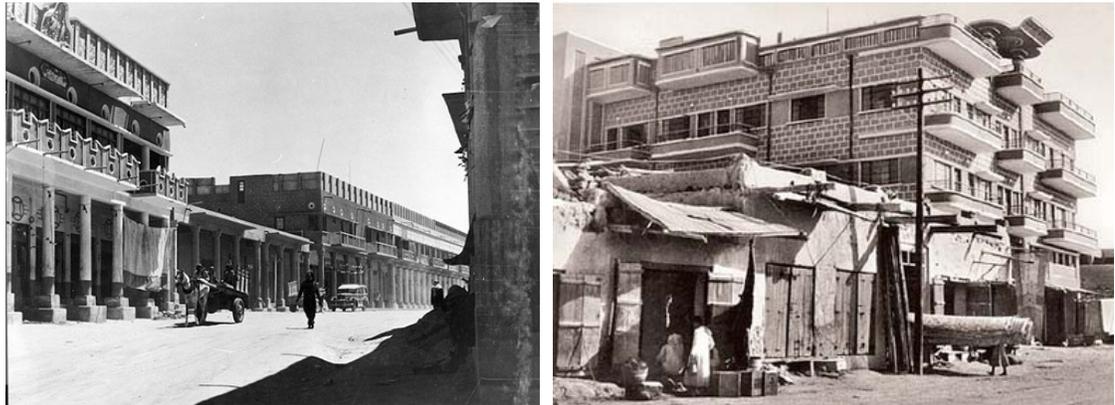


*Figure 18.* The courtyard of Beit Khalid & wooden window shutters and beams, Kuwait Kester (2016).

Unfortunately, the elimination of courtyard was the result of the utilization of indoor space and air conditioning. The house's floor plan is no longer simple in shape, the hierarchy of spaces was altered to fulfill function rather than privacy as before, where privacy was associated with women's choice of dress and social practice. Talal Al-Mahmeed (2007), have discussed the impact of modernization on traditional architecture and interior spaces, where he illustrated five major time periods that influenced the architectural style in Kuwait. Each time period has its own characteristics and influences; some were applied with careful considerations, while others were only Western imitations:

### 1. Architecture in the Early Post Oil Period (1950s- Mid 1960s):

This phase is portrayed through the oil revenue and its significant transformation on the country's economy and infrastructure to cope with the rapid modernization at that time. The government had managed the demolition process of Kuwait city along with the "importation" of international professionals, architects, engineers, and contractors to contribute in the formation of the new modern Kuwait city. However, the "importation" of foreign designers was far from understanding the local culture, traditions, environment and lifestyle of Kuwaiti society. In fact, this period to be 'an architectural failure' to the architectural identity in Kuwait due to countless experimentation of international modern styles borrowed from the West that did not reflect the past nor the present of Kuwaiti culture (Figure 19).



*Figure 19.* (Left) Modern buildings in old Kuwait city during the 50's (KOC, 1950)  
(Right) The first concrete and bricks building in Kuwait and it was built by Alkurafi & Almatrook opposite the customs in Al Seif Street (KOC, 1950).

## **2. Architecture in the Middle Post Oil Period (Mid 1960s- Mid 1970s):**

The major highlight of this time period in Kuwait was the implementation of “Cut and Paste” technique, which is the process of borrowing elements of western architecture and trying to impose them in the built environment of Arab countries. As (Mahmeed, 2007) stated “The intention behind this technique was to inject modern aesthetics into the traditional architecture known as Regional Modernism.” He added, “The concept behind this style is to signify local identity, traditional character, and present local history and heritage through the built environment”. Therefore, this movement was a continuation to the previous movement toward modern architecture, but with great emphasis upon the revival of traditional architecture within a modern understanding. With this in mind, the prosperity of architectural styles borrowed from foreign countries, particularly Mediterranean region such as Lebanon and Syria, allowed for enriching local architectural styles, techniques and improved imported building materials.

On the other hand, this period was characterized by its overwhelming mixture of architectural styles, which aggravated the misconception of representing the original Kuwaiti architectural identity, and people misunderstood the idea of architectural identity, it became more of a symbolic expression of wealth and social status. Hence, architectural alienation and lost identity was the main unfavorable consequences of this time period (Figure 20) “The main factor behind this alienation is the lack of architectural understanding in terms of heritage, culture and identity. The image of modernism was nothing but an illusion of a better way of life (Al-Mahmeed, 2007, p.41).



*Figure 20.* Private Houses; Modern Architecture in Kuwait during the late 1960s. (Cecil,1968)

### 3. Architecture in the Late Post Oil Period (Mid 1970s – Mid 1980s)

This period was a shaping period for architectural styles in Kuwait. After, the huge structural mess and alienating architecture, serious issues have surfaced that let people to question the quality of their local architecture to climate and identity expression. As a result, the public started to realize the problems related to the lack of connection with the historical architecture, traditional elements and vernacular design (Figure 21). Hence, local architects envisioned Islamic design as the perfect solution to social, environmental dilemmas, and a source for aesthetic inspiration to reinstate the architecture of Kuwait.

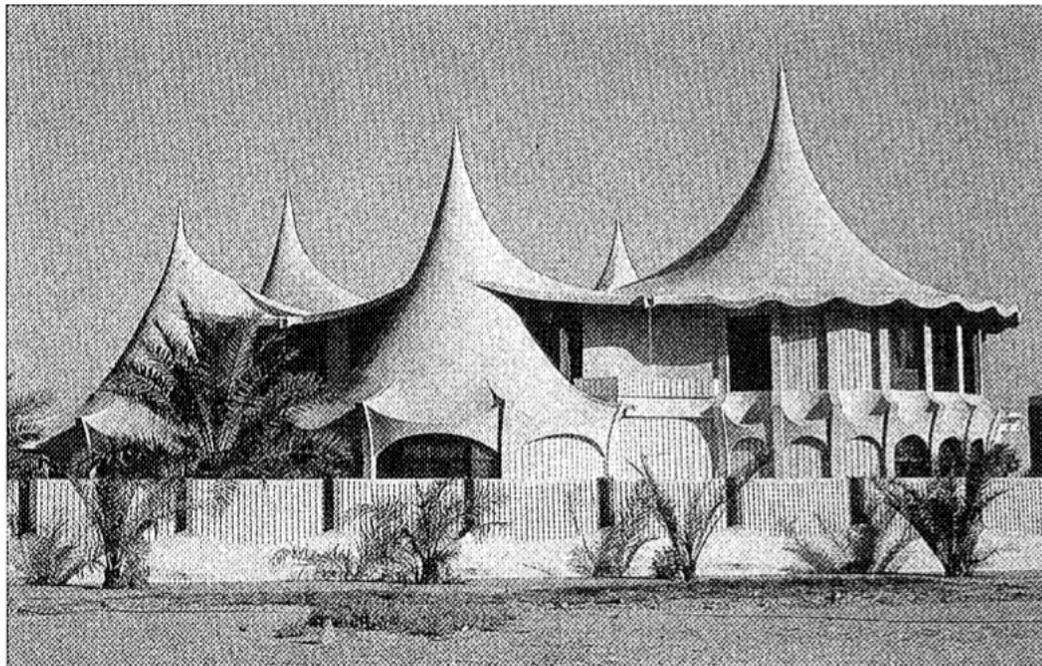


*Figure 21.* Modern Houses in Kuwait constructed in a Modern Style Admired in the 1970s (Cecil,1968)

#### 4. Architecture from Mid 1980s to August 1990

This particular period was considered as the revival of traditional architecture, due to public awareness of architectural problems in Kuwait. In fact, considerable determination and efforts made by the government and people to reinstate the traditional architectural identity that initially took place from the essential unit of Kuwaiti culture, the house. Therefore, several historical and architectural elements were incorporated inside houses and public buildings such as the courtyard, 'Mashrabiyyah', tents, antiqued doors, roof parapets, arches and arcades in a contemporary design (Figure 22).

Besides, new construction methods and building materials were introduced in this period such as reinforced concrete, insulation materials and synthetic stones.



*Figure 22.* Concrete tents house, Kuwait by (Lina Abugharbieh,1986)

## 5. Architecture after the War (1991- Present)

The fifth period is the fundamental stage for the Kuwaiti government particularly after the Invasion and Gulf war, by restoring the country's infrastructure and the destructed built environment. Fortunately, modern technologies and smart building materials such as solar panels, metal cladding, steel and tensile structures enhanced the current architectural styles without overshadowing the identity of traditional architecture. By that, this phase puts great emphasis on 'regionalism' in design and manifested the traditional architecture in its contemporary aesthetics (Figure 23).

Apparently, globalization has a significant impact on Kuwait's modern architecture and In fact, open-minded thinking is a sign of this cultural transformation that might struggle with traditions and culture. The struggle with cultural identity is clear with designers who try to impose international architectural styles into local architecture without cultural awareness causing difficulties to adapt and understand those styles within Kuwaiti culture (Elscheshtawy, 2008).



*Figure 23* Souk Sharq shopping mall from exterior to interior reflecting the traditional identity of local architecture 1998, Kuwait (O'shea & Spilling ,2010).

As a matter of fact, the blind imitation of foreign architectural styles without cultural considerations impacted the interior environments and produced a superficial image of architectural design. Not to mention that architectural mess increased the loss of the architectural character of Kuwait. Thus, the society challenged the fear of losing traditional architectural identity and the attempt to impose Kuwaiti architectural style, particularly, after the destruction of war, to preserve the cultural identity from loss and lead the futuristic vision of traditional architectural design (Al-Asfour, 2004),

### **The transformation of shopping experience from the Souk to the Mall**

Another major influence on the transformation of local society was globalization, which created profound tension between traditional Kuwaiti Islamic values and modern values, which is evidenced in how the architectural spaces are regulated by gender roles and Kuwait traditions. Islam is woven into the country's governance policies, art, architecture, social life, people's identity, and language. However, the whole society has been exposed to the diverse international trends, significantly seen during two major phases: the first phase was the oil boom and the second was after the 1991 Gulf War. They marked the major transformation of the society's expression of gender identity and use of space. Not only did these two phases influenced social standards in Kuwait, they also influenced its architecture, fashion, lifestyle, education, and modern consumerism (Al-Mulla, 2013).

Loved or feared, technology and rapid social transformations do create tension in Gulf countries and specifically in Kuwait. Women's education and grater participation in the public sphere threaten men who may use their power to control women's mobility

outside their home (Cooke, 2014). In that, the experience inside traditional souks was greatly influenced by modernity, there has been a paradigm shift from regarding traditional souks as a conventional open-air space for sociocultural activities into more enclosed modern malls. In modern Kuwait, modern malls are not only centers for shopping, but highly structured social spaces designed for entertainment, interaction, relaxation and consumption.

### **The Souk in Modern Kuwait City**

Traditional shopping-scapes that characterized many Islamic cities evolved from the traditional form of souk / bazaar, commonly depicted as spaces of sociocultural exchange that are accessible to all, where people would frequently visit to buy goods from local artisans, craftsmen as well as food. However, these traditional spaces became tamed with the advent of modernization and the enclosed shopping mall concept, they became more standardized, globalized and built with international style (El Amrousi, M., & Odeh, 2014). As time went by, investors sought to incorporate leisure facilities into the mall structures thereby creating the modern shopping-scapes. This was particularly necessary due to the lack of outdoor parks and other recreational areas, aspects that can be attributed to dry climatic conditions of the region. As a result, malls in Gulf region have become cultural hotspots where people of all ages, nationalities, and races come to shop, meet and interact (Al-Hazmi, 2013).

With the diminishing role of traditional souks in the Gulf region and particularly in Kuwait, it is worthwhile to generate a better understanding of the shopper's socio-spatial behavior within interior spaces inside traditional and contemporary shopping environments. According to (Jahawi, 2015), modern shopping malls seem to encourage

the involvement of young people, especially shoppers who are 20-29 year, within the shopping environment more than traditional souks, his research showed that older shoppers in Dubai still prefer to shop in traditional souks. Al-Hazmi (2013), noticed the influence on individuals' capacity to visit shopping malls in the Gulf region to purchase their needs, do window shopping, or socialize is therefore varied. The rationale behind this is that while some shoppers seek social exploration, others are after recreational facilities and opportunities. Shopping in modern malls has become an agent for breaking cultural boundaries in the society of the Gulf countries.

In a research study done by Farrag, El Sayed and Belk (2010) that investigated the modern conceptualization of shopping malls by generating motives and reasons for female customers' preference and shift from traditional souks to modern malls. This study has introduced seven shopping motives as a personal preference for mall shopping experience (convenience, safety, self-identity, appreciation to modernity, freedom, entertainment, bargain hunting) regardless of the context or type of merchandise for which shoppers shop. Findings showed that 29% of shoppers (women between the age 20 and 60) prefer shopping in a mall due to the sense of role-playing, self-gratification, and group interaction are all relevant to the motive of self-identity and appreciation of modernity identified in this study.

Lastly, freedom and safety are shopping motives that are related to female shoppers (34% of women between the age of 21 and 60) seek safe environments free from harassments and bad weather conditions. Furthermore, safety as motive is of particular concern to Muslim women, who are generally more conservative compared to others; the mall for them is a much safer and appropriate place compared to street

shopping. Freedom on the other hand is generally related to adolescent girls, (37% of girls between the age of 11 and 20) prefer to spend their leisure time with their friends rather than under parental supervision. As a result, the difference between traditional outdoor souks and modern shopping malls is that a mall represents a safe, enclosed, and multipurpose place where shoppers spend their leisure time to shop and socialize, which is a demand driven by the need for convenience, safety, entertainment and self-Identity.

Given these points, Kuwait City's socio-cultural drift created such transformations of traditional souks that allowed modern malls to expand as spaces of inclusion and exclusion to certain social groups. Their success affected the morphology of the souk's sociocultural composition and physical environment. Yet, traditional souks still remain present in modern Kuwait city as a historical reference of the local culture.

The drastic shift in architectural and interior design of traditional souks to modern shopping malls in Kuwait has provided an opportunity to compare the transformation of shopping-scapes in relation to retail interior design criteria. By comparing the oldest traditional Souk in Kuwait, Souk Al-Mubarakiya to the Avenues, one of the latest contemporary shopping malls in Kuwait. The following criteria were considered: reference to architectural elements, organization and spatial layout, materials and finishes, quality of natural daylight, quality of artificial light, use of colors, circulation, and furniture (Foster & McLelland, 2015):

**Souk Al-mubarkiyah, Kuwait:**

- Reference to architectural elements: in Souk Al-mubarkiyah, the architectural elements such as columns, ceiling structure, storefront doors and openings were

originally designed in traditional architectural style, slightly simple ornamentation and Islamic geometric detailing.

- Organization and spatial layout: organization of the Souk constituted as a two rows of chain of shops along a narrow internal street from both sides, each side of the buildings is built in two-story height emphasizing the overcrowded traditional shopping experience (Figure 24).
- Materials and finishes: building materials were selected from the local culture such as wood, limestone, brick and corrugated metal sheets, and floors were paved with slate and stone tiles to withstand the outdoor weather conditions and heavy traffic flow.
- Quality of natural daylight: daylight was enhanced through the use of clerestories on both sides of the building and through courtyards to maintain positive energy level and comfort.
- Quality of artificial lighting: artificial lighting was applied in two types, functional and festival lighting. The functional lighting was used through the traditional gaslamps fixtures distributed along both side of the Souk' structural columns and suspended from the ceiling in a central line. The festival lighting is used to decorate the Souk's main structure during cultural and religious celebrations using traditional string lights
- Use of colors: the primary color scheme used inside the Souk's interior space and shops was traditional earthy tones of beige, white and brown.
- Furniture: there were two types of furniture inside the souk, hard furniture and soft furniture. Hard furniture such as tables, chairs and shelves were used inside

and around shops and teahouses, were simply made of traditional style of painted wood, while soft furniture such as cushions and ottomans were locally made with traditional wool upholstery known as ‘Sadu’.



Figure 24. Interior space inside Souk Almubarakiyah, Kuwait. (Dashti, 2014)

### **The Avenues Mall, Kuwait:**

- Reference to architectural elements: inside the Avenues Mall, the architectural elements such as columns, ceiling structure, storefront doors and openings were minimal in designed to reflect the contemporary transformation of local architecture, that is by using minimal design and reference to traditional architectural style. The ornamentation and Islamic geometric detailing were widely used in partitioning, decorating surfaces and storefronts with a pleasant modern twist (Figure 25).
- Organization and spatial layout: organization of interior space inside the mall mimics the old traditional bazar style using two-story high buildings as a two

rows of chain of shops, but along a wider and spacious central walkways to increase space efficiency for engaging activates and capacity for crowd.

- Materials and finishes: high-end and contemporary building materials are used to enhance the shopping experience using inelegant materials, interactive surfaces and elegant surfaces for a polished look (Figure 26).
- Quality of natural daylight: daylight was enhanced through the use of skylights and large openings to increase positive energy level and psychological comfort.
- Quality of artificial lighting: the use of artificial lighting is prolific, functional, decorative, ambient and festival lighting to create various moods and spatial experiences depending on each phase of the mall (Figure 27).
- Use of colors: the primary color scheme used inside the mall's interior space and shops was modern color scheme with crisp tones of white, grey.
- Furniture: there were two types of furniture inside the mall, hard furniture and soft furniture. Hard furniture such as tables, chairs and shelves were used inside and around shops and cafes, and designed in modern style using various materials such as plastic, polished wood, marble and steel, while soft furniture such as seating cushions were made with modern fabrics such as vinyl and velvet for upholstery.



*Figure 25. Interior space of Grand Avenue, The Avenues, Kuwait. (PACE, 2016)*



*Figure 26. Interior space inside Prestige, The Avenues mall, Kuwait. (PACE, 2016)*

*Figure 27. Interior space inside The Avenues mall, Kuwait. (PACE, 2016)*

To resume, Kuwait has undergone immense changes in its social, economic and physical environment. The shift from old town to a modern city influenced the cultural identity of the modern urban society. Old Souks of Kuwait City bear witness to the struggle between culture, history and place making, culminating in the question of a Kuwaiti national identity. While modern shopping malls created a drastic change in shopping-scapes by offering a holistic globalized retail experience, but without the exclusiveness and authenticity of traditional markets. Still, traditional souks can facilitate

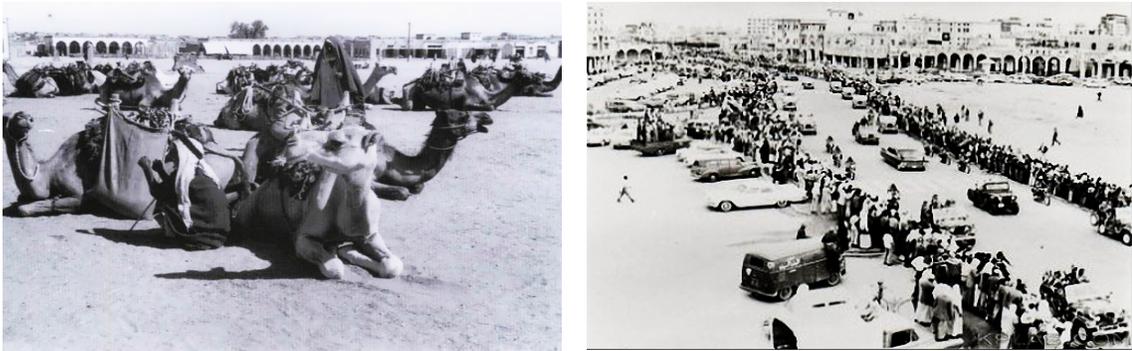
urban identity for the groups associated with definite urban environments and play an important role in the formation, change, and reproduction of the identity of the place. Accordingly, the next section will cover an overview of Kuwait City's traditional souks and their historic characteristics in order to proceed later to case studies relevant to the scope of this study.

### **Traditional Souks in Kuwait: Overview and Historic Characteristics**

The heart of Kuwait City was the major commercial district for trade; the traditional markets or Souks became a daily place to socialize or to participate in cultural ceremonies, and a main attraction point for local citizens as well as tourists. Although Kuwait is a well-developed land, traditional markets are still kept as a living heritage.

During the period of 1850-1930s, the old mud walled city of Kuwait contained more than 30 markets located in the heart of the city center, which extended from the port area on the seafront to the Safat Square- a major historical commercial square in Kuwait City-which was a transit place with temporary shops for the traders, Bedouins, and locals to sell, buy and unload cargos (Figure 28). Such markets were scattered through the narrow streets of the residential areas with small shops and cafes used to open from sunrise to late evening. In this context, the Souk became the melting pot for social, cultural, economic and political exchange of all times. Nestled within the historical area of Kuwait City is one of famous traditional markets in Kuwait, *Souk Al-Mubarakiya*, a standard traditional Arab open air market, where people meet to socialize and shop for daily needs in an old fashioned bazaar atmosphere. It consists of several sections depending on their specialties of certain commodities (Figure 29) (Smith, 2005).

Presently, major areas of the Souks have been either demolished or relocated to fit the city's master plan. Yet, their importance started to be extensively recognized by the government and local citizens, as a rich source of Kuwaiti heritage that must be preserved for future generations. The fast pace of modernity had a major impact on Kuwait City's master plan. Al-Jassar (2009) illustrated the drastic impact on how major traditional markets were eliminated under the urban growth of the city, "The master plan of Kuwait City is separated by functions, the new plan called for commercial and business district. The core of the city, the Souk District, maintains only a fraction of its original markets" (Al-Jassar, 2009, p. 27).



*Figure 28. Al Safat Square at Souk Al-Mubarakiya before development (Smith, 2005).*

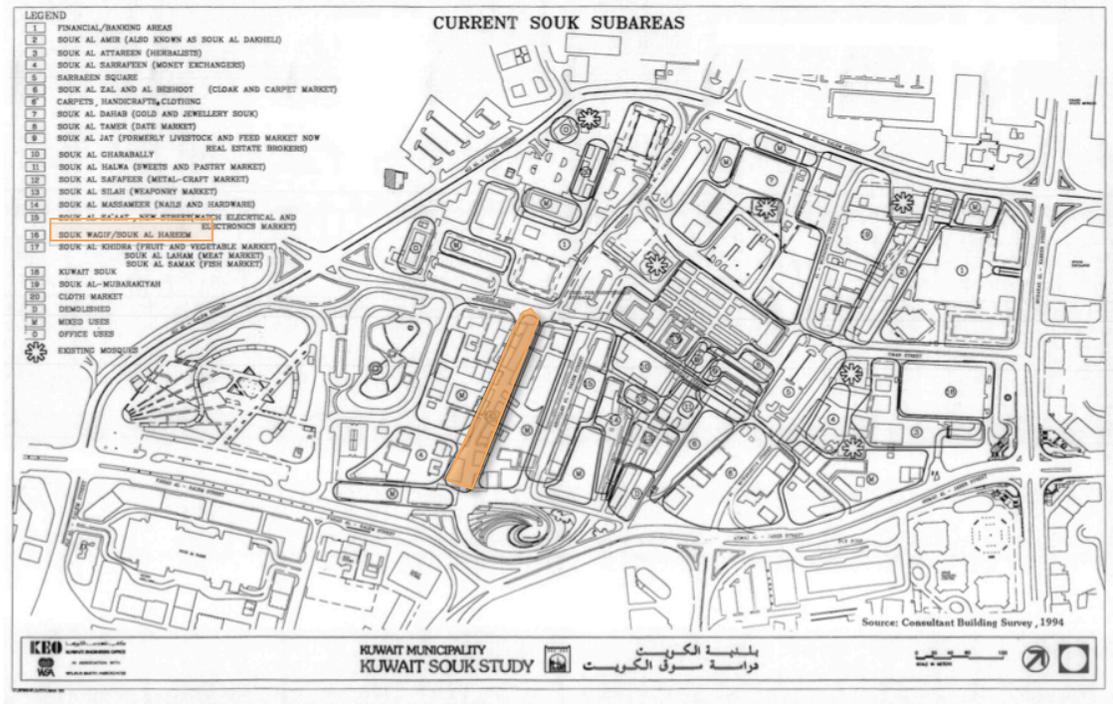


Figure 29. Old Plan of Souk Al-Mubarakiya shows Souk Wajif in relation to the larger Souk Al-Mubarakiya (Smith, 2005).

As can be seen, the Souk in old Kuwait evolved much in the same manner as the traditional Islamic Souks in the region. The old Kuwait Souks were a significant integral part of the organic planning system and urban form, which grew to meet basic needs much like other parts of the city. The Souk area was created in an unplanned and spontaneous way, developing almost a living organism until the present day. Up to the turn of the century, the old Kuwait Souk was characterized as a compact, yet irregular assembly of the shops and buildings connected by arcades with the necessary openings for fresh air, shade and circulation (Smith, 2005).

By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Souk was not only a place where trade was carried on, but also the starting point for caravans. Blackish brown tents were often seen in the open areas near Safat Square, for example. Those covered Souks were built with

low permanent roofs over the stalls, and a higher roof supported by either timber poles or masonry piers. These roofed Souks were open in the clerestory at the end for ventilation. Variations of these wooden roof arcades still survive today. It is important to realize that the interior spaces inside the traditional Souks were not only designed to accommodate businesses, but also to encourage social interaction. The role of coffee houses was very much to be as an integrated part of the Souk and surrounding open markets. People prefer to socialize in coffee houses due to their vital nature; they encouraged social activity and cultural exchange inside the Souk's environment and Kuwait City as a whole (Figure 30 ).

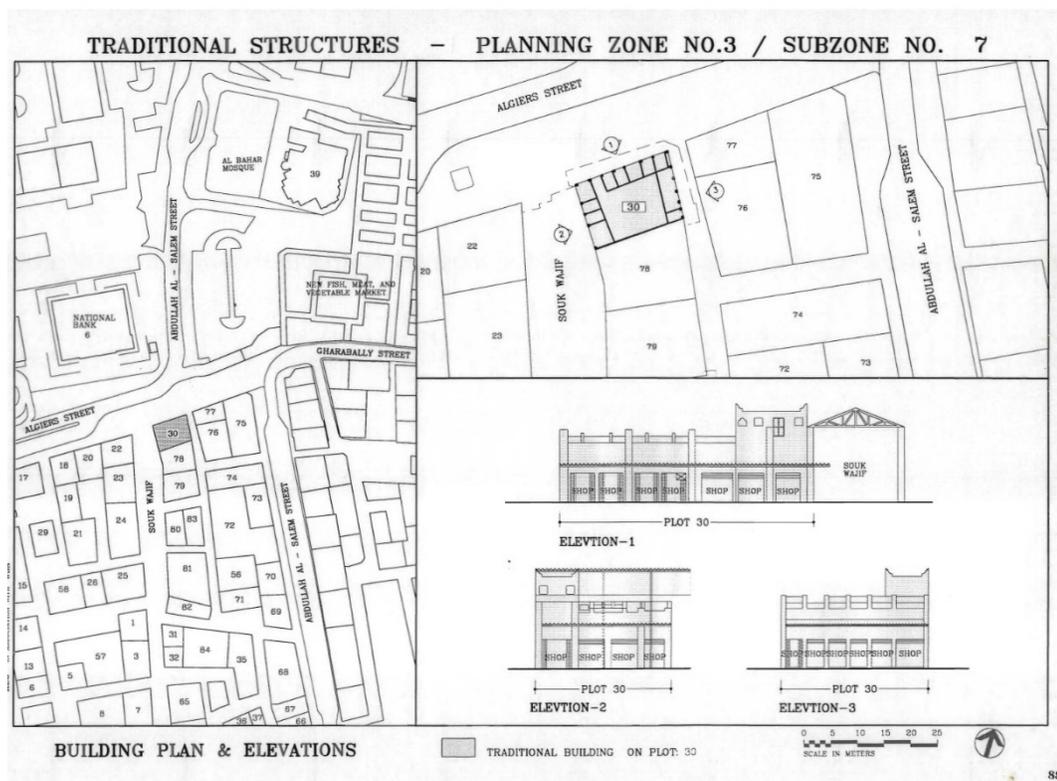


Figure 30. A close-up of Souk *Wajif*'s floor plan and elevation inside Souk *Al-Mubarakiya* – Kuwait City (Smith, 2005).

Architecturally speaking, most of Kuwait's old Souks were built with the traditional architectural style of the Gulf region. They were constructed with wooden trusses and covered with ceilings made of straw mats, which is a design strategy to protect the shoppers from the harsh climatic conditions such as the heat, rain and dust storms. Due to the lack of durable building materials and deterioration under severe climatic conditions, the main structural support was replaced with durable building materials such as wooden trusses and metal shading panels to handle severe weather and last longer (Jamal, 2004).

It goes without saying that the architectural design of the old marketplace was simple with no emphasis on architectural detailing or traditional decoration. The main aspect of it was to offer a commercial place only to display various goods in containers made of straw, jute bags or metal boxes. Somewhat, it shows that sellers were not paying attention to the visual display of their tiny shops since the main reason for the shoppers was to visit the market to buy daily needs with little to spend over accessories and extras. Still, the traditional market has a cultural flavor by its dynamic environment as a place to socialize, practice culture and to revive the nostalgic memories of the old Kuwait.

From a religious perspective, Ramadan nights and religious celebration have special flavor for the locals who spend their time shopping, strolling or resting in café's to enjoy the celebrations and listening to traditional songs. There are various other traditional Souks located within the historical area of Kuwait City, which are well preserved under the country's funds such as the famous Souk for Women, Souk Wajif, a local Rug Souk, Souk el Zal and also the Gold Souk, Souk Al-Thahab, to name a few (Jamal, 2004). The Kuwaiti traditional Souk is an intertwined place for identity

expression and the production of culture. The scattered teahouses within the tiny alleys were and are still used as a social gathering place for men to rest and socialize with the company of friends and relatives. Their discussions usually revolve around the current economic, political and social happenings, which are an effective way of practicing local culture and identity expression (Smith, 2005). Moreover, the narrow lanes that are branched out from the main marketplace on both sideways hold a lot of excitement for the visitors to find and discover hidden corners of traditional artifacts, which signifies by itself an unforgettable experience for the visitors. Those Souks still lure in both those who are after something in particular and those who are there to enjoy the atmosphere and the glimpse of the past (Al-Jassar, 2009).

As has been seen, traditional Souks are one of the surviving historical places within the rapid urban sprawl of Kuwait City. They are perceived as containers for history, traditions and memories (Jamal, 2004). Their spatial character arouses nostalgic memories, the beauty of simple architecture, smell of old building materials, textures, and sounds all are well preserved to maintain the cultural identity of Kuwaiti heritage. However, the Kuwaiti government's current spatial development inside Souk Wajif created a tension between preserving the architectural identity inside traditional Souks and women traders' sense of ownership and attachment to their stalls (Al-Qabas, 2013). The assumption is that women traders in general begun to personalize the newly designed stalls as a reaction to maintain their emotional ties with the physical and social aspects of place after the development that is to secure their sense of ownership and cultural identity as they used to before the government's renovation plan.

Today, old traditional Souks, keep the past alive and the old culture present for the new generations, therefore it is obvious that the Kuwaiti government is keen on preserving such sites of beauty and history. Yet, some key aspects were not considered during the development process, which impacted the use of space particularly inside Souk Wajif. Therefore, the next section will focus on Souk Wajif as a case study and discusses its design characteristics and transformation prior and after the renovation plan in 2013.

### **Case Study: Souk Waqif, Doha, Qatar**

A good illustration of traditional Souks in the Gulf region is “Souk Waqif” in Doha, Qatar, a comparable architectural reference of traditional souks that went successfully under development to preserve the souk’s heritage from urban growth (Boussaa, 2014). Souk Waqif is situated in the center of Doha City, Qatar, a small country situated in the Arabian Gulf, Middle East and shares similar architectural style, heritage and traditions of Kuwait and other Gulf countries. The souk was founded at least a century ago in proximity of the dry riverbed known as Wadi Musheireb. For centuries, this location has been a trade spot for Bedouin to trade for daily necessities. With time, the souk started to run down and has almost get to the point of being demolished. Luckily, in 2004, the government launched a restoration program with the purpose of preserving the souk’s architectural and historical identity according to the traditional Qatari architectural techniques (Law & Underwood, 2012).

In 2006, the governmental Buildings that were constructed after the 1950s were demolished whereas older structures were renovated. The restoration was successfully completed in 2008. Named as “The revitalization project”, which is a development plan

implemented by the Royal Chamber of Qatar “Amiri Diwan”, which proposed a unique architectural restoration of one of the most important heritage sites in Doha. The project’s proposal was based on a comprehensive study of the history of the souk and its buildings (Figure 31) Besides, it aimed to reverse the dilapidation of the historic structures and remove inappropriate alterations and additions that were in contradiction with the overall traditional character of the souk (Salama, & Gharib, 2012).



*Figure 31.* Souk Waqif after renovation project, Doha, Qatar (Sherwood, 2009).

The restoration project won the Agha Khan Award of Architecture in 2008 as an excellent project for architectural restoration of historic places; the project covers 164,000 square meters (1.77 million square feet) and was supervised by a local firm “Private Engineering Office” and designed by architect Mohammed Ali Abdulla (Salama, 2013). His vision was to rejuvenate the memory of the place, a traditional open-air public space that is used by shoppers, tourists and merchants, and appreciably by women traders. Through the development phase, modern buildings were demolished; metal sheeting of existing roofs were replaced with traditional rooftops using local building materials of dangeal wood and bamboo with a binding layer of clay and straw as seen in (Figure 32 & Figure 33).



*Figure 32.* Interior space of Souk Waqif (Sherwood, 2009).  
*Figure 33.* Exterior shops of Souk Waqif (Sherwood, 2009).

With this in mind, traditional strategies to insulate the buildings against extreme heat were re-introduced. Strategies such as traditional heating methods to utilize wood and bamboo rods to preserve the original structural character with sustainable design solutions (Alraouf, 2012). Some of the new features were also introduced such as the sophisticated lighting system that illuminates the market's streets but still reflects the traditional feel of the souk (Figure 34).



*Figure 34.* Stalls were replaced with tiny shops to sell traditional goods at Souk Waqif (Sherwood, 2009).

Preserving the traditional identity and cultural practice of women sellers were carefully put into consideration within the Souks' revitalization project; their stalls or shops were reviewed with renovated to fit perfectly within the social fabric of the souk

(Sherwood, 2009). Physical needs were also well thought of for the traditional design of the stalls, their stalls were located at the hear of the souk in two rows facing each other and separated by a pedestrian walkway for the victors. Each stall was perfectly enclosed with doors to form a private nook for each woman seller to provide maximum privacy and protection (Figure 35). In the past, stalls were movable and built from boxes and stacked products. Overtime, the interior space of the souk was deteriorating and needed instant renovation to protect the sellers from chances of accidents and risks. The new plan aimed to provide small shops for each seller similar to the stall size but fixed and protected with doors to form a permanent spot for selling traditional goods (Law & Underwood, 2012).



*Figure 35.* Preserved architectural elements and style at Souk Waqif (Sherwood, 2009).

The choice of building materials was successful in terms of durability, visual appeal and historic expression. Walls were mainly built from brick and covered with earthy tone plaster, traditional shop's door was well crafted to look ancient and rustic. Furniture inside each shop were simply made of wood and covered with each seller's preference. Also, artificial lighting was considered crucial inside souk's interior space due to its enclosed design, which required more light in evening time. Stone pavement was a good choice for tiling the central walkway due to its durability and easy maintenance (Figure 36). Tourists and visitors enjoy the social feel of the souk as well as its historic feel. As a whole, the project enriched the sociocultural aspect of the building, its historical identity. In this context, the identity of the sellers was an extension of the whole souk (Alraouf, 2012).



*Figure 36.* The South façade of Souk Waqif showing traditional scene of local architecture and guards of the Souk (Sherwood, 2009).

## **Case Study: Souk Wajif (Souk AL Hareem or Women Market), Kuwait**

### **Historical Overview of Souk Wajif**

"Souq Wajif" or also known as "Souq Al-Hareem" in Arabic means *women's market*. Wajif means 'standing' in Kuwaiti dialect. It was called so because the sale was done so fast that the customers did not need to sit down while it was taking place. As the name suggests, it was a place where women could find goods for all their needs of scented oils, wool and textiles, dairy products, tools and materials were used in crafts that women produced for their families such as sewing garments and simple soft furniture and home accessories (Al-Zaid, 2003). It was located within the heart of Souk Al-Mubarkiyah, which is Kuwait City's largest traditional market and famous cultural center for daily happenings (Figure 37 & Figure 38).

One of the essential characteristics of Souk Wajif is human movement, through human bodies moving in physical space. The marketplace becomes a social and cultural place through the manifestation of language, body movement and materiality. Undoubtedly, the physical space has no meaning if body movement does not exist as Duranti explained his notion of cultural connectedness and place making (Low, 2003, p. 7). Socialization synthesizes many aspects of embodied space, along with gender relations within space. That being the case, through traditional markets, culture is produced and reproduced through human interaction and movement inside the historic buildings and shop fronts, sound, traditional music, fresh aromas, even the smell of old buildings, varied textures and patterns altogether participate in the Souk's exclusive and unique atmosphere, as well as its constant temptation for its visitors to explore the local culture. Altogether, identity

expression in traditional markets is manifested through tangible as well as intangible aspects: food, materials, art, cloths and artifacts resemble the tangible aspects of identity expression. While nostalgia, memories, social interaction, cultural activities and emotions resemble the intangible aspects of identity.

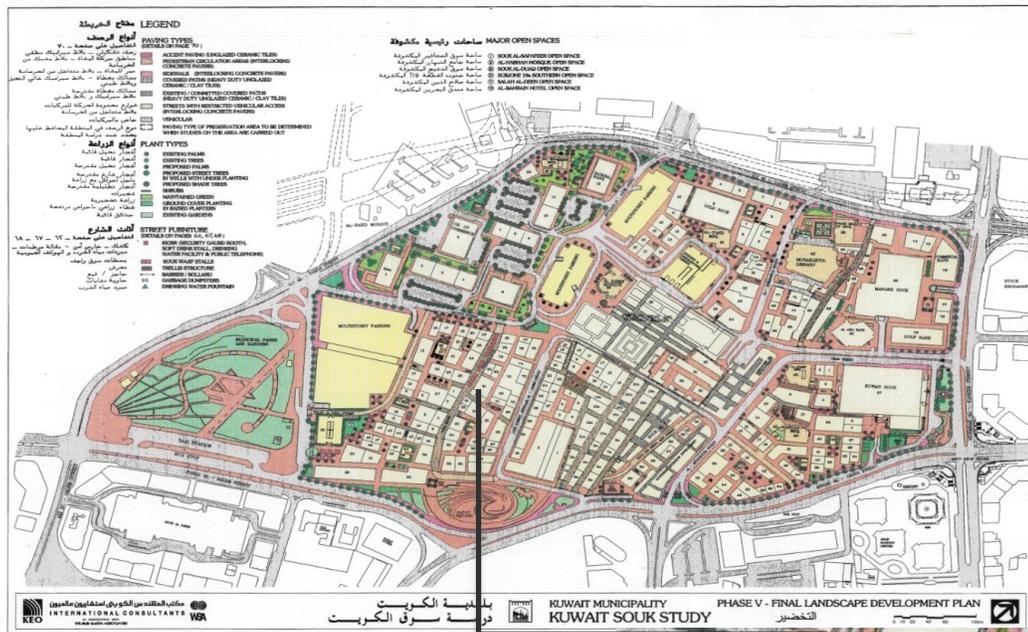
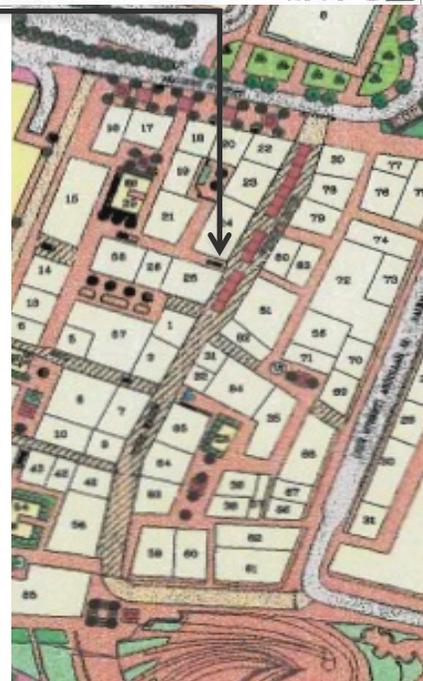


Figure 37 (top). Souk Al Mubarakiya existing Subareas including Souk Wajif (Hareem Market). (Smith, 2005).

Figure 38 (bottom) A closer view of Souk Wajif map – Al- Mubarakiya showing the new stalls layout. (Dashti, 2014)



Particularly, Souk Wajif offered invaluable insights into the local culture and old trade traditions. Historians say that the Souk was started in the early 20th century by “amateur traders”, mainly women dressed in traditional clothes. It was perceived as the light tunnel that took women out of the shadows into the public sphere, the marketplace, social life and the world in large (Hussein, 2003). In the middle of the traditional market, each stall was stacked with various commodities and traditional cloths were sold by Kuwaiti women, who were covered with *Abbaya* and *Burqa* (Figure 39) to sell their goods with confidence with the presence of male shopkeepers and customers inside the market (Jamal, 2004). Women sellers sat cross-legged on cushions or on stools to sell homemade items or foodstuffs. These included henna, traditional eyeliners, traditional jewelry, and accessories for women, traditional clothes, kitchenware, soap, locks, wheat, eggs, and rice.



*Figure 39.* Traditional women traders wearing *Abbaya* and *Burqa* in Old Souk Wajif. (Jamal, 2004).

## Architectural Style and Layout

Souk Wajif consists of different structural elements, which have been joined according to their functional and spatial form. The architectural composition of the market mostly formed in linear fashion and structured in meaningful way to connect major areas of the city (Assari et al., 2012). The basic structure of these specialized markets was an expanse of adjacent or wall-to-wall shops with high ceilings of palm branches to render what protection possible from the hot sun (Smith, 2005) as shown in (Figure 40).

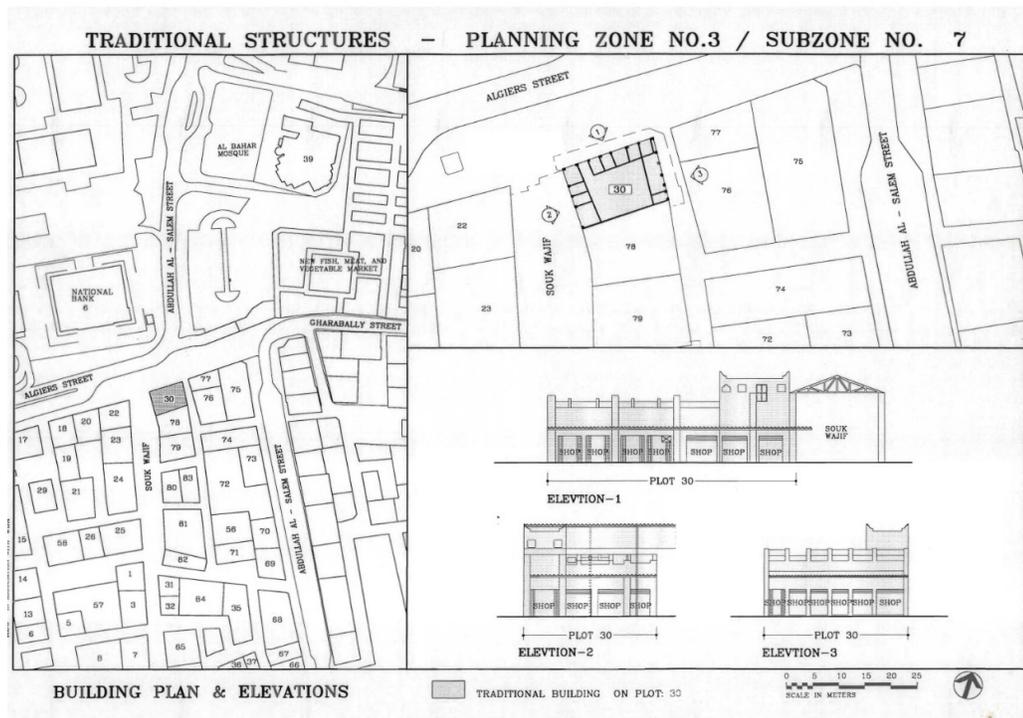


Figure 40. A close-up of Souk Wajif's floor plan and elevation inside Souk Al-Mubarakiya – Kuwait City (Smith, 2005).

Given that, the emptiness of the physical space inside the markets and the simplicity of the architectural features created a spatial void for the female sellers

(Figure 41), that negative space became positive as it influenced their presence in the market. The emptiness of the void created a massive space that required women traders to surround themselves with traditional Abbaya (cloak) and products they sell as a form of fortification within (Figure 42). The surrounding micro-personal space around women traders offered security and sense of ownership; it allows them to interact with customers within acceptable traditional norms and out of restricted social judgments. This arrangement presents a unique experience within two forms of layers: dress and space. It is perceived as a metaphor of how women's cultural identity is constructed out of space and confined by its boundaries. What is more, the pedestrian flow and movement in the marketplace carves out the negative space surrounded by male shopkeepers to fit the Harem's area in the middle, which extends beyond materiality to express gender identity through cultural discourse.



*Figure 41.* Interior view of the space is constructed inside Souk Wajif - Al-Mubarakiya before the settlement of women traders in the central space (Smith, 2005).

In traditional architecture, gender preferences plays an important role in controlling and regulating interior spaces, like the case inside traditional markets, which are known as public spaces with a clear expression of gender (Al-Sabah, 2001). The traditional identity of the Souk Wajif has a significant influence on female’s cultural identity through the overlap of dress, material culture and spatial layout (Figure 42), which secondarily enhances place attachment through the physical, social and cultural dynamics of space (Smith, 2005). Women traders inside Souk Wajif gained power and sense of ownership over their stalls due to various factors. One factor is that the layout of the physical space inside the Souk created a central space (positive space) where its boundaries were defined by the circulation of pedestrian flow from each side creating a central negative space for women sellers to be settled in. The stall reflected mobility, flexibility in layout, and diversity within a traditional style.



Figure 42. Illustration of the old stall’s materials and composition, (Dashti,2016).

That negative space became the void that allowed women traders to carve their niche within the Souk's interior space. Another factor is that men sellers dominate the long strip of shops on each side of the Souk, which assign a masculine character around the central space, or the void. Inside Souk Wajif, the void became a powerful space for women traders to show their authority and control over their stalls. The fortification of material culture and products reinforced the sense of ownership to women traders; it created a protected zone for them with better privacy. Yet, the stalls were arranged to foster social interaction both among women sellers and customers. At the same time, the openness of the stalls reinforced the presence of women traders as a vital part of the Souk's social and cultural activities (Kapchan, 2011). Figure 43 shows a strong

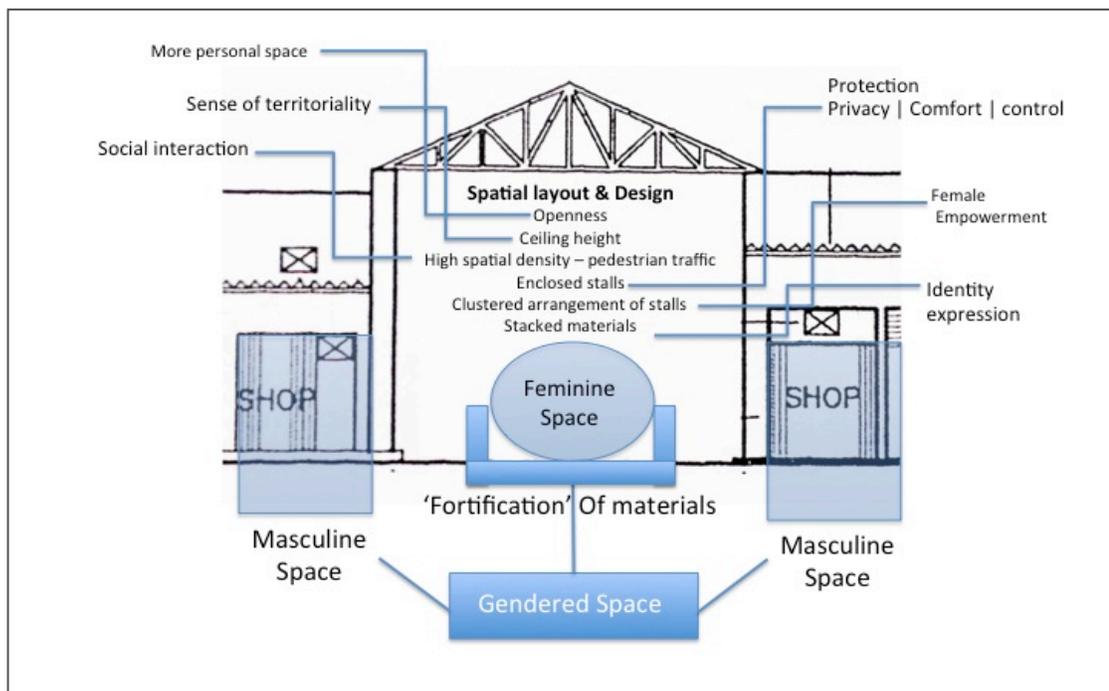


Figure 43. A conceptual diagram showing the relationship between women stalls and the surrounding space of men shops. Dashti, 2014).

relationship between physical space, gender and identity construction based on the power of central space of the market. The void inside the market allowed women sellers to build their stalls and personalize them according to their personal needs, comfort and protection. The old arrangement and transience nature of the stalls offered better sense of control and territoriality to women sellers than current design.

### **Traditional Building Materials, Colors, Textures and Construction Methods**

The traditional architectural design of the Souk is set to adapt to the environmental influences such as the severe hot sun, glare, and wind. Inside the Souk, the interior space is characterized by its high ceiling, large openings and wide pedestrian sidewalks. This design strategy facilitates the use of natural ventilation, natural daylight and shadow patterns. Accordingly, the large open space formed by the interior space offered less privacy for women that somehow imposed them to shelter their bodies with traditional dress as a form of protection, comfort, and control over physical space, which is typically dominated by men sellers.

The primary building materials for Souk Wajif in Kuwait City were sea coral, mud bricks, together with other materials like timber poles and gypsum plaster (mainly sea rock or coral blocks) using mud mortar. Thick walls built of coral blocks were laid together with mud and straw mortar. All walls were load bearing, toothed together, and had continuous coral footings. Because soil mortar is weaker than stone, cracks often developed in the walls of many shops. Chandal and bamboo were used to span the widths of shops. Chandal or (mango poles) held mats woven out of weeds. Wood strip bamboo layers formed the framework of the mat. This method has been described as the use of

Chandal, Bascheel plus Hasser. On this framework, a mat of straw was used to carry the mud roof, which was usually 30-50 centimeters thick and included a mixture of straw (Figure 44). Most of the walls and roof of the surviving traditional shop structures in the Souk have suffered erosion form wind and rain (Smith, 2005). In this phase, women stalls inside Souk Wajif were constructed from material culture such as products and artifacts of everyday necessities. The stalls' physical characteristics were flexible in arrangement, set over a low wooden platform that also used for sitting.



*Figure 44.* The primary building materials in Old Souk Wajif were mud brick walls, Chandal & Pascheel. (Al-Zaid, 2003).

As mentioned, goods were stacked and organized in a longitudinal traditional fashion with huge emphasis on ornamentation and color to attract the passing customers. Positive and negative aspects: those women sellers created good relations with their customers and visitors over time, their work taught them patience and self-restraint over different personalities and customers' behavior through the day. The negative side is that their temporary stalls under the open marketplace weren't protected from the severe

weather conditions such as dusty storms, summer's heat and winter cold nights (Al-Hajji, 2004).

### **Timeline of Souk Wajif's Development**

In relation to the study, it is significant to place Souk Wajif in its proper historical context through the various developments it went through history. Therefore, the study will explore different spatial developments of women stalls area inside Souk Wajif as follows in the next page (Figure 45):

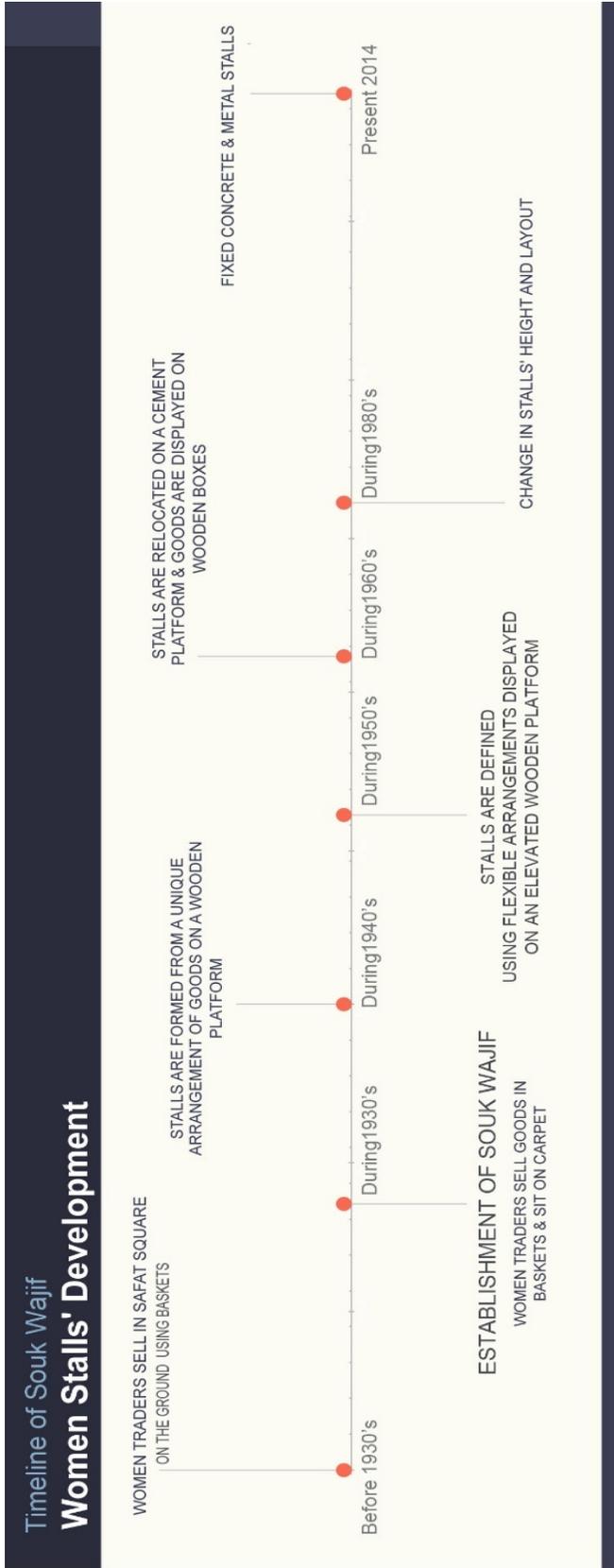


Figure 45. Timeline of Souk Wajif – women stalls' development process (Dashti,

**Before 1930s.** Historically, the Souk was initiated as part of a bigger market and took place in Al-Safat Square, which was an open-air marketplace (Jamal, 2004). Women traders gathered in one area and carried their goods in straw baskets to sell on a daily basis. The variety of goods was limited and displayed in small quantities due to the small space assigned for women traders inside the market, no stalls have been formed yet, just random sellers sitting and selling next to each other (Figure 46). The harsh sun and severe hot temperature was one of the greatest challenges women traders faced while selling. As a result, they utilized the shadow from the adjacent buildings to protect themselves from sunlight and raised temperature during summer.



*Figure 46.* The establishment of women's market in Safat Square between 1850s-1920s (Jamal, 2004).

**During 1930s.** The marketplace started in the early decades of the 20th century as Souk Wajif or Haberdashery market, which was famous for selling small goods and cheap items of all kinds of makeup, soap, sewing instruments and fabrics, traditional clothing, kitchen ware, household items and traditional jewelry. Then it was called Souk Al Harem (Women's Market) within Souk Al Mubarakiya referring to the female sellers who used to sit in the central space of the market and sell goods.

According to Smith's (2005) study of the Souks in Kuwait, the traditional building materials, colors and textures of the Souk evolved originally to meet the basic needs of the city's population in dealing with the harshness of the desert's climate and the heat of the sun. Such materials, textures and colors reflected the use of local resources to the maximum extent possible.

This phase was considered as the formation of Souk Wajif meaning that the Souk was located inside a building and protected its central interior space with shading elements. The main building was constructed from mud brick and supported with wood columns and covered with straw panels as a shading element (Figure 47). The longitudinal pathway of the covered market was perceived as the best place for women traders to settle in as a secured spot. Small shops on both sides usually owned by male shopkeepers surrounded women traders' area, which became the focal point of the market. Still, stalls were not visibly formed and women traders brought goods and place them on the ground next to each other or in straw baskets. In this market, women represented a high proportion among the sellers, which also gave the market its name.



*Figure 47.* Women stalls before the development plan in Souk Wajif (Al-Zaid, 2003).

**During 1940s.** During the 1940s, Souk Wajif was still located west of Safat Square; it was relocated in the ‘*Dehla*’ area west of Abdulla Al Salim Street, and was reestablished in 1948 to replace the old marketplace (Smith, 2005). Souk Wajif was part of a great expansion and took place inside a two-story building. Most of the shops specialized in providing butcher shops, fresh vegetables, dates, traditional clothing, traditional textiles, household goods, and antiques (Figure 48). The old structure of the main building was replaced with durable wooden trusses and straw panels. The additional height of the new building created a larger room for day light penetration from both sides and air circulation.



*Figure 48.* Old Souk Wajif showing women market in the center selling various goods (Smith, 2005).

The central space was expanded and created wider sidewalks, which gave women sellers more room to display their goods in different configurations. In this phase, stalls were built by the unique arrangement of goods around each women seller. Women sellers used to sit on the ground and display their commodities on a piece of old carpet (Jamal, 2004).

**During 1950s.** By 1950s, Kuwait City was exposed to the massive urban development. Souk Wajif became one of Kuwait city's major markets due to its unique character and the verity of goods. The uniqueness of Souk Wajif is gained through its visual interplay of surfaces, fabrics and materials, along with use of products and goods to define the identity of local culture. Not to mention that the intricate fortification of

materials of the women's market visually contrasts with the architectural character, simplicity, and plainness of market's traditional style. It became a living and dynamic strip of its own expression of identity through the whole Souk.

With modernization, new architectural developments were done by the Kuwaiti government to improve the Souk's overall environment. One of them is replacing the old roof structure with modern metal trusses and metal cladding. Concrete and cement blocks were used in the Souk by many shops to repair or remodel part of additions. The use of natural colors and textures seemed to be the goal in itself. This was achieved by using wood construction for shops' roofs and arcades covering pedestrian ways. Still, colors and textures reflected the traditional use of local materials. Beige or mud colors were prevalent because of the use of sea bricks and mud mortar for buildings (Jamal, 2004).

Other improvements such as elevating the roof over concrete structure allowed for extra openings and, better air circulation and more natural daylight inside the Souk. In this phase, women stalls' area became defined by placing a wooden platform that is elevated above the ground to provide better seating for women traders and protection of their goods (Figure 49). Lighting was simple in design using regular light bulbs and metal covers inside the market mostly around the shops on each side of the market.



*Figure 49.* Interior space of women stalls in Souk Wajif during 1950s (Smith, 2005).

**During the 1960s.** The space inside Souk Wajif was refined with better spatial arrangements inside the shops, efficient lighting and organized pedestrian sidewalks. The main structural system was improved by reinforcing the roof trusses with wooden columns in the central space (Figure 50). At this phase, women traders' stalls area was shifted toward the main structural columns and placed over a cement pavement, which allowed extra room for better pedestrian flow in busy days. Stalls were more defined with goods stacked over wooden boxes, women traders started to stack goods around them and sit inside, which formed a better sense of personal space.



*Figure 50.* The architectural layout inside Souk Wajif during 1960 (Jamal, 2004).

**During 1980s.** In that time period, women traders started to adjust the form of the stall and layout by elevating each one on the cement platform (Al-Mulla, 2011). The new height offered them better function, comfort zone and protection against weather conditions (Figure 51). Yet, the overall environment inside the Souk was aging and signs of deterioration were clearly shown in the structural system, wood textures and paint. The condition continued to worsen until the major fire in 2013 that impacted Souk Wajif's interior space and required immediate intervention by the Kuwaiti government.



*Figure 51. Souk Al Hareem spatial layout during 1980s ( Smith, 2005).*

**Present 2014.** Women stalls inside the Souk were part of a major development plan implemented by the Kuwaiti government after the major fire in 2013. This led to undesirable changes in the original stalls area, design characteristics, materials and layout in Souk Wajif.

The overall environment of the Souk was renovated but kept its simple traditional character of its architectural features such as the traditional lighting design, roof trusses and traditional wooden doors of its sideways shops. The main building was preserved and painted in similar white washes and the main metal structural system was painted in natural wood colors to mimic the historical feeling of the place (Figure 52).



*Figure 52. A view of the new finishes and paved sidewalks and Souk Wajif. (Dashti, 2014).*

As mentioned previously, the traditional stall was flexible in shape, size and layout and owned by women traders. However, the new design is confined and built from 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> concrete and steel cubical system (Figure s 53 & 54). The development plan put into consideration the design of fixed concrete stalls for women traders, to protect the area from future damages by using durable building materials such as concrete blocks and steel structure.

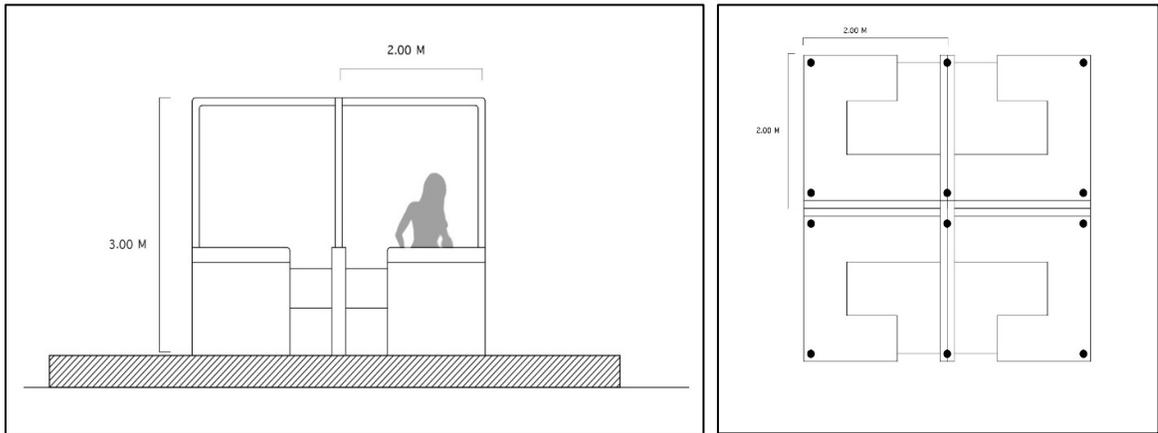
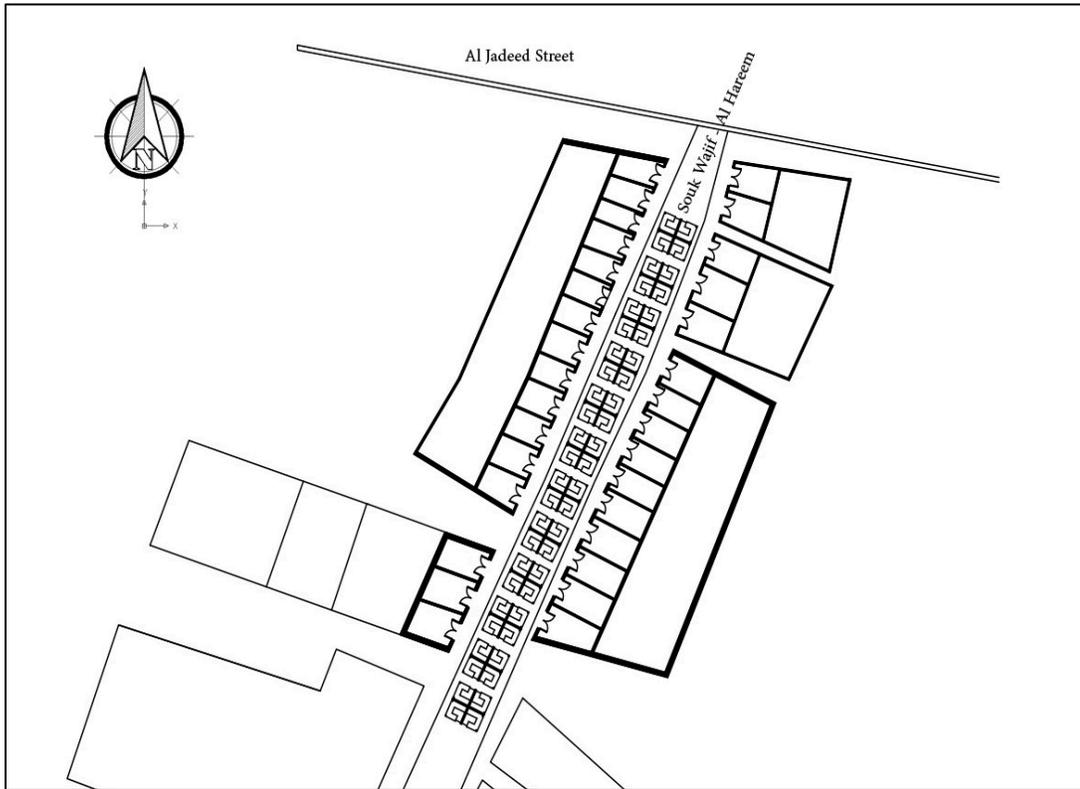


Figure 53 (top) Floor plan of the new design of women stalls in Souk Wajif. (Dashti, 2014).

Figure 54. (bottom). Detailed Floor plan and elevation of the new design of women stalls in Souk Wajif. (Dashti, 2014).

The stalls' layout changed from irregular and flexible into enclosed modular system (Figure 55), where each woman seller sits inside and faces one direction, which is facing the pedestrian sidewalks on each side of the Souk. Stalls were built in larger proportions with limited access and views the women sellers used to function with ease. Now, each stall is customized by its seller to function according to their needs, goods and preference, such as using higher sitting benches, hanging shelves and metal screen that function as a display system (Figure 56). The stall is rigid, huge in size, fixed in layout, and nontraditional in style

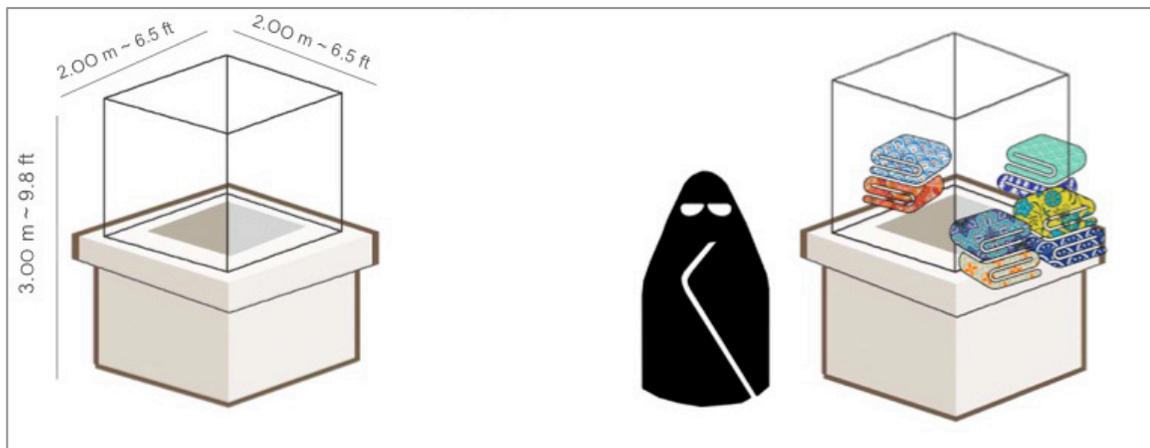


Figure 55 Illustration of the redesigned stall's materials and composition (Dashti,2016).



*Figure 56. A closer look at the concrete stall inside Souk Wajif after the development (Dashti, 2014)*



*Figure 57. A closer view of the concrete stalls showing various adjustments done by women traders to adapt to the new design (Dashti, 2014).*



*Figure 58.* Natural daylight, artificial light & walkways were improved through new higher ceiling inside Souk Wajif (Dashti,2014).

In addition to creating an enclosed space inside each stall, the height of the stalls was increased to 1.00 m with a service counter. This change impacted the way women sellers used to function inside the old stalls. Stalls were created with lower height just to surround women traders while being seated on the carpet or wooden bench. The increased height required women traders to stand most of the time while selling or squeeze a tiny chair inside, which would limit the movement inside the stall.

Accordingly, some stalls were altered by women traders to fix this problem by attaching a wooden platform inside the stall to sit and sell comfortably as shown previously in (Figure 57), and most importantly to function as the way it was before. Lighting and ventilation went through major improvements in Souk Wajif. Lighting fixtures were distributed along the central space and on the side ways (Figure 58). The style of the lighting fixtures mimics the traditional lantern design, and were distributed along the central line of the ceiling and on both sides being attached to each column to improve the

quality of light of the pedestrian sidewalks (Figure 39). Air circulation was improved by enlarging the side openings on top of the building and placing water sprinklers and fans at each entrance during hot summer season to improve the ventilation system inside the Souk.

### **Summary**

Remarkably, Souk Wajif expressed gender identity through history without forced physical barriers. Gender interaction was tied to how women sellers conceal their identity by covering their faces and bodies, while reinforcing their identity with the way material culture is displayed and exchanged.

The Souk's architectural character is valued by its visitors, the simplicity of traditional architecture gave the Souk its unique character, which brings delight, excitement and arouses nostalgic feelings of the old days in Kuwait City. The production of space inside Souk Wajif is constructed from a pleasing sensorial experience, a relationship between immaterial and material world. The intricate textures, vivid colors and stacked artifacts create an intriguing atmosphere for the visitors to interact with. The contrast between the simple architectural style of the traditional Souk and the complex arrangement of goods inside the women's stalls allow the positive space to reproduce itself with an aura of its own, that is only through the presence of women traders and their daily interaction inside the Souk. The interplay of fabrics, materials, textures, and body movement allowed for the engagement inside the Souk through a process of making a space into a meaningful place.

Previously, stalls were flexible and were not defined by physical boundaries. Women traders had the freedom to control the location and layout of their stalls

according to verbal agreements among the sellers. This demanded a strong social network among women sellers, which means sellers who are close friends prefer to set their stalls next to each other. That was seen as one of the powerful aspects of the market's dynamics, since it empowered women traders' identity, sense of belonging, security, ownership and social interaction. However, the current distribution process of the stalls between women sellers is considered inconsiderate and unfair (Al-Zaid, 2003). Now, stalls inside Souk Wajif were distributed to women traders through a lottery system, without considering personal preferences.

This study is concerned to investigate how Kuwaiti women sellers produce space and construct their identity through a major transforming phase, which is after the modern development plan. The goal is to explore how the new stalls' design for women sellers influences their social interaction, sense of ownership, and identity expression. Material culture becomes a significant part of place identity and plays a vital role in preserving the traditional character of Kuwaiti markets. But, before I move on, we need to better understand who are women traders.

## **Person**

### Overview

The concept of gender refers to the socially constructed aspects of femininity and masculinity. Gender roles can be defined as the set of social and behavioral norms that are generally considered appropriate for either man or woman in a social or interpersonal relationship (Al-Mughni, 2001). Social science explanations of gender depend on three concepts: gender roles, socialization, and opportunity structures (Lamphere, Ragoné & Zavella 2014).

According to Kopec (2006), gender differences are the main factor in experiencing the physical environment from different perspectives; men and women perceive, interpret and describe their environments differently. Their experiences are often related to their respective roles in life, their primal instincts, and cultural backgrounds. There are factors that influence gender roles such as personal preferences and perspectives of the world, history and traditions. Besides, the extent to which a person becomes exposed to aesthetics, knowledge and experiences is a significant factor that influences gender perception within physical space (Kopec, 2006).

**Human behavior and space.** A vast literature has dealt with the interweaving and relative importance of biological and cultural components of human behavior. Gender roles, social interaction and other domains, where cultural and biological aspect are interwoven, have been endlessly discussed (Keesing, 1974). Culture is perceived as an adaptive system used by the society to generate various traditional and non-traditional patterns to sustain its identity. How human behaviors are influenced by space, tells a lot of how embodied space constructs meaning and manifests culture.

Within an age of urban sprawl, public spaces, particularly traditional marketplaces, became the arena for daily social, political and cultural expression and interaction. Their multiple usage and proliferation are strongly based on gender, context and ethnicity. Gehl (2011) discussed the role of public spaces as ‘shared spaces’ that have the potential power for the manifestation of culture:

“Urbanists have long held the view that the physical and social dynamics of public space play a central role in the formation of publics and public culture. A city’s streets, parks, squares and other shared spaces have been seen as symbols of collective

well-being and possibility, expressions of achievements and aspiration by urban leaders and visionaries.” (Gehl, 2011, p. 2)

In the light of identity expression and place attachment, public spaces known as ‘shared spaces’ are perceived as transitional spaces of self-identity. Self-identification is an internal process of one’s perception of self and its belonging to a particular social group and place. Not to mention that cultural expression through public space is significantly tied to gender, race, generation, class and political identities (Lamphere et al., 2014). However, the articulation of those aspects with one another is complex and overlapped depending on the sociocultural norms and environmental context.

Territoriality is considered as one of the architectural attributes of the environment and behavior (Zubaidi, Santosa & Faqih, 2013), in which the interaction between individuals and communities who have activity purposes and an environment that accommodate their activities.

According to Edney and Buda (1976), territoriality involves the possession and defense of physical space as well as the exclusiveness of use, marking, personalization and identity (as reference of the self) of that space by the occupant or the user. It is a psychological act based on the feelings of ownership, therefore, social behaviors can be transacted without confusion.

In every culture, territoriality serves to organize human behavior, and provide individuals with reliable access to social contacts they need through the use of organizers such as directional signs, fences, edging and partitions (Edney & Buda, 1976).

Research on gender issues now suggests that all social interactions, and the institutions in which the interactions occur, are gendered in some manner (Lindsey, 2011).

Many research studies support the significance of the relationship between gender roles and environmental behavior patterns. Spatially speaking, men constantly claim larger territories than women and prefer greater interpersonal distances than women, which explains why women are better to cope with high density and feeling of crowding in public space, such as traditional markets (Al-Azmi, 2010). In contrast, women experience more negative moods in relatively low spatial density conditions and more helpful to others in need in complex settings. Also, women require more personal space when ceilings are higher (Kopec, 2006). At the end, the reason behind gender behavioral patterns is the degree of instinct, genetic memory and level of socialization.

According to (Kopec, 2006), there are three types of territory: primary, secondary and public. The primary is the most controlled and generally owned by individuals whereas secondary territory is less important and more likely to be shared or changed. Then public territory has less control and shared by everyone.

Likewise, there are three types of territorial violence that Kopec (2006) illustrated in his book: territorial infringement is classified as an invasion, when an outsider physically enters a territory with an intention of taking control of it; territorial contamination is the intentional fouling of someone else's territory such as vandalism, graffiti, stink bomb and excessive noise; and territorial violation is a temporary invasion into someone else's territory, the goal is not ownership but annoyance, power and harm.

In social theory, the notion of territoriality is reinforced by social rules (Altman, 1975) when people are on their own territory, they feel more secure and able to control or dominate an intruder, and the level of dominance is controlled by the quality of that territory.

Eventually, by understanding the role of territory, it can assist in reinforcing a person's sense of belonging and ownership. For example, this study investigates how women in traditional markets establish territorial boundaries and reassert their place in the Souk to develop a better sense of security, and by allowing them to select a particular object that represents their sense of identity. Not to mention that draping fabrics and cloths around their stalls to divide their space between them allow for privacy and better sense of control.

**Gender role and cultural identity in Kuwait.** Identity and gender are constructed by societal norms, which express individual characteristics by which a person is known. Internal factors such as physical appearance, personality, mental ability and gender have an effect on a person's identity. The same is considered for external factors such as family, class, religion, culture, occupation and nationality, which also would strongly influence one's identity (Meijl, 2008). Above all, societal opinions have strong influence on both gender identity and cultural identity.

To explain the relationship between identity, gender role, and the physical environment, Hauge (2007) discussed three theories on identity. First is the social identity theory, which explains the individuals' knowledge of belonging to certain social groups and the emotions and values expressed as a group member. Second is place identity theory, which describes the individual's incorporation of place into a larger concept of self. Third is identity process theory, which sees identity as a dynamic, social product of the interaction of the capacities for memory, consciousness and organized construal (Hauge, 2007). Accordingly, the organization of elements changes according to input and demands from the social context in order to guide the formation process of constructing

identity with respect to culture. Norma Figueroa (2016) delved deeper into the concept of how gender differences in different cultures relate to the built environment, by observing how the conceptions of personal space and gender relationships impact people's behaviors. Her study: *Culture, Gender, and Medical Waiting Rooms: A Kuwaiti Case Study*, unraveled how the sociocultural norms in Kuwait determine the spatial dynamics in semi public spaces such as the waiting rooms in public hospitals. Where individuals adapt their behaviors and spatial parameters to meet cultural, political and religious norms. Here, gender role and identity intersect to define how spaces are occupied and used within two different gender perspectives, men and women.

In Kuwaiti society, women's cultural identity has been noted as changing over time, and after 'Oilism' a term that defines the oil boom era in Kuwait, women encompassed with modernity and its tempting potentials to start a new life, when in fact, culture and traditions have been abandoned instead of relaying them as the roots of their identity. There are three factors that have been recognized as responsible for the change of Kuwaiti female's identity: (a) The socioeconomic status, (b) class, and (c) education (Moghadam, 1993).

The persistence of modernization and gender inequality within Muslim societies became evident, particularly, by women's relative lack of economic power, division of labor by gender and political power (Moghadam, 1993). Another important factor related to gender inequality is through "deculturalization" of physical space and gender use, a term defined by Mahfouz and Serageldin (1990). Their study focused particularly on women's role in Muslim society. There is tremendous variability in social practice between societies; this variability translates into different societal roles for women and

the contextual framework within which women's view of self and societies are defined. The discussion focused on the neglected needs of female Muslim architects in creating spaces that are culturally and religiously responsive in terms of privacy, identity and role. They have discussed Muslim women's role in Muslim society as a mother, sister, wife and productive worker, which represents women's view of self and the society. A lot of issues were questioned regarding the articulation of space in Muslim architecture and the role of women in defining its privacy and hierarchy. What are the reasons behind identity loss in spaces and buildings, villages and modern spaces? The authors concluded their discussion with an attempt to appreciate the female architect's role in shaping positive built environment along with the consideration of her role through a cultural perspective to define the Islamic architectural identity.

Generally, in every culture, gender plays an important role in expressing the cultural identity of dress and space, particularly for women, as both dress and space have a powerful influence upon their social role in the society (Webster, 1984). Regardless of political and economic influences, identity is an extension of dress and space. In Muslim culture, the veil and 'Abaya' are forms of conservative dress that construct a spatial enclosure, one that offers both privacy and control to the Muslim women. Besides, it enables them to effectively communicate, practice their role in public spaces and express their identity. The veil as a form of shelter overlaps with the surrounding physical environment to create a wrapped and protective personal bubble for women. Both space and veil unfold to adapt certain human behaviors and needs such as privacy and control. Besides, the form of traditional dress may influence the psychological behavior and emotional response of Muslim women of their social

interaction within public spaces as well as their private homes. Here, traditional dress becomes the mediator between women and physical space in Middle Eastern culture.

With this in mind, the virtues of Islamic Law made a drastic transformation in empowering women's social status and gave them respect and admiration, which was disregarded before modernization. Before modernization, women in old Kuwait used to live within a judgmental society and under unjustifiable restrictions that were dictated by tradition rather than religion. "The taboos for women were based on the morals of the society not what is prohibited by religion" (Al-Jassar, 2009, p. 130). Therefore, Islam as a religious and cultural paradigm remarkably survived to reframe the society and support people to adapt and cope with the challenges they faced, particularly women, since the start of modernization process of old Kuwait until present time.

Still, Kuwaiti women have the choice to go veiled or not depending on many factors such as religious background, clan, and social values. A considerable weight of political power is controlling how women use public spaces and semi-public spaces depending on the nature and function associated with each type of physical environment. Aside from women's social background and status, women are strongly claiming their social and political rights (Al-Mughni, 1988). They demand for moderation and easing of the social restrictions on them. Their presence in public spaces is tied to the form of dress and space.

In relation to how spaces are constructed in Middle Eastern architecture, gender issues formed the basis of creating introverted spaces, architectural partitioning and veiling (Al-Maghribi, 2001). They have been viewed as a primary source of gender discrimination in physical space and women's isolation from the society. Both

architectural and dress styles have been designed around women's isolation from physical and visual access of male strangers: "Opaque surfaces tightly regulated access points, and separation of internal and external spaces are characteristics of Islamic vernacular architecture" (Webster, 1984, p.251). Today, the female veil is a principal marker of Muslim identity, while Islam itself is relatively heterogeneous and interwoven with different local beliefs and customs (Wagner, Sen, Permanadeli, & Howarth, 2012).

Over time, the changes in gender relationships in Kuwaiti society were noticeable and developed by three stages. The first stage is the time before the discovery of oil in Kuwait in the early 20th century. During this stage, Kuwaiti women stayed at home and were responsible for housework and childcare. The second stage began after the oil boom in Kuwait in the late 1930s, which loosened most of the social constraints by offering women educational and career opportunities in the society. The third stage was during 2005 when Kuwaiti women gained their political rights and excelled in their careers and social contribution (Al-Azmi, 2010).

*Oilism* and industrialization penetrated through the sociocultural fabric of Kuwaiti society and had distinct gender-specific effects particularly on women. Modernization in the Gulf countries encouraged labor migration, which had several consequences including social, psychological, cultural and political effects. The demographic transition and the rise of social class were the most noticed gender dynamics associated with women's identity expression and social change in Kuwait (Al-Sabah, 2001).

Gender roles were strongly influenced by the mechanism of social control in old Kuwaiti society. The role of women in the community was assigned by their social and economic status, meaning that the merchant class families controlled women's lives

through their seclusion in large courtyard houses, hidden and unheard from strangers (Hussein, 2003). This is because merchants travel in voyages for long periods of time and by forbidding their women to appear in public, they would protect them and save their honor while men are away. Therefore, servants and slaves were kept in their homes to provide women with daily needs, domestic work, and shopping at the market (Al-Mughni, 2001).

Above all, family has been the most influential part of the social system with Kuwaiti society for centuries. Gender roles play a significant part within every family and classify social practice, duties, and daily activities for men and women correspondingly. Therefore, gender identity is influenced gender roles and cultural identity with pride. Essentially, a Kuwaiti woman considers herself a wife and a mother regardless of social status, education, or employment. Her role remains distinct to her identity and respectable position in society (Al-Jassar, 2009).

### **Kuwaiti Women Traders and Social Interaction in Traditional Markets**

Obviously, the way Kuwaiti women relate to physical spaces depends heavily on its degree of privacy and function (Al-Jassar, 2009); they can adjust themselves and adapt to the surrounding environment by transcending their behavior from private to public space and visa versa. Space and dress influence each other from both within spatial and cultural perspectives.

Market activities, such as economic exchange, social relations, cultural practices and political actions, by their nature, operate within and across physical space, linking distinct geographical and cultural regions while market women at all levels navigate

those spaces through time (Seligmann, 2001). Places where women live and socially interact with others are important in women trader's ability to establish themselves, as a way to construct their identity:

“Women take a personal agency to impose cultural identity in the marketplace. The lack of clear spatial and social boundaries within the marketplace means that gender identities do not determine cultural rules about women's transitions from private to public sphere.” (Seligmann, 2001, p. 25)

The reason behind the preference of women traders to be part of the Souk's social environment is due to two factors; first, because it is a flexible occupation that merges well with the present cultural rhythms of daily life. Second, as a powerful source of achieving or maintaining independence and perhaps, alleviating poverty. That is, by sharing daily gossip and economic burdens, being from the same religious group, cultural background and social networks create a supportive environment to construct their identity.

With this in mind, the breadth and width of social networks constitute a rich source for traditional women traders to establish themselves. These networks are inherited by subsequent generations. Also, market women value their social skills, information and social networks more than they value economic capital in enhancing their ability to earn a living. They are more knowledgeable than men in social skills and gossip and ties about daily life that constitute the material of social information and networks (Al-Zaid, 2003).

In traditional Souks, women sellers gain a field of power in their experiences as economic and cultural brokers. The interconnection between gendered spaces, the use of

material culture as a 'fortified' physical territory of traditional women traders is particularly intriguing. Kapchan (2011) illustrated in her book that Moroccan women vendors in traditional markets worked against gender ideologies by carving out a niche for themselves in the Moroccan Souk as independent identities. Their stalls or shops become safe places for women to be around each other, especially that their limited space is surrounded by men's shops and visitors all day, hence, physical and emotional comfort are needed for women traders to better engage with the Souk's social environment in which face-to-face contact is the norm to communicate with each other inside the stalls. Moreover, the physical boundaries of each stall can also enhance the psychological comfort of women traders, serving as a buffer zone from outer threats or unwanted interaction in socially awkward situations inside the Souk's environment.

Evidently, globalization's influence is multifaceted; women in the Arab Gulf states negotiate between the boundaries of traditional gender expectations and women's public presence outside their homes (Shimek, 2012). The forces of globalization have played a key role in the Abaya's evolution and use of social space, influencing everything from its functional and traditional use to a more cultural practice and expression of identity in public, particularly in traditional Souks. The act of wearing Abaya and Burqa by women sellers has reinforced their presence in the Souk and became a powerful symbol of culture and identity expression (Hussein, 2003).

The unique identity of women traders gave Souk Wajif its authentic character; their cultural background has a significant role in constructing their identity in public. It is of great importance to understand the historical context of how those women traders emerged in the Souk and expressed their strong identity as independent women. The next

section will discuss the historical background of women traders and their role in producing culture.

### **Women Traders in Traditional Souk Wajif- Bedouins**

Historically, the Bedouins are nomadic tribes who originally lived in the desert and transcended from the Arab Peninsula in Middle Eastern regions. In Kuwait, they form a social cluster; they are the dwellers of the desert (Al-Sabah, 2001). The Bedouins were a nomadic culture moving in search of water and food, and because of that they lived in tents. They engaged in nomadic herding, agriculture and sometimes trade. They also earned income by transporting goods and people across the desert (Spilling, 2010). Bedouin women are well known for their intricate handicraft skills in weaving tents, cushions and flat rugs made from animal hair. Bedouin women do most of the work, while the men socialize and make plans for the group. Women manage to fit weaving activities in between their daily life needs like cooking, chores such as milking, cloth making and caring of their children (Spilling, 2010).

With modernization, most Bedouins no longer inhabit the desert and are settled in the suburban areas of Kuwait City (Alajmy, 2008); they are called ‘Urbanized Bedouins’ (Lautrette, 2006). Material culture of the Bedouins is limited due to their simple transient lifestyle, their tents, small furniture and weaved goods are their main possessions (Jamal, 2004). As most Bedouins now in Kuwait live in housing settlements and abandoned the desert life, Bedouin women are no longer in need of weaving activities and some of them prefer to trade goods in traditional markets or either stay at home as housewives (Al-Ajmy, 2008).

Bedouin women chose Souk Wajif as a traditional market to gather in one place to sell goods, their goods are organized in a stockpiled fashion around themselves and adjacent to each other as a form of protection and identity expression. The fortification of materials around their bodies offers psychological comfort and gives Souk Wajif a distinctive visual character (Al-Zaid, 2003).

Inside traditional markets, women traders conceal their identities by wearing the veil (Abbaya and Burqa), which is known as the traditional Bedouin costume in Kuwait. It functions as a shelter, mobile space and a social skin through physical and social interaction with space. As mentioned, the visual characteristics of traditional costume became the main cultural symbol for women traders to maintain who they are as part of the larger society. The unique visual character of women traders together with the uniqueness of what they sell in the Souk empowered their emphatic character as Bedouin women and authorized their presence in Souk Wajif (Figure 59). It is noteworthy to keep in mind that their distinctive identity as Bedouins comes from concealing their face with Burqa and Abbaya, which become the main feature to identify Bedouin women in public. Although non-Bedouin women wear only Abbaya without covering their faces, the way they dress mimics the old traditional costume of all women regardless of the social class in old Kuwait City (Hussein, 2003). Above all, their traditional costume manifests original aspect of Kuwaiti heritage that symbolizes modesty, respect and pride.

In the past, traditional women did not congregate to socialize in public. It was inappropriate for women to sit in coffee shops or chat with men in public other than to just buy and sell goods. Thus, the Souk experience for women traders eased the social restrictions that governed their presence in public for years and became of great

importance to them.



*Figure 59.* Bedouin woman trader wearing traditional dress and selling in her stall inside Souk Wajif. (Al-Zaid, 2003).

It represented their independent identity and became their favorite lively place for socialization and daily happenings. Still, the level of interaction between men and women in the market was protected within traditional frame, both gender roles overlapped each other in the market while maintaining separate interactions, yet, expressed cultural identity in its most traditional form (Al-Jassar, 2009).

In a larger sense, Kuwaiti women, particularly Bedouin women, were regarded as the producers of material culture, curators of identity expression, and the organizers of social networking and marriage arrangements within the traditional society over history. However, the cultural transformations during the time of oil boom turned the role of women traders in preserving traditional culture as a challenge with big responsibility. The goal of this study is to explore what those challenges are for women traders in particular to preserve their identity from loss.

## Proposed Model for Study's Purposes

Based on Scannel and Gifford's tripartite model (2010), Waxman's organizational model of place attachment (2006) and Hashim Mortada's (2003) architectural concepts in traditional design that were discussed earlier in this chapter, a new model is developed to fit the parameters of this study. Aspects such as time, social and physical factors were added to assist in this study to explore women traders' perception of place attachment in traditional markets (Figure 60). Here, *place* represents the traditional market and is divided into social and physical characteristics.

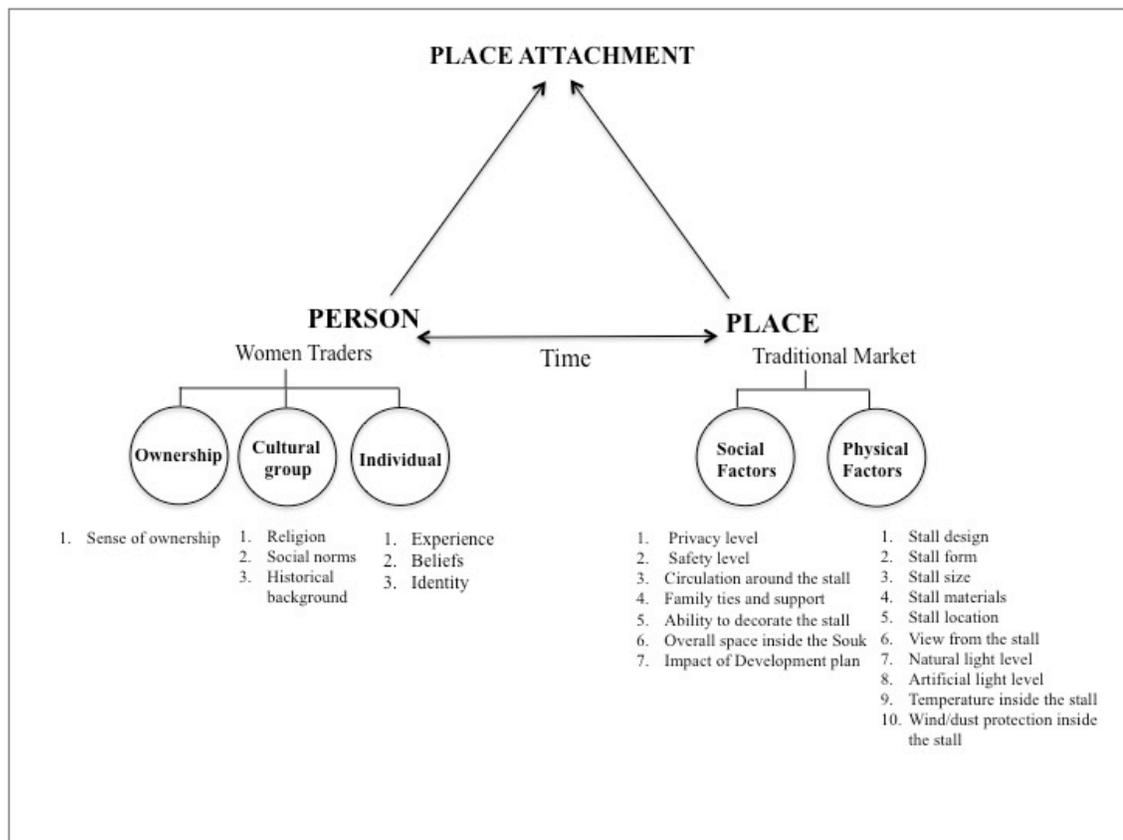


Figure 60. *The model of place attachment in traditional markets. (Dashti, 2014).*

## **Place Attachment**

It is understood as the relationship that develops through one's strong emotional bond with a specific location (Debenedetti, Oppewal, & Arsel, 2014). This relationship promotes and provides stability, familiarity, and security to women traders. Yet, the degree of place attachment in the Souk might change as women traders and physical environments develop, the Souk's environment ages, or any changes that interfere with the social and physical activities in place (Perkins & Brown 2003).

**Time.** At the forefront of the proposed variables is time dependence. It is believed that increased length of residence in a location increases the attachment a person has to that location (Perkins & Long, 2002).

In the model, *Time* is presented as a significant indicator that determines the level of attachment between person and place, which in this case are women traders and the Souk. The length of time relates to how many hours are spent by women traders selling inside the stalls every day, and how many years they have worked as traders in the Souk, and how many generations have inherited trade in the Souk. Both indicators would reveal significant aspects of place attachment such as memories and personal experiences through the course of women traders' lives in the Souk.

**Person.** As mentioned, 'Person' represents women traders and is split into three aspects: ownership, cultural group and individual. Each aspect refers to certain influences upon women traders' identity and cultural background.

***Sense of ownership.*** feelings of ownership are created when individuals participate in a particular environment or setting, such as preferences of physical location, opinions on how stalls should be run, and above all, perceived superiority (Waxman,

2006). Developing a sense of ownership about the Souk brings a sense of commitment, since women traders feel the stall belongs to them. That's because participation creates ownership and empowers women traders' involvement in the Souk.

***Cultural group.*** Refers to the attributes of women traders' cultural background such as religion, social norms and historical background.

1. Religion: or Religious identity refers specifically to a religious group that shares the same beliefs. It can generally provide women traders a perspective and opportunities to socialize, maintain common lifestyle and easiness of communication without religious barriers.
2. Social norms: are the group-held beliefs about how women traders should behave in a given context, such as inside the Souk's social environment. Social norms are understood as informal understandings that govern women traders' behavior inside the Souk, which are accepted in the larger society.
3. Historical background: is basically the preceding history that is at all relevant to women traders in the Souk. For example, the historic background of Souk Wajif might include the establishment of women stalls, how did women sellers involved in the market and major accomplishments.

***Individual.*** Last is the individual aspect of a 'person' section in the model, which refers to one's personal experience, beliefs and self-identity:

1. Experiences: past and present individual occurrences that are experienced by women sellers themselves while selling in the Souk. Those life time encounters help women sellers to gain knowledge and skills about anything related to the Souk's

environment, buying and selling, personal behaviors and how to deal and bear with customers under different situations.

2. Beliefs: The ideas that a woman trader holds as being true based on sociocultural constructs. Their beliefs can come from different sources, including their own experiences, the acceptance of cultural and societal norms (such as wearing veil in public, limited interaction with male strangers) and influences from the society as a whole.
3. Identity: Over extended periods of time, place identity can develop (Hauge, 2007). Place identity is defined as an individual's perception of self as a member of a particular environment (Speller, 2000). Personal identity is the distinct personality of women traders and is concerned with the persisting characteristics of being both Bedouin and women traders in Souk Wajif. Personal identity includes all physical, behavioral, mental and emotional attributes that characterize the unique identity of women traders.

Other proposed positively correlated variables are ownership (i.e. of home, land, shops) and social interactions. Some inversely related variables that have been suggested are building size (Stedman, 2002) and age (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001) impact the relationship between individuals and places.

## Place

The two major factors influencing place attachment in the Souk are social factors and physical factors as follows:

**Social factors.** A person's presence in public space validates or conforms their existence as a social member in the society. Social interaction refers to the relationship between two or more individuals, which is a form of social exchange (Seligmann, 2001), which happens between a woman trader and another traders or between a woman trader and customers. The interaction happens based on an act and react relationship between woman sellers and the environment around them inside the Souk. That interaction helps in the progression and growth of the Souk and society in large.

- 1. *Sense of privacy.*** Refers to the degree of personal space, protection and security each stall provides to women sellers inside the market. Moreover, the privacy has two levels in impacting the psychological and physical comfort (Kopec, 2006). One is through expressing territorial feelings (Waxman, 2006) and second is through wearing traditional dress, which provides an opportunity for anonymity (Al-Mughni, 2001).
- 2. *Safety level inside the stall:*** the way in which women traders form a small social group by building a block of community inside the Souk based on trust and respect. This emotional bond is constructed through acceptable manners between women traders as a group and between women traders and their customers. Trust and respect have a great impact on women traders' psychological wellbeing and attachment to the market. The spatial

arrangement of the stalls has a great influence on how women traders create their sense of community.

3. ***Circulation around the stall:*** Pedestrian movement inside the Souk is directed and regulated by the level of movement and social density. Sidewalks are important element inside the Souk that follows very strong social behavioral patterns (Hakim, 1986). Pedestrian movements through sidewalks around the stalls are considered either as an attracting or distracting element for women traders.
4. ***Family ties and support:*** when a climate of trust is established in public space, people feel welcome and able to be themselves (Waxman, 2006) and more importantly, feeling respected and it is a safe place. It is considered as one of the important emotional needs for women traders while being in the Souk, due to the fact that they come from the same cultural group (Bedouins). Supporting each other as traders maintain their cultural identity, which still persists their traditional lifestyle, norms and values as Bedouin women in present time. Women traders can support each other on both emotional and economical level (Al-Zaid, 2003).
5. ***Ability to decorate the stall:*** it relates to the ability of women sellers and freedom to decorate the stalls according to their own taste and set of preferences in relation to the old one before the development plan. The degree of control might have a significant impact on sense of ownership for those women sellers and sense of territory (Waxman, 2006).

6. ***Overall space inside the Souk:*** the built environment provides the settings by which individuals function and perform their activities. It also impacts people's sense of place and general wellbeing. As a result, meanings are generated by certain architectural elements that people read and interpret through physical space (Butterworth, 2000). The symbolic connection between the historic architectural elements of the Souk, building materials and history of local culture enhances the emotional bond and place attachment between women traders and the traditional Souk.
7. ***Impact of development plan:*** the general feelings associated with the physical attributes of a particular physical environment and the way it impacts peoples' perception and function in place (Butterworth, 2000). It refers to how women traders recognize the physical environment inside the Souk as a positive correlation, which increases their familiarity and psychological comfort inside the Souk particularly, prior the development plan.

**Physical factors.** The set of environmental factors that affect individuals that share common work, home or public spaces. Physical factors have a significant impact on human health, comfort, wellbeing and productivity (Kopec, 2006). They consist of architectural and spatial design elements used to define the overall interior space of a building.

1. ***Stall design:*** the ideal visual and physical set of elements to create the stall design in relation to historical and cultural references of Souk Wajif.

2. ***Stall form:*** the ideal physical proportions that formulate of the stall in relation to architectural and cultural references of the Souk (Mezaheri, 2006), which are influenced by women sellers' needs, cultural identity, and overall architectural style of the Souk
3. ***Stall size:*** the ideal size of the stall may vary according the level in which the space inside the stalls provides physical comfort and functional comfort while women sellers work, sell and rest during the day. To facilitate the physical boundary of the stall with minimum external surface and maximum internal volume, which eliminates waste of space (Mezaheri, 2006).
4. ***Stall materials:*** is related to the choice and selection of building materials used to build the new stalls, with careful consideration to women sellers' physical comfort, local climate and cultural character.
5. ***Stall location:*** is related to the legibility and orientation individuals act upon in place. Humans have a strong drive to make sense of the environment and to be involved with it. People are motivated to locate environments that stimulate curiosity, yet offer a degree of certainty. (Butterworth, 2000). Each stall has its own location, which might increase or decrease the satisfaction level of the seller due to surrounding physical elements, views and closeness to other friends sellers.
6. ***Views from the stall:*** has a significant impact on the emotional wellbeing of individuals in physical environment (Kopec, 2006). Visual stimulation is measured as the amount of visual appeal each stall is exposed to inside the

market that contributes to the personal wellbeing of women sellers and increases their bond with place.

7. **Natural light level:** quality vs. quantity of light takes great consideration in traditional markets. Borrowing light from glare proof central courtyards, which help reduce the heat during summer and elevates the mood of the users inside the Souk (Mortada, 2003). Preferred lighting levels are influenced by a number of factors, including the availability of natural lighting, the color and reflective qualities of the finish materials, the type of artificial lighting illuminating the space and the age of users (Waxman, 2006). As people age, their vision must be considered in performing basic tasks.
8. **Artificial light level:** Designers recognize that there are benefits from artificial illumination in interior environments. There is a demand for artificial lighting for sight at dim areas, movement, safety, personal security against crime, and evening's social and commercial activities. However, it is not at required at all that when it comes to the use of artificial lighting, the more used means it is better quality (Hakim, 1986). Careful design is critical to ensure appropriate light levels for age requirements where it is really needed. It protects women sellers during evening time while working inside the stalls from injury and provide better vision for work.
9. **Temperature inside the stall:** refers to the range of temperatures women sellers tend to prefer or avoid for the Souks' outdoor setting. Owing variations in hot temperature during the year and likely natural ventilated

space inside the Souk, women sellers must put into consideration the type of clothes they wear to increase comfort level and fresh air inside their stalls.

10. ***Wind/dust protection inside the stall:*** refers to the protection and safety level women sellers endure during strong winds and dust storms both during summer and winter. Safety solutions must be considered to protect the displayed goods from dust or falling apart, as well as health protection from contaminated dust.

Given these points, the model explains the concept of place attachment within a dynamic relationship by considering the Souk's physical and social environments as a force, which stimulates women traders' emotional bond and psychological benefits through time and under various circumstances to construct their identity.

### **Conclusion**

This literature review chapter gave a background to the study of place attachment and identity construction within the built environment by discussing behavioral and spatial interactions such as identity, personal space, and territoriality. Next, place attachment factors that may affect the use of space were discussed. Then the characteristics of traditional souks in Islamic cities and more specifically in Kuwait, followed by the modern transformation of local architecture, and a highlight of Souk Wajif as a case study, which exclusivity were also discussed. Finally, a proposed model for place attachment was presented to be implemented in this study.

This study rests on the premise that traditional Souks and women's marketplace in particular are well-thought-of as a cultural container (Mortada, 2003), where women become cultural brokers and curators of traditional identity. The focus is laid on how social and physical factors influence place attachment and identity expression in traditional women market. Redesigning the women's market became a threat to identity expression. There are gray areas that we know little about the production of space and identity in traditional markets. Social sciences have largely ignored attachment to traditional commercial places, despite a focused interest toward place attachment as a broader concept (Leweicka, 2011).

Place attachment involves dynamic but enduring positive bonds between people and prized socio-physical settings (Brown, Perkins & Brown, 2003). These bonds reflect and help cultivate group and individual identity. The notion of place attachment is nourished by daily encounters with the environment and people, seasonal celebrations, continued physical personalization and upkeep, and effective feeling toward and beliefs about a particular place (Rollero & Piccoli, 2010).

Although there are numerous studies on the topic, the literature pays little attention to commercial settings, in particular to traditional Souks in the Middle Eastern architecture. Traditional Souks symbolize the life of the city (Smith, 2005), they become an extension of peoples' identity (Asadpour, 2011). Traditional markets encourage people to visit, socialize and invest within a sociocultural environment. Place attachment looks for the factors that influence why people may or may not visit/work in that particular environment.

In this study, a Kuwaiti traditional market is proposed as a location to explore how Kuwaiti women produce space through the interaction of cultural, physical, and social factors. The relationship between those three factors influences the sense of place and place attachment, hence, constructing place identity. The relationship between place attachment and identity construction is intertwined since place identity has a strong relationship with personal identity (Davenport & Anderson, 2005). Moreover, the way gender roles are fabricating the physical boundaries of space explains how women relate to physical environment and interact with it under social, religious, and political discourses.

This research will investigate the role of physical and social design traits inside traditional Souk Wajif in broadening our understanding on how the traditional spaces inside the Souk are constructed to support emotional bond with its users and manifest cultural identity. Such traits like use stall design, form, size, location, building materials, use of light are significant design concepts in shaping traditional public spaces. Not to forget the social traits such as privacy, safety, circulation around the stall, respect and support become the influencing principles in designing traditional Souks, particularly, with a great emphasis on gender needs and identity.

To conclude, there are various analyses on how space is constructed by gender roles and how place attachment is measured by physical and social factors. The design of the stall, form, size and building materials, light and weather protection perform as multiple screens of cultural constructs to ease social interaction and shape the boundaries of physical space inside Souk Wajif. In order to understand the way women traders produce space in the market, it is significant to highlight and raise awareness of

the architectural concepts of traditional markets such as the concept of inner space and its influence on sense of ownership and attachment.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the study contributes to the theory-base aspect of place attachment as well as the interior design field by identifying a cluster of design traits such as social and physical characteristics that are implemented in traditional spaces to influence women's identity, social interaction and psychological needs.

The application of the concept of place attachment using Scannel & Gifford's tripartite model (2010), also reveals how an understanding of people's attachment to place can influence research, policy makers and design practice, particularly, preserving traditional architecture of great value in the context of globalization (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013).

Next, research design and methodology including the criteria for selecting participants, pilot study, data collection instrument and the analysis plan will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the identity of Kuwaiti female traditional sellers and place attachment after the development plan of Souk Wajif.

This chapter focuses on how the research is designed through a detailed review of decisions concerning research methodology, the criteria for selecting participants, pilot study, how the data collection instrument was shaped and thought of, and the analysis plan. This chapter consists of nine sections and presents the methods and procedure used in this study of place attachment. The first section describes research strategy proposed to implement the study. The second section explains the research design. The third section explains the outcome and explanatory variables. The fourth section discusses the subjects' eligibility to conduct this study. The fifth section explains the procedure of selecting subjects for this study. The sixth section involves the methods used to collect data for this study. The seventh section discusses the pilot study conducted prior data collection process to ensure quality results for this study. The eighth section explains the analysis method used to test the variables of this study. The last section sets forth the limitations of this specific study.

#### **Research Strategy**

The intricacy of place attachment phenomenon encourages studying it through different approaches and using various methods. This research study adopts combined designs and various methods to collect and analyze data. The mixed methodology will be used to examine the impact of renovating Souk Wajif in Kuwait on place attachment and

the identity of women traders. Data will be gathered within both quantitative and qualitative parameters from interviews with 20 women traders, survey and visual observations of the researcher.

Baxter and Jack (2008) defined qualitative case study as an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses, which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood.

Since the scope of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of a particular cultural group and explore issues of identity and place attachment, a case study approach was seen as the most proper strategy to fit the study's specific illustration (Creswell, 2013). Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life case over time (Yin, 2013), through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, followed by a case description and case themes. The unit of analysis in the case study might be multiple case (multisite study) or single case (within-site) study (Creswell, 2013). Accordingly, the research strategy will be considered a single case study, since the focus of this study will be explored within a single location (Souk Wajif). Also, single case study provides more in-depth gathered information and analysis for this specific topic.

Therefore, the key to define a case study is when described within certain parameters such as a specific place (traditional Souk) and time (Souk's working hours). Typically, case study researchers study current, real-life cases that are in progress so that the gathered information will be accurate and not lost by time (Yin, 2013). The

importance of conducting a case study also lays in its intent, which means that a case study can be composed to illustrate a specific topic or maybe to better understand a specific issue, problem or concern (redesign of women sellers' stalls).

Creswell, (2013) emphasized the importance of presenting in-depth understanding of the case study in order to ensure its richness in quality and content. In order to accomplish this, the researcher collects many forms of qualitative data, ranging from interviews to observations to documents and reports, to audiovisual materials. Relying on one source of data is typically not enough to develop this in-depth understanding.

In addition, case studies are often end with conclusions formed by the researcher about the overall meaning derived from the case. There are called “building patterns” or explanations (Silverman, 2016). It could be also considered as the general lessons learned from studying the case. One of the challenges inherent in qualitative case study is that the researcher must identify the selected case and its scope, its either wide in scope or narrow in scope depending on the scope of the study (Creswell, 2016). Since this study highlighted issues related only to Souk Wajif, its investigation will fit within a narrow scope to establish a focused approach of data gathering and analysis. Also, having enough information to present an in-depth illustration of the case might be considered as another challenge, which limits the value of some case studies (Yin, 2013). In this case, setting the boundaries of this study would maintain the value of gathered information and analysis in terms of time, events and processes inside Souk Wajif.

The approach of case study design is used when the research question(s) fall within one of the four categories: (a) the focus of the study to answer “how” and “why” of the phenomenon; (b) the behavior of the participants cannot be manipulated in the

study; (c) to cover contextual conditions relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Accordingly, a case study design was chosen because the case (place attachment and identity) couldn't be considered without the context of (Souk Wajif) and more specifically for women sellers' stalls setting and the traditional environment of the Souk. Since the research questions were determined by a case study and its boundaries, it would be best answered both quantitatively and qualitatively, the case study would be focusing on the analysis of individuals and experiences of 20 women sellers, which will guide the overall study purpose (see table 2).

*Table 2: Defining case study concerns in relation to the research questions.*

Case Concerns	The Research Questions
Measuring the level of place attachment of women sellers inside Souk Wajif between the age of 25 and 75 years.	1. How place attachment is constructed in a redesigned Kuwaiti traditional market?
Assessing the experience of 20 women sellers inside the redesigned stalls of Souk Wajif using physical and social factors related to stall designed overall Souk's environment.	2. What design characteristics come into play in this process?

<p>The type of arrangements of goods/ products inside the stall and choosing what kind of products that reflect women sellers' emotional bond and traditional identity.</p>	<p>3. How does material culture relate to place attachment?</p>
<p>The impact of development plan of Souk Wajif on the physical and social bond, cultural identity and authority of 20 women sellers between the age of 25 and 75</p>	<p>4. What are the implications of this process for women sellers' social interaction and sense of ownership, and identity?</p>

### **Research Design**

For the purpose of this investigation, based on Scannel & Gifford's (2010) tripartite model of place attachment and Waxman's (2006) organizational model of place attachment were adopted, which suggests that the physical environment and its features have an effect on place attachment. However, this effect is complex only and only revealed through modeling the indirect symbolic meanings (Stedman, 2003). Therefore, the study will investigate how women seller perceive their stalls' physical and social features and the overall environment inside the Souk, and how these features might generate certain symbolic meanings and provoke various types of sociocultural activities and experiences.

### **Outcome and Explanatory Variables**

Outcome/ dependent variable (*place attachment*). The sense of place attachment will be measured based on the assumption that it encompasses both place dependence and place identity. Place identity involves the process by which participants assess the quality

of their stalls and the availability of social and physical resources that satisfy their goals and needs (Seidman, 2013). To measure the sense of place identity in Souk Wajif, it is important the relationship between its physical aspects (stall's features) and the experiences and meanings that participants associate with those features of the stall.

**Outcome/independent variables.** The study measured the participants' perception of their stalls' physical features, social aspects and the overall environment of the Souk., through 10-point Likert scales. The following are the independent variables that will be compared and correlated to participants' level of place attachment (the dependent variable) to identify patterns of relationship or predictions.

**Physical variables.** Because the study assumes that there are certain physical features that can potentially promote interaction and connection to place, the investigated variables under this domain involve design and spatial features that contribute to enriching participants' sociocultural experience and satisfaction. Therefore, the domain is intended to explore the subjects' perception of specific physical features, such as the stall design, form, size, location and building materials. Also other features such as the quality of natural and artificial light, temperature inside the stall, and wind/dust protection were considered to measure the level of comfort inside the stalls.

1. **Stall design:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the new stall design in relation to the old one.
2. **Stall Form:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the stall's form in relation to the old one.
3. **Stall size:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the size of the stall design in relation to the old one.

4. **Stall materials:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the new stall materials in relation to the old one.
5. **Views from the stall:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the views from their stall in relation to the old one.
6. **Stall location:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the location of the stall in relation to the old one.
7. **Natural light:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the quality of natural daylight in the stalls area and inside the Souk.
8. **Artificial light:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the quality of artificial light in the stalls area and inside the Souk.
9. **Temperature inside the stall:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the temperature inside the stall in relation to the old one.
10. **Wind/ dust protection inside the stall:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the wind and dust control inside the stall in relation to the old one.

***Social variables.*** The study measured the social characteristics and activities in the Souk involving participants' interaction with the Souk's features as well as their customers/ visitors of the Souk. This domain investigates the social aspects and social activities associated with selling in the Souk under study. Since place attachment in at the Souk's level can be reflected in the portion of women sellers who are familiar with the Souk's and its sellers/visitors, there are questions related to participants' sense of security or safety in their stalls of the Souk. Other queries relevant to people women sellers-place relationship and sense of community are included. The following are the social

independent variables correlated and compared to the prediction of levels of place attachment as a dependent variable.

1. **Privacy level:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of their privacy inside the stall in relation to the old one.
2. **Safety level:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of their safety inside the stall in relation to the old one.
3. **Circulation around the stall:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the circulation around the stall in relation to the old one.
4. **Ability to decorate the stall:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of their ability to decorate the stall in relation to the old one.
5. **Family ties and support:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of their emotional, material and moral support they share with other traders and family member in the Souk in relation to it before the development.
6. **Overall space inside the Souk:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the overall space inside the Souk in relation to the old one.
7. **Impact of development plan:** participants were asked to rate the satisfaction level of the impact of development plan on the stall in relation to the old one and the Souk's environment and architectural character.

**Participants' demographic variables.** The study collected data concerning the subjects' individual and demographic profile. In order to design individual-level variables. The following measures were collected for the purpose of describing the current sample. These variables are:

- **Age:** Participants were asked to select their age range from three categories: 25-40, 41-55, and 56 or older.
- **Number of years in the Souk:** Participants were asked to select the number of years selling in the souk range from five categories: Less than 9 years, 10-19 years, 20-29 years, 30-39 years, and 40 years or more.
- **Educational level:** Participants were asked to select their highest level of education completed from five categories: secondary school, high school or equivalent, some college, bachelor's degree, or none.
- **Cultural background:** Participants were asked to select their cultural group they belong to within the local society range from four categories: Kuwaiti Bedouin, Kuwaiti non-Bedouin, non-Kuwaiti, or other (asked to specify).
- **Religion:** Participants were asked to select their religious background from two categories: Muslim, or other (asked to specify).
- **Number of hours spent in the Souk:** Participants were asked to select their number of hours spent daily inside the Souk range from four categories: less than 3 hours, 4-6 hours, more than 6 hours, or other (asked to specify exact hours spent).

### **Participant Eligibility**

Several criteria have to be met for subjects to be eligible to participate in the study:

1. Participants should be women sellers from the market of Souk *Wajif – Al Mubarakiya*.

2. Women traders have to be owners of the stalls who were in the business for at least 5 years. If not possible, then a 1<sup>st</sup> degree female relative will be selected who inherited the business for at least 5 years. The length of residence in the Souk increases the likelihood of more personal experiences and emotional bonds between women sellers and their stalls, social interaction and the overall surrounding environment of the Souk.
3. The woman seller subjects have to be adults. A range of ages between 25 and 75 years old. The low range of 25 was set to ensure women have been trading for at least 5 years and been in the business prior the development plan in the market. To ensure getting experiences from women sellers who witnessed the market at its peak, before and after the development.

### **Participant Selection**

The participants of the research will be selected based on the researcher's personal visit to the Souk and snowball technique. As Kuwait is the researcher's country of origin, familiarity with the area and an elimination of language barriers were additional factors that favored the selection of Souk Wajif as a case study in Kuwait. The process started by selecting a random woman seller who appeared to be the eldest among other sellers. This seller will be assigned as a key participant who can assist in identifying other experienced women sellers in the Souk through a snowball sampling technique. With this in mind, possibility of that the selection criteria mentioned will not work as planned in case the researcher couldn't identify a key participant. Therefore, a backup plan is considered to continue subject selection process. This would be achieved by contacting

the Souks' management and obtain official records of women sellers who are currently selling in the Souk.

Two possible biases have been identified:

1. Community bias could be introduced by relying on snowball sampling, where the key participant could influence the sample selection.

Occasionally, some participants would favor particular fellow sellers. This could be monitored by following the established selection criteria, and the researcher will be selective in choosing the appropriate participants and make sure they fit the criteria without any bias.

2. The researcher's familiarity with the location, personal experience and memories could affect the researcher's perception of the space. The cultural and historical nature of the selected site could bring certain memories and thoughts that might influence the researcher's bias, or direct the participants' answers. Researcher's bias can be minimized or eliminated by using open-ended questions that give the participants better control of their responses. Also, probing questions will be generated from the participant's responses rather than the researcher's expectations.

### **Data Gathering Instruments**

Scales developed to measure place attachment and place identity often included participants' intention to remain in Souk Wajif, as well as their length of residence, and the feeling of pride to be in place as positive predictors of place attachment (Elabd, 2013). Place attachment has shown to be higher for place-owners and long-term residents (Brown et al., 2003). Additionally, other studies focused on measuring place attachment

based upon expressing intentions to move out from particular place as opposed to the feeling of sadness to leave that place (Elabd, 2013).

Early studies on place attachment and its related aspects, such as rootedness and place meaning, depended solely on the phenomenological perspective of the authors, with no empirical evidence (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). Other studies attempted to identify and discover peoples' connections to place and the spatial identity of particular places, using in-depth, open-ended or structured interviews (Manzo, 2005). For example, in Manzo's exploration of place attachment and place meaning, he used face-to-face interviews including questions exploring participants' experiences in places that are considered important and meaningful. Each interview was composed of a series of open ended questions covering the following aspects: (a) the meaning and the importance of different places in the lives of the study participants; (b) the feelings towards and experiences in the participants' places of residences; and, (c) past environmental experiences such as experiences from childhood. (Manzo, 2005).

Creswell (2013) identified three reasons that mixed-method research may be superior to single-approach designs. Liability is ensured through the use of multiple research techniques

1. Mixed-method research can answer research questions that other methodologies cannot, such as gaining a deeper perspective of how women traders feel about themselves being in the market, their personal experiences and attachment to the Souk.
2. Mixed-method research provides better (stronger) inferences, that is, by combining the survey tools and interviews.

3. Mixed methods provide the opportunity for presenting a greater diversity of views that is by getting reflections from various individual experiences of different women sellers.

A combination of two methods: focused interviews and personal observations- will be the primary data collection methods of the research. Below, elaborations will be presented on each method.

Central to designing a case-study research is to design the data collection protocol upon which the study will be based, which will also help in increasing the reliability of case studies (Creswell, 2013). This research study was conducted based on multiple or collective methods of data collection. The case study was explored using three methods of data collection that investigated all of its related aspects and study variables: (a) Questionnaire technique, (b) Structured interviews with women sellers of Souk Wajif, and (c) Field observations.

**Questionnaire.** A questionnaire survey instrument was designed to empirically examine and measure participants' sense of place attachment in relation to the physical and social environment of Souk Wajif, with both quantitative and qualitative parameters. The study questionnaire included a place attachment scale, which is a ten-point Likert scale containing items from well-tested psychometric scales and measuring place attachment and satisfaction level of the stall and overall space inside the Souk. The questionnaire also included queries focused on women sellers' perceptions and satisfaction level of the quality of the Souk's physical features, such as location, stall design, stall form, stall size, building materials; and the quality of natural and artificial

light; and the related social aspects, in addition to the participants' demographic characteristics. Open ended questions were utilized for the these reasons:

1. The researcher does not know all possible answers to a question,
2. A range of possible answers is so large that the question would become unmanageable to put multiple-choice format,
3. The researcher wanted to avoid suggesting answers to the participants,
4. The researcher wanted answers in the subjects' own words (Seidman, 2013).

The questionnaire also included a cover letter introducing the researcher conducting the study, describing why this study being done, and explaining how the results will be used. It is described approximately how long it would take to fill out the questionnaire. The researcher also included her contact information (email, mailing address, and phone number) for any inquiries or concerns.

**Structured interviews.** In this type of interview, the questions are formed beforehand and then asked in order and in specific manner (Seidman, 2013). These structured interviews were conducted with female sellers of Souk Wajif. The intention of these interviews was to learn more about their role in the Souk, problems and concerns, and also to know more about the history of Souk Wajif. The interview guide included open-ended questions, regarding:

1. The type of goods women sellers' display in their stalls
2. Identifying the features that women sellers' like or dislike of their new stalls
3. The challenges that women sellers face and the efforts to adapt in responding to the development plan of Souk Wajif.

4. The role of preserving the cultural identity by women sellers' through their presence in Souk Wajif.

Appendix A shows the structured interview questions developed for the study. A number of demographic questions will be asked followed by specific place attachment questions. The interview questions consisted of 17 'essential' categories making sure participants' time wasn't consumed during their working hours by having to answer unnecessary or irrelevant questions. In order to ascertain the appropriateness of the interview's questions and procedure, a pilot study was undertaken and will be discussed in depth later in this chapter. Seventeen essential variables were covered in the interview questions. The physical characteristics included:

- Stall Design
- Stall Form
- Stall Size
- Stall Materials
- Stall Location
- Views from the Stall
- Natural Light
- Artificial Light
- Temperature inside the stall
- Wind/Dust Control inside the stall

The social characteristics included:

- Privacy Level
- Safety Level

- Circulation Around the stall
- Ability to Decorate the Stall
- Family Ties and Support
- Overall Space Quality of the Souk
- Impact of Development Plan

The interviews conducted with the intention to gain deeper insights into meanings that places possess, associated memories and personal experiences of the participants. Some of the techniques used for qualitative research are free association tasks, in-depth interviews, and verbal reports from focus groups (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010). In this study, interview questions were subjective, and assessed the participant's motivation, personal experiences and in-depth views of the topic. The researcher asked each participant the same series of questions. Questions were created prior to the interview, questioning is standardized and the ordering and phrasing of the questions are kept consistent from interview to interview.

Before involving into the main sections, two warm-up questions were asked to initiate the topic with the participants, such as: 'How do you feel about the renovation process inside the Souk?' and 'How do you evaluate the stall's design in relation to the surrounding environment inside the Souk?'. The physical characteristics section will include questions that are designed to enquire about the satisfaction level of the stall's design and the overall environment inside the Souk. The researcher will start this section with questions related to the quality of light, ventilation and overall quality of space such as: 'How does the stall design reference your needs?' and 'How do you feel about the quality of light in the Souk?'.

The social characteristics section elicited individual experiences of the women traders and their emotional bonds with the Souk's environment. The researcher asked questions about the social aspect of the Souk such as 'How do you feel about interacting with the visitors inside the Souk? Then 'What is so special about the Souk's social atmosphere?' And be more specific such as 'Can you tell me more about your personal experience as a seller in the Souk?'

It was important that the researcher played a neutral role and acted casual and friendly without introducing her personal opinions in the interview. Data from the structured interview were gathered from paper-based report (face to face) and tape-recorded by the researcher. The researcher determined a time limit for each interview that would be around 20-30 minutes.

**Field observations.** Personal observations provided additional qualitative data, sometimes described as 'thick description' (Creswell, 2013). The researcher picked detailed information of the physical characteristics of Souk Wajif's environment. Observations must be selective in what is to be perceived the most useful to the research inquiry. The study investigated the social and physical aspects of place attachment, and due to the nature of study, it is quite difficult to observe the social interaction of women traders inside the Souk. First, because observing women trader's social interaction might lead to biased reflections by the researcher analysis. Second, women traders conceal their identities by covering their faces and this obstructs the ability to analyze their facial expressions and body language when they interact with each other or with customers.

Personal observations were focused on the visual documentation of the Souk's environment. The researcher spent one whole day in the Souk from morning to evening

time, to document all possible activities and happenings in Souk Wajif by taking photographs and documenting movements, like women traders arriving in the Souk, unpacking and arranging their goods inside the stalls, interacting with the customers, body movement inside the stalls and through the Souk, and packing goods at the end of the day. It allowed the researcher to be aware of the daily encounters that might impact women sellers' experience in the Souk, how to deal with it and how to adapt to the new design. This will help in the understanding of:

1. Pedestrian movements: which areas are subject to heavier or less pedestrian flow and why.
2. What strategies were implemented by women sellers to reconstruct and organize their stalls, and how it references the Souk's cultural and social practice.
3. How women traders' attempt to modify the physical design of the stalls and what are the solutions they make.
4. What preferences are made in the stall's visual display and why?
5. The level of lighting inside the Souk, this observation will help in understanding the role of light in enhancing the visual characteristics of stalls, material culture, displayed goods, and emotional state of the sellers and visitors.
6. The architectural features such as size of columns, design of shop doors, displays and ceiling structure inside the Souk work with or against the stalls' visual character or the traditional architectural style of the Souk.
7. To observe how pedestrian sidewalks around the stalls are controlled by women traders to be safe and protected inside the Souk.

## **Pilot Study**

Because the study required interviewing the participants in person, a pilot study was conducted in July 2013 to test participants' responses and ensure quality results. A preliminary analysis was obtained by doing unconstructed interviews with three sellers in the Souk. The findings will be further discussed in the following chapter.

For the pilot study, three random women sellers were selected by the researcher inside Souk Wajif – Al-Mubarakiya traditional market and discussed the current situation of their redesigned stalls and the way they are trying to fit within.

The conversation took place inside the new stalls. The researcher asked all three sellers to share their experience about Souk Wajif before and after the development plan. It seemed that the adaptation process was a bit difficult due to the nature of the new stall design, layout and material selection. The fixed limited size concrete stalls worked against these women's sense of ownership and flexibility. When asked "What do you think about the new size and design of the stalls?", all three women raised concerns regarding the rigid design and compact size of the stalls. One of them described it as a "tiny animal cage". They did not feel comfortable but said they will try to adapt to it.

Important issues emerging from the pilot study shed light over the notion of place attachment in Souk Wajif and the design of women stalls. First, the importance of involving the user in planning processes to provide functional designs with references to users' identity and special needs. Second, regardless of how the new stall design is fixed and rigid, it did not restrict women sellers from coming with modest solutions to adapt to its confined boundaries, such as placing a wooden platform inside the stall so women traders can sit comfortably like before. Also attaching shelves to the back of the stalls as

a display system for their goods. Third, the social bond among women sellers and the visitors showed great importance, the level of social attachment in the Souk is greatly influenced by physical attachment. Lastly, the identity of Souk Wajif became an indispensable extension of women traders' identity.

Also, the interviews were very informative and helpful in understanding how significant the change was in that particular market's space, before and after the development plan. The three participants showed their resistance to the modern design by covering the concrete stalls with traditional textiles and cloths as one way of expressing their identity and attachment to place. The three women sellers stated that the market itself was an extension of their personal identity. Based on their answers in the pilot study questions, time played a big factor in creating a strong bond with the Souk's physical and social environment. A following question was asked to the sellers "What does it mean to you as a seller to be part of the Souk?". One of the sellers said, "I inherited this job as a seller in the market from my mother and grandmother, our identity is reflected by the way we dress, sell traditional goods and make good relationships with tourists and visitors." All three women sellers expressed their attempt to mimic the old style stalls by covering the new metal hangers with fabrics to feel sheltered, "protected from unwanted attention" as one of them said.

All three participants showed their resentment on the processes by which the design came about, which did not pay attention to their needs and spatial requirements before and after the renovation process. They felt ignored and insignificant and the new stall design does not reflect their cultural identity and suppresses their social interaction with each other. As one said:

“I feel disrespected after all these years in the market, officials never asked us as sellers what are your preference or needs to the new design. The government changed the feel of the space, and the stall is too tiny for us to work comfortably.”

To conclude, the pilot study helped the researcher to engage with female sellers and recruit more participants through their social network. It also confirmed that the qualitative aspect of interviews is successful in introducing the topic and gaining the involvement of female sellers. Participants mentioned the importance of their job as traditional sellers in constructing their identity by inheriting the stall through generations. This issue only emerged through the pilot study. All of the above helped refine the research protocol by including in-depth interview and survey questions on both physical and social traits of place attachment inside the Souk.

### **Analysis Tools**

The study utilized various types of quantitative and qualitative data analysis, including data from interview sessions:

**Descriptive statistics.** Because data will be gathered within the range of 20 participants, simple descriptive statistics such as simple frequencies technique will be used to summarize and analyze data (Seidman, 2013). Particularly, there were used to describe the personal characteristics of the subjects and their demographic background/information, such as age, educational background, religious background, and number of hours in the Souk. Also, the study utilized descriptive statistics to describe the subjects' perception of, interaction with, and attachment to their physical and social environment of Souk Wajif.

With respect to the data collection from the interviews, it will be relevant to summarize all participants' responses to questions and present them in a table of unprocessed numbers. It might be helpful to combine answers to various questions: for example, how many participants liked the lighting levels, what are the highest and lowest preferences of the stall design, and so on. Therefore, the first step might be to construct a frequency distribution of the scores by simply count how many participants obtained each of the scores that it was possible to obtain.

**Qualitative analysis of interviews and field observations.** To further understand the Souk's environment and the meaning these stalls held for female sellers, structured interviews were conducted. The interviews took place inside the stalls of the Souk and lasted approximately 45 minutes. They were recorded with voice note using a digital recorder. The notes were transcribed for later use in the analysis of the data.

The data derived from the interviews and observations were analyzed qualitatively using coding techniques outlined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012). The coding began with microanalysis, open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were used to examine data.

In this process, the microanalysis referred to as line-by-line analysis, phrases, sentences and paragraphs analyzed. All of the field notes from the observation sessions, open ended survey questions and interview transcripts were examined line by line in search of unique events involving the physical and social use of stalls inside Souk Wajif. With this in mind, physical and social events found to be similar in nature or related in meaning were grouped in categories.

**Coding.** The answers of the open-ended questions listed in the study's questionnaire concerning what the participants like and dislike about the current Souk's development plan were categorized or coded into themes representing the preferred physical and social features in the Souk. Coding, according to (Punch, 2013), is the process by which length answers are reduced into specific response categories or themes.

Open coding followed this phase in which the data were broken down into discrete parts and compared for similarities and differences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Then axial coding is followed to look for connections between categories. This is done by linking codes and contexts, to consequences, to patterns of interactions. This phase allows the researcher to look for answers to questions ask such as why, where, when, how, and with what results (Patton, 2005). The last stage of coding is referred as selective coding. This stage is the process of integrating and refining categories to form a larger theoretical scheme that eventually result in theory. From this process, seven categories of findings emerged. These included findings related to physical characteristics of the space, social characteristics of the Souk, factors influencing place attachment, and identity expression.

### **Limitations**

It is important to note that the findings of this study are limited in terms of generalizability. The small number of survey respondents and the snowball sampling strategy clearly resulted in some skewed data, including a more analogous sample population. It is possible that data from a more varied sample would cause cultural orientation to take on even greater importance. Despite these shortcomings, the researcher was still able to draw significant conclusions for this selected population,

particularly as it relates to traditional Bedouin identity and the cultural aspect of Souk Wajif.

In addition, the impact of ‘place attachment’ is somewhat limited by how the measure was constructed. An expanded measure with an increased number of dimensions would likely (based on previous literature) improve the specificity of its influence on attitudes and behavior. Also, little is known about the neurological changes that make place attachment possible, because of the exaggerated focus on social aspects by environmental psychologists (Jelley, 2013). The difficulties in measuring place attachment over time, and the heavy influence of individualistic experiences and emotions on the degree of attachment are the main limitation of the study. In addition, the study measured place attachment only within a commercial setting, which might have different conception and meanings compared to other contexts such as home or work environments.

Procedure of analysis, findings and discussion of the data collected for this study will be discussed and analyzed further next in Chapter Four.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Analysis: Findings and Discussion**

This chapter presents the statistical analysis of the data. It begins with investigating the variables and data coding. Moreover, the sample of the study was described to offer detailed information about the range of subjects represented in this sample. Following sample description, results of the survey analysis and interview responses are discussed. The place attachment model of this study (Figure 41) is tested in this chapter to structure the analysis of findings according to its framework. Finally, findings of the analyzed data are presented and followed by conclusion of this chapter.

#### **Procedure of Analysis**

Several themes were developed from data coded based on the interview structure to locate patterns to categorize information, thus, analyze data for emerging themes as (themes, categories, codes). The plan for analysis was developed and based on transcripts of the interviews, which was better as an exemplar of an emergent theme. Therefore, themes and categories were generated basically from the interviews' interpretation and analysis.

To better understand the preferences of the women sellers in Souk Wajif, surveys were distributed in each interview session. Twenty surveys were completed inside the Souk. The sample of survey respondents can be considered a nonrandom purposive sample. Care was taken to gather data at a variety of times during the day. Inside the Souk, approximately five survey participants were chosen in the morning, nine during the middle of the day, and six in the evening. It was considered important to survey participants from various times of the day due to varied social climate in the Souk during

these different timeframes. Of the 25 female sellers asked to participate in the survey, four declined to participate and one asked to do it sometime later.

The survey had three parts and included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The first part of the survey included demographic questions. The second part asked each female seller to evaluate the physical characteristics of the stall they own inside the Souk, while the third part asked about the overall characteristics of Souk Wajif. Questions were asked about their reaction toward the development plan and the new stall design, so the researcher could identify those attributes that were highly valued, and may even be missing from the Souk after the renovation process. The survey included questions regarding the physical characteristics of the stall, lighting, their preferred view and stall location, circulation around the stall, environmental impact such as temperature and weather/dust protection, privacy and safety inside the stall. Finally, there were several open-ended questions addressing participants' feelings, memories and personal experiences about the Souk and level of satisfaction with the development plan in which they encountered (see interview in Appendix 1).

### **Physical and Social Characteristics of the Stall and Overall Space Inside the Souk**

**Analysis of survey responses about the Souk.** In the second part of the survey, female sellers were asked to respond to the physical characteristics of the stall they owned inside the Souk. Closed-ended questions were analyzed using simple descriptive analysis, where all questions asked participants to rate a specific part of their stall or the Souk on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 as the highest and *very satisfied*, and 1 means *very dissatisfied*. The categories of the questions included graphs that explain the responses of 20 women sellers. In each graph, the scores were grouped in three subcategories to obtain

accurate percentage of responses and scores for each question. Thus, to simplify the analysis process, category 1 included scores ranging from 1-3, category 2 included scores ranging from 4-6, and category 3 included scores ranging from 7-10.

## Demographics

Descriptive Statistics (N = 20)

### 1. Age

The majority of the interviewees in Souk Wajif were older women of 56 years or older (Table 3 & Figure 61). There were seven of the 20 women sellers were 25-40 years (25% of the age group), while 5 of the 20 women sellers were between 41 to 55 years old (35% of the age group). Lastly, 8 of the 20 women sellers were 56 or older which represented 40% of the age group.

Table 3 *The percentage of age groups of women sellers inside Souk Wajif*

Age groups	Count	Percentage
25 – 40	7	25%
41 – 55	5	35%
56 and above	8	40%

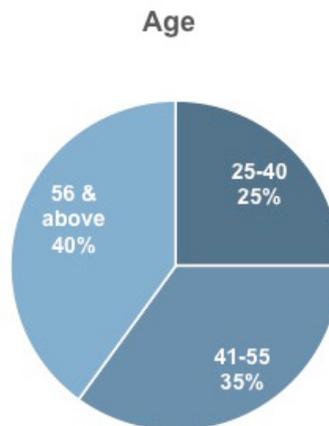


Figure 61. A piechart showing the percentage of age groups of women sellers in comparison to eachother

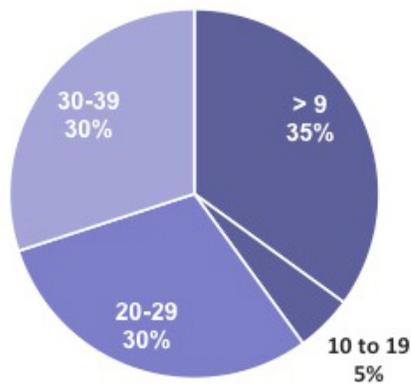
## 2. Number Of years in the Souk

The average number of years spent by interviewees in Souk Wajif falls between 20 to 40 years (Table 4 & Figure 62). There were 7 of the 20 women sellers who stayed less than 9 years in the Souk, which represented 35% of the participants. One of the 20 women sellers stayed between 10 to 19 years in the Souk, which represented 5% of the group. Yet, 12 of the 20 women sellers stayed at the Souk between 30 to 39 years, which is 60% of the group.

Table 4 *The number of years spent by female sellers in Souk Wajif.*

Number of years groups	Count	Percentage
Less than 9	7	35%
10 – 19	1	5%
20 – 29	6	30%
30 – 39	6	30%

**No. of years in the Souk**



*Figure 62.* A piechart showing the number of years spent by women sellers in Souk Wajif

## 3. Education

Findings about the educational level of interviewees in Souk Wajif showed that the majority of these sellers were not formally educated (Table 5 & Figure 63). There were 2 of the 20 women

sellers who received college degrees, which was 10% of the group, while five of the 20 women sellers were graduated from high school, which was 25% of the group. There was only one of the 20 women sellers who received secondary education level. Twelve of the 20 women sellers were not formally educated, which was 60% of the group.

Table 5 *The percentage of educational background of female sellers in Souk Wajif*

Educational group	Count	Percentage
College	2	10%
High School	5	25%
Secondary	1	5%
None	12	60%

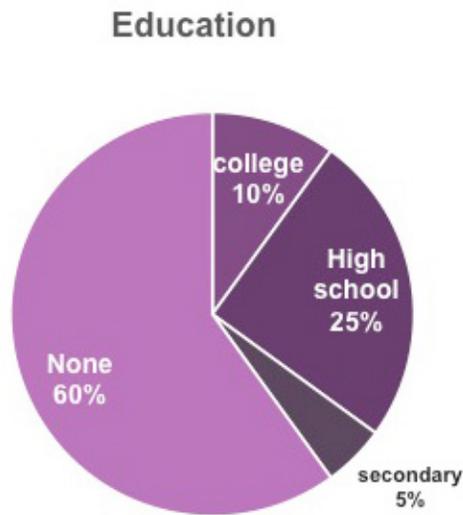


Figure 63. A piechart showing the educational level of women sellers in Souk Wajif

#### 4. Time spent in the Souk hour/ day

Findings show that half of interviewees spent four to six hours of the day in the Souk, while the other half - ten of the 20 women sellers- spent more than six hours selling in the Souk (Table 6 & Figure 64). There were 10 of the 20 women sellers who spent 4-6 hours per day in the Souk, which is 50% of the group.

Table 6 The percentage of time during the day spent by female sellers in Souk Wajif.

Tine frame groups	Count	Percentage
Less than 3 hours	0	0%
4 – 6	10	50%
More than 6 hours	10	50%

Time spent in the Souk hour/day

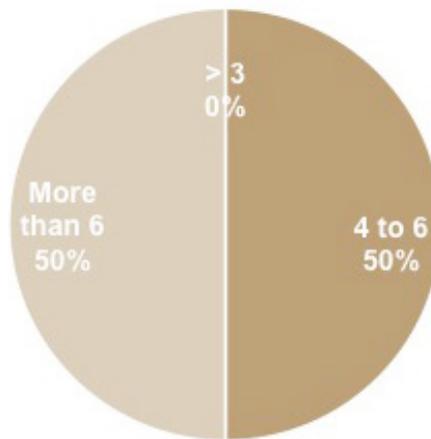


Figure 64 A piechart showing the time spent in Souk Wajif.

All participants come were Kuwaiti Bedouins and Muslims.

### Presentation of Findings

The findings will be categorized in order to identify significant patterns within interview transcripts. Each theme was analyzed with subcategories known as descriptors. From the analysis of interview sessions, several categories were structured to support research questions, such as factors influencing place attachment, meaning of place and identity expression.

The analysis of personal observations and interviews collected from 20 female sellers in Souk Wajif focused on unraveling the ways cultural identity interacted within two scales of the interior environments and how this process impacted the degree of place attachment in traditional markets.

Women sellers were asked to express their emotional and physical bond with the Souk through two scales, the stall and the overall Souk's environment.

1. **Scale I: The Stall.** The stalls of Souk Wajif represented the personal and working space for women sellers. At the scale of individual spaces inside the Souk's environment, the function of these spaces played a role in the construction of female seller's identity and sense of belonging over time. The stall was built as a 2x2 m cubical with a total height of 2.70 m from the floor to the metal structure, and 1.0 m height service counter. Design elements such as layout, location, size, form and materials of the stall were evaluated in order to understand the varying degrees of the ways women sellers constructed their space, expressed their cultural identity and the influence of place attachment.
2. **Scale II: The Souk.** Spaces inside the Souk were composed of architectural elements that created the whole; walls, floors, walkways, columns, lighting and ceiling planes defined the boundaries of the special experience, yet each interrelated with the female sellers' sense of belonging and identity expression in different manners to various degrees. By breaking down the space into the composed constructors, a greater understanding of the interaction and influence between the interior environment and the facets of identity and its adaptation process, definitely, after the development plan of the Souk. This will be further discussed later in the chapter.

Concisely, the discussion revolved around the two scales and the question to those women sellers on the reasons they developed meaning inside Souk Wajif. The answers were classified into four factors of meaning of the Souk to them: (a). identity expression, (b). memories, (c). temporal connections, and (d). community.

### **Scale I: The Stall**

#### **Q.1 What does the space mean to you as a woman seller?**

***Identity expression.*** The significance of the stall as a physical entity inside the Souk allowed those women sellers to manifest their cultural identity in distinctive ways. 14 of 20 women sellers mentioned the worth of identity expression in constructing their space through their discussion. One female seller was sitting inside her stall with her beautiful hands wearing a cluster of gold plated bangles and showing off her goods to the visitors. She has been a seller for almost 36 years and she noted:

*“ The stall makes me physically connected with the Souk’s environment. I sit there and sell as a traditional woman seller and the stall maintained that identity by allowing me to display traditional goods and wear traditional cloths to represent my heritage.”*

She explained how the traditional goods she sold belonged to her identity.

*“All products I sell belong somehow to who I am, traditional clothes, traditional accessories that used to be made by us, and beauty products that we use. You can’t find them somewhere else; therefore, the stall with its products is part of my Bedouin identity.”*

The stall represented the tangible aspect of women sellers’ traditional identity. For most of those female sellers, the stall was considered as the physical manifestation of culture; without the stall they would not be able to sell their products anywhere else in the market. But it represented more than that. Another aspect that allowed the stall to convey

the cultural identity of the women sellers was its unique ability to connect the past with present time. As one female seller who was a proud seller that raised her family from selling goods in the Souk for four decades and taught them to be proud of that,

*“For me, the stall represents the link between modern life and old heritage. If I sell inside the Souk, it means I am preserving part of our tradition that is about to disappear. I feel responsible for preserving women’s traditions by becoming a symbol in Kuwaiti culture.”*

She explained how aspects of culture are connected through the stall:

*“Without the stall I can’t sell my products, I can’t display culture, and I can’t even wear my traditional dress. Everything here in the Souk is connected to each other. If one thing is removed from the system, the Souk is going to be ruined.”*

This showed how women sellers tried to conserve what is left from their culture for future generations; their identity was manifested through their traditional dress and their stall as inseparable parts.

**Memories.** In the case of Souk Wajif, childhood memories were intensely woven into identity expression. Most of those women sellers have a strong desire toward preserving the cultural practice inside Souk Wajif. Actually, the passion to sell traditional goods and preserve the stall’s identity was a way to manifest their cultural identity and preserve the timeless tradition of Souk Wajif. 11 of 20 women sellers mentioned the role of memories in strengthening their emotional bond with the Souk through their discussion. One female seller who was in her late thirties was unpacking her boxes filled with female accessories and beauty products. She illustrated:

*“The Souk reminds me a lot of my childhood days, where I sit with my mother and learn about how goods are arranged and displayed. Now, I sell traditional goods such as traditional clothes, jewelry and wooden combs, traditional makeup, and everything that belongs to traditional women before like my mother did. The*

*whole thing is part of my identity and through my dress and existence in the Souk I maintain my self-identity and preserve the Souk's traditional identity."*

People feel nostalgic about old ways of life and they want to relive them in historic places. Legg (2004) defined nostalgia as a sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations. It can be a longing for a place that no longer exists, with associated feeling of loss. Or it can be the mental return to the one's personal memories of the past (McAdams, 2008).

In the case of traditional markets, older people feel nostalgic to historical markets and try to recall memories by visiting the Souk (Rejabi & Safahn, 2010) While younger generations were always intrigued to know about the history of their local culture. Here, the stall became a symbolized element for a mental return and cultural exchange for younger and older visitors. Another female seller was sitting on top of her cluttered stall making jokes with her friends, was selling in the Souk for three decades, she added,

*" Souk Wajif is one of the richest places in history inside Al-Mubarakiya, it represents our forgotten heritage in the middle of everything modern. The stalls return us to a beautiful era of simplicity, when the visitors feel nostalgic to the past they visit the Souk to relive precious moments of the past."*

Women traders expressed a greater emotional bond with the Souk, where they stored the past times, personal experiences and memories of Souk Wajif. One female seller spent her life as a traditional seller in the Souk and owned a stall after her mom died, she was only 23 years old when she started the trade. she recalled, "I used to tell my sisters everyday what happens in the Souk, after, I used those stories to tell them to my children, they love them and find them charming."

Moreover, length of time or residence in a particular place is consistently related to the strength of place attachment and formation of memories (Lewicka, 2013). One

female seller was in her late sixties and stayed around 6 to 8 hours a day inside Souk Wajif, she explained how her memories that were associated with the Souk kept her attached to the Souk, *“the Souk has a special place in my heart and precious memories as a seller, I prefer to sit most of the day selling than being alone in my home.”*

On the contrary, the disruption of memory can lead to estrangement and feeling of alienation (Kenz, 2006). The same female seller continued:

*“I am so attached to the Souk, I want to spend my whole life selling here. But, after the development plan, I started to feel separated from the Souk’s interior space, it feels strange to sit inside built-in structures that do not connect with our history; it feels awkward and disturbing.”*

The turn between nostalgia and alienation revealed that it was obvious that most of the female sellers of Souk Wajif hardly overcame their sense of un-rootedness, which resulted mainly from the development plan. Their sense of rootedness was formed through their attachment with their personal memories of the past. Eventually, memory as an enabler of place attachment is strongly tied to temporal connections with place.

***Temporal connections.*** The relationship people develop through time with certain places has a strong influence of their feelings of attachment (Lewicka, 2013). In Souk Wajif, most of women sellers were lucky to be sellers for more than 40 decades. Their strong emotional bond with the Souk was clear through their long presence in the Souk regardless of how the environment was changing.

One of the measures of place attachment was the length of residency: it was assumed that attached people stay longer in the place than those who are unattached (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010) in their study: Does place attachment affect social well-being?.. 15 of 20 women sellers mentioned their temporal connection with the Souk and

how it developed with time through their discussion. One female seller who was selling in the Souk for 44 years said,

*“I love to be in the Souk every day because it connects me with my friends, it just makes me happy to socialize with the visitors as it’s the only place left for women to gather comfortably in public.” At this point, there seemed to be a strong historical connection with the Souk, where women sellers worked hard to keep their cultural practice alive because it was the only thing that lasted for them, where they felt they belonged to in present time.”*

In this line of thinking, the temporal connection resembled their bond with the past times of the old Souk, and their desire to keep it untouched as it used to be. Here, the Souk has helped them form a strong relationship between identity, memory and place.

**Community.** Sense of community has been linked to place attachment at both the individual and community scale. In that, both scales involve psychological and social processes that reinforce the bonding nature of a group, such as feelings of mutual trust, social connections and shared concerns. To emphasize, sense of community has a strong influence to citizen participation of a social group and other positive individual and community outcomes. (Perkins & Long, 2002). Interestingly, the stall alone wouldn’t be as much effective as if grouped in a larger cluster inside the Souk. In fact, most of women sellers found themselves more social and connected by the clustered nature of the stalls, which generated a stronger sense of belonging and community inside the Souk. Thus, their collected traditional identity symbolized the cultural identity of Souk Wajif. 17 of 20 women sellers mentioned the role of community they established inside the Souk in reinforcing identity through their discussion. A female seller who joined the Souk after being influenced by her friends to sell her handmade shawls, had been selling in the Souk for almost 15 years. She stated:

*“To be able to keep the culture alive and preserved, one must belong to the same culture and social group. And for Souk Wajif in particular, there is no one else that can sell in the stalls except us Bedouin women traders.”*

Sense of community also involves neighbors’ trust in each other. Trust is essential to the social aspects of community or place, which is the emotional component of both place bonding and social bonding (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013). With time, the Souk’s peaceful social environment became the refuge for most of those women sellers from life’s stress and pressure. A female seller who associated her happiness with the Souk since she started selling around 50 years ago, was grateful for how her stall connected her with many other female sellers who belonged to the same ethnic background. She noted: *“Inside the Souk, we work as one family, we trust and respect each other, which strengthen our social closeness and relationship as one group.”*

Therefore, sense of community and place attachment operates at multiple levels, where emotional ties to one’s community are based not only on individual processes but also on external social processes that foster social cohesion and social control (Brown et al., 2003). This was clearly manifested within the group of female sellers inside the Souk. As several female sellers assured that the emotional component of both place bonding and social bonding can powerfully motivate them as one group of sellers, community members participate in preserving the traditional environment of the Souk.

In the next section, the second part of the discussion revolved around the reasons behind selling in Souk Wajif for those 20 women sellers. The main reasons to sell in the Souk were centered on cultural representation and pride, trade inheritance, and preserving the traditional identity of Bedouin women sellers.

## **Q.2 What is your purpose of selling in Souk Wajif?**

*Cultural representation and pride.* A female seller who expressed pride in owning a stall before the Invasion period and lost her husband in the war, representing her Kuwaiti identity and preserving her spot in the Souk even after the political trauma the country had gone through. She stated,

*“The stall represents my life, I spent decades here selling as my mother and grandmother did: it is a business of three generations. I need to be here in the Souk everyday not to sell goods only, but to be a symbol of the traditional women seller who is created in this place and you can’t see it anywhere else in the city.”*

Another reason to sell in Souk Wajif was the sense of pride those women sellers expressed to be a traditional Bedouin seller in the only surviving historical place in Kuwait City. 19 of 20 women sellers mentioned their pride to be part of the Souk’s cultural environment through their discussion. Another female seller who was in her early thirties had inherited her stall from her grandmother. She expressed, *“Being a woman seller is something I am proud of. It is the job of my mother and grandmother and I inherited this job to continue this cultural practice to preserve our traditional identity from fading.”*

For this reason, she felt proud no matter how hard the situation was inside the Souk after the development. She wished that the government would pay attention to their needs and return back to their old stalls.

*“I am proud of my identity and I feel responsible for preserving this tradition inside the Souk. I wish that the government pays attention to the current condition of the stalls and Figure a way to return to the old stall design.”*

It was significant for most of women sellers to sell in the Souk, because it made them feel independent women and able to be an influential exemplar to other women who

were suppressed by social constructs, particularly, in a male dominated society. A female seller who spent 28 years in the Souk also was proud and honored that she inherited the job of her mother and grandmother, because it has a significant impact on shaping her personality and identity: *“The main purpose to sell is to preserve this tradition as a seller, who sells traditional goods. For the tourists they are more like savonniere or little gifts from our culture.”*

**Trade inheritance.** Another unique aspect that was assigned to Souk Wajif was each woman seller passed her tradition and job from one generation to another with pride. It was a cultural practice that was innately inherited, which kept it alive until present time. 13 of 20 women sellers mentioned their trade inheritance from past generations through their discussion.

One of the big concerns that revolved around the cultural practice of women sellers in the Souk was the challenge those sellers would face in passing down that traditional practice to their younger daughters. Especially with the fast developing pace of modern Kuwait City, younger generations were more attracted to westernized lifestyle and nontraditional work. Thus, it was challenging for those women sellers to convince their young daughters to pursue their traditional job of selling in the Souk. For example, one female seller who was the youngest among other female sellers was only 21 years old and owned her stall next to her mother. She was passionate about selling in the Souk and while she was studying part time to attain a college degree at the same time. She said, *“I want to be a traditional seller like my mother. It is a job that reflects who we are and I want to be known as a seller who is trying hard to preserve the authenticity of Souk Wajif. Studying in college is something needed to secure my future.”*

Significantly, there was a deep sense of commitment to preserve the Bedouin identity of those traditional women sellers. Thus, women sellers were privileged to inherit the stalls and maintain their cultural identity by selling in the Souk. As another female seller who was sitting next to the 76 years old woman noted:

*“ The Souk tells a beautiful story of Bedouin women traders who were brave enough to leave their homes and challenge the strict traditions of our society. It makes us proud of our identity also because I personally inherited this job from my mother and lived my childhood here in the Souk helping her inside the stall. I can’t explain my joy to be part of this Souk. It is my second home.”*

The majority of those women sellers inherited their stalls from their mothers decades ago, and it felt precious to keep the stall and they were honored to continue as a traditional seller.

***Preserving the traditional identity of Bedouin women.*** Identity is multifaceted; it has two aspects in which it can be perceived. First, it is a process and not a ‘found’ object. Usually traditional identity is associated with traces left from civilization as it moved through history. Those traces are the culture, or identity of that civilization. Secondly, being a process, identity cannot be fabricated; people develop their identities by tackling what they perceive to be their problems in their culture. Thirdly, identity isn’t a self-conscious thing; it is an innate feeling of persistence on the basis of some kind of psychological continuity over time, which is associated with the particular identity of an ethnic group (Elabd, 2013).

In this line of thinking, traditional identity can be an extension of traditional spaces, such as in the case of Souk Wajif, where female sellers have articulated their sense of who they are by means of the stalls they constructed and the material culture they created inside Souk Wajif. After the development plan, women sellers felt

responsible to protect their traditional practice in Souk Wajif, which was considered as a daily cultural practice that represented their authentic Bedouin identity. To them, it was the only legacy left in the Souk that reflected their sense of pride and cultural identity.

With this in mind, a considerable number of women sellers have a passion to sell in the Souk Wajif. Although their presence in the Souk was threatened by the development plan, their physical and social attachment to the Souk was obvious in how strongly they were connected with each other, which formed one big family. 18 of 20 women sellers expressed the significance of preserving their Bedouin identity as a cultural group inside the Souk through their discussion. A female seller who was sitting inside her stall and making jokes with other friend sellers explained, *“We share one group identity; we form a strong traditional female community by supporting each other on a moral and material basis and we all work hard to preserve it from loss”*

Noticeably, the identity of Souk was fading in recent years due to the absence of cultural awareness, which left women sellers feeling neglected and threatened to be evacuated from the Souk. In return, some of those women sellers felt obligated to defy the overwhelming presence of foreign sellers inside Souk Wajif. This was considerably achieved by contacting *Shaikha Amthal Al-Sabah*, who was in charge with the development plan of Souk Wajif in particular and Souk *Al-Mubarakiya* in general. As one female seller who was in her mid-forties, claimed:

*“I belong to this Souk, I feel I am an important part of it and cannot leave it. What is annoying is that the government tried once to replace us with foreign labors, which is unacceptable. The Souk’s environment was degrading, lot of fights, lots of intruding morals and foreign traditions that were ruining the Souk’s status and reputation. So, I would like to thank Shaikha Amthal Al Sabah who was*

*in charge of this case, forbidding the foreign work labor to sell in Souk Wajif as a way to protect the traditional identity of the Souk and women sellers.”*

***Q. 3 How does the stall allow you to meet your purpose?***

It was noteworthy to investigate the connection between the reasons behind selling in the Souk and how the stall enabled those women sellers to reach their aims. There were three main aspects related to the role of the stall in achieving the goals for those 20 women sellers, they were: (a). sense of ownership, (b). ability to socialize with the visitors and other women sellers, and (c). family ties and support.

***Sense of ownership.*** Ownership is distinctly related to the sense of belongingness to things and places people feel are theirs. There are two types of ownership, psychological ownership and legal ownership (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks, 2003). In this case, female sellers felt that they own their stalls inside Souk Wajif (psychological ownership) while they actually owned their stalls (legal ownership). 19 of 20 women sellers mentioned their sense of ownership inside the Souk through their discussion and how it was impacted by the development plan. Without doubt, there are several consequences related to the sense of ownership people experience with their physical space such as work or home. Ownership can lead to several positives; such as citizenship behavior, discretionary effort and personal sacrifice. While the loss of ownership can also lead to negative outcomes, such as feelings of personal loss, resistance to change and interpersonal conflict (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

Thus, being a traditional female seller who still would be able to sell in Souk Wajif is a cultural challenge that is limited to Bedouin women. The limitation was a result of many factors such as age, health condition and sense of ownership. For the

majority of women sellers, sense of ownership was formed by their psychological wellbeing at work inside their stalls since they had total control over the stall.

*Ability to socialize with the visitors and other women sellers.* Social interaction is perceived as a relationship between two or more individuals and can take place as processes by which people act and react to those around them, usually in a particular setting or environment. At the same time, place interaction is also significant in which the users can carry out their everyday lives, regular actions, behaviors and events that unfold in the typical days, weeks and seasons of a particular place (Weszkalnys, 2004).

In that, social interaction is important to place because it gives a place both a sense of activity and environmental presence. To illustrate, one of the vital aspects of the stall was allowing women sellers to socialize with each other as well as the visitors of the Souk, which in turn, made the stall a valuable medium to exchange culture with locals and tourists who visit the Souk on a regular basis. 14 of 20 women sellers mentioned the role of the stall in fostering social interaction inside the Souk through their discussion. A female seller who was divorced for 15 years and had two children to raise, felt lonely after her two boys got married and lived by herself stated:

*“The stall allowed me to be more social with people, learn from them and they learn back from me many things about my history, my culture and my country. I don’t feel lonely in the Souk, but happy and surrounded with friends all the time.”*

Another woman seller who brought her little daughter with her to help her inside the stall, was thankful for being surrounded all day with her best friend sellers said,

*“Everyday, I enjoy telling the visitors information about our old traditions in the Souk. It is a kind of sharing culture.”* “Aside from sharing valuable information and cultural experience that couldn’t be found anywhere else in Kuwait City, women sellers felt

obliged that they can introduce themselves to tourists and inform them about the local culture.

The ability to socialize inside the Souk have strengthened both the emotional and physical bond that connected women sellers together with the social environment inside the Souk. It had a significant impact on their sense of belonging and community.

***Family ties and support.*** It is known that traditionally designed spaces in Kuwaiti architecture were known for regulating the relationship among community members themselves and the community values of traditional architecture. To put it other way, gendered spaces in traditional architecture enhanced the sense of community and protection, particularly, among female users through their sheltered spaces (Saleh, 2004). In this case, the sense of community was one of the unique aspects that made Souk Wajif a safe place for traditional women sellers to work and socialize spontaneously. Moreover, the social structure of the Souk's urban environment was strongly tied to female sellers' identity expression.

Women sellers were gratified about the sense of community Souk Wajif created for them. 17 of 20 women sellers mentioned the importance of family ties and support in their job as sellers inside the Souk through their discussion. As one female seller who was in her early fifties selling henna and traditional kohl (eyeliner) said: *“We support and protect each other as one big family, Bedouins are well known for that, we never leave member of the group in need or hardship.”*

That sense of community was reinforced by emotional and material support among those sellers. They trust each other, protect each other and share their daily lives

as one big family. What is more, they receive emotional support from their parents, particularly their mothers, as a source of encouragement.

Moreover, family support has a big impact on some women sellers' confidence level and strength to stand out in public and work around men strangers. A female seller who was selling in the Souk for almost 35 years added:

*“My mother always said that the strong woman is the woman who is independent and earns her living to raise her children, especially as we live in a male dominated society. Therefore, I followed her philosophy and I feel so proud to be part of the Souk.”*

For one thing, the roles of traditional women in Kuwaiti society have changed over time and encompassed social, cultural, political and economic challenges. In the sociocultural context of the traditional public sphere, the significance of the research conducted by Naser, Nuseibah and Al-Hussaini (2012) is that it reflected the transformation of Kuwaiti women from passive members of society to active citizens of their society.

As a matter of fact, in 2015, 53% of Kuwaiti women participated in the labor force, while 46.7% of Kuwaiti women between the ages of 15 and 64 were employed in 2015. (Sidani, 2016) The aforementioned statistics show the extent of the impact that economic development has had in encouraging females to enter the labor force; this suggests that the changing role of Kuwaiti women from homemakers to workers, allowed them to attain more active roles in the public sphere. To elaborate, the traditional roles of women in Kuwait have been highly influenced by factors such as customs, culture and religion (Rizzo, 2005). The changing role of women in Kuwait was being driven by a desire to break free from traditional and long-established customs that have strictly

controlled the role of women in the local traditional society. Besides, the role of Kuwaiti women was greatly dependent upon the evolution of Kuwaiti society into an industrialized and modernized state. Of course, this shift created major tension among social, cultural and political constructs in the local society, leading to an internal change within the social and urban fabric of the city's traditional markets.

### **Scale II: The Souk**

Undoubtedly, Souk Wajif has a special place in those women sellers' hearts; the whole space inside the Souk including the stalls area signified their ethnic identity and strong ties with the local culture over the years. The traditional architectural character of the Souk created the stalls area to fit uniquely within its simple interior space. The simplicity of its architectural and structural components maintained the central space to focus on the exclusiveness and vibrant atmosphere created by the stalls.

### **Change and Politics of Renovation of Souk Wajif**

The feeling of nostalgia to the old Souk was always a big part of why those women sellers felt attached to the social and physical environment of the Souk. The social pattern was purely authentic with local traditional sellers, unlike the current condition of the Souk, which was shifting toward modern approach of the Souk's restoration and development. One female seller who has been selling in the Souk for more than five decades witnessed the gradual change of the place over time and felt disappointed with how the Souk became neglected economically and culturally, she blamed the competent authorities in charge of the current chaos. She claimed with a devastated tune:

*“I am very disappointed and sad of what they did to the Souk. It is one of the precious places in Kuwait that must be well supported and I’ve been selling here for almost 40 years in Souk Wajif, I am so lucky to still sell here.”*

A study showed that the cultural and economic neglect of the traditional architecture in Kuwait City were the main reasons for its architectural chaos (Betz-Bornstein, 2015). Inasmuch as the transformation witnessed in traditional Souks of Al-Mubarakiya, particularly Souk Wajif. The transformation of the stalls’ form and building materials from flexibility to rigidity made a drastic change on the way women sellers felt inside their stalls. As another female seller who was sitting outside her stall on a plastic chair sewing a girl’s *Bukhnag* (a traditional head cover worn by little girls) stated:

*“ The design is not functional at all; it doesn’t provide comfort nor aesthetics to the Souk. Because it looked like a fortress or a prison and does not blend well with the traditional atmosphere of the Souk; also it doesn’t express traditional female touches such as the soft quality of fabrics and colors.”*

The reason behind considering the stall as a ‘prison’ was the confined feeling women seller experienced inside the concrete stalls. Also, the metal structure placed on top of each stall felt aggressive and reminded some women sellers of jail bars. Another contradictory aspect of the stall design was its permanent structure, which was a different concept than the original composition of the stall. The uniqueness of the old stall was its transient nature and form flexibility, one female seller who was cleaning her stall from dust in her early forties, stated

*“ I like the old way of building the stall, it was simpler and flexible in shape, colors and materials. They used to fill the space inside the Souk with joyful and vibrant colors. Now they just look rigid, monotonous and odd in shape.”*

The goal of the renovation process of Souk Wajif was to create a fixed strip of stalls inside the Souk that was stable and durable enough to survive in severe environmental conditions and disasters, such as the major fire in 2013. Unfortunately, there



Eighty percent of women sellers (16 of 20 participants) showed high level of dissatisfaction of the current stall design. As a result, several issues were raised regarding the overall stall design; the majority of those women sellers were not completely satisfied (the average score is 2.25 which reflected higher dissatisfaction level) with the aesthetics and physical characteristics of the stall. They thought that the traditional character was absent in the new design as it looked odd inside the Souk, as one female seller who decorated the lower section of her stall with Kuwaiti flags and wore a tiny brooch of the same flag said, “I did not like it because they designed it against the historical character of the Souk. We never worked inside concrete stalls, and now we feel like prisoners inside.” It was obvious that those negative feelings were a result of how the metal structure and concrete felt harsh as stall materials, which increased the imprisoned feelings and the resemblance of jailed spaces for those women sellers.

More importantly, the majority of women sellers were disappointed because the stall design didn't relate to their ethnic identity as it used to be. A female seller who expressed her regret by showing her old pictures of the Souk and her stall during the sixties ( a phase during the modern sprawl of Kuwait City when traditional lifestyle was coherently settled with modern life) kept the pictures inside her stall in a small wooden box to remind herself and the curious visitors of the beautiful memories of the old Souk. She said, “*I am so disappointed with the new design; it does not represent us as Bedouin women sellers.*” She explained:

*“It doesn't represent our ethnic identity as dessert dwellers; it doesn't have the soft quality of the fabrics, and it doesn't reflect the shiny textures and materials like the old one. The old stall was pleasing to the eye and soul, but not anymore!”*

Besides, there seemed to be a huge disconnect between the current stall design and its function. Most women sellers considered that the space inside the stall wasn't well thought of in terms of size and function, as one female seller who was using a metal screen display at the sides of her stall to hang and display some of her lighter goods, argued, *"It is designed with extra wasted space inside, there is no place to display or hang the products like before except the metal structure, which is only suitable for clothes and fabrics."*

Apparently, that disconnect was not only evident through the stall's design and function, but also it changed its ultimate meaning of place to those women sellers. The same female seller who was cleaning her stall from dust earlier, tried to mimic the old stall arrangement but found it hard to manage with the new height. She said:

*"Now, the stall is completely fixed to the ground, too huge and cannot be reformed. Also, the sold goods were just accessories and not used anymore for modern women; they were only for cultural celebrations and educational purposes in schools. So, the stall exists only as a cultural symbol to protect the identity of the Souk and women sellers from loss."*

As a result, responses showed high dissatisfaction of the new stall design. Women sellers expressed their frustration of how their stalls appeared disconnected from the Souk's traditional character and environment. The majority of women sellers were disappointed because the stall design did not relate to their ethnic and cultural identity.

One of the most debatable transformations in Souk Wajif was the form of its stalls. In an attempt to organize the central space inside the Souk, the development planners thought that it would be more effective and appealing to fit the stalls in a modular grid system. The resulting nonorganic spatial arrangement converted the shape of the stalls from being irregular and spontaneous to geometrical and static. One female

seller who joined the Souk in 2003 and was famous for selling a wide range of traditional eyeliner and makeup expressed her resentment toward the stall's form as, *"I don't like it at all; it looks huge and odd from the surrounding, and the stall must blend well with the traditional character of the Souk; the new design failed completely to blend within."*

**Stall's form.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the form of the stall was asked as follows:

Q.2 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the form of the stall?

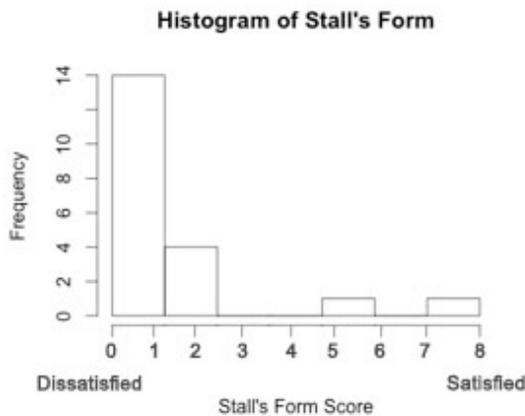


Figure 66. Satisfaction with the form of the stall.

In this question, the scores showed that the mean was 2.45.

Ninety percent of women sellers (18 of 20 participants) were completely dissatisfied with the current form of the stall. The unforeseen consequences of the new design were not only its odd shape, but also its rigidity. As most women sellers were challenged to the new form, particularly when it comes to the arrangement of displayed goods. The same female seller who previously mentioned joining the Souk at 2003 and sold cosmetics thought it was a thoughtless design, because it was built with no

consideration to their needs as Bedouin sellers, “I prefer the old stall, it is closer to my heart; it was comfortable, soft and inviting. The way traditional Bedouin women sellers built it is how it got its appealing look and character.” She added:

*“ It was flexible and looked irregular in form, it gave us freedom to arrange the goods in different ways and according to our taste and preference. At the end, the stalls looked amazing filled with colors, patterns and shining from traditional jewelry.”*

It was obvious that most interviewees struggled to adjust their basic spatial requirements with the stall’s form, movement, especially with their older age requirements. The entire process of the development plan was problematic, particularly regarding women sellers’ opinion and spatial requirements, which wasn’t solicited at any stage of the development plan. For example, age, health and functional needs were critical factors to be considered during the early stages of the design process. An old female seller that was in her mid-seventies held a walking stick in her hand and preferred to sit on a chair outside her stall stated, “It does not matter If I like it or not. The stall was designed without listening to our needs and age requirements. The only option we had was that we must adapt to the new design.” Then when she was asked whether she was comfortable adapting to the new form, she replied:

*“ No, it is not for an old woman, I miss the old stall where everything is displayed in a beautiful arrangement around myself. Now, everything is stacked on top of each other, which makes the stalls looks over packed and cluttered.”*

As a result, the responses showed a high level of dissatisfaction of women sellers regarding the stall’s form in terms of its current shape and structural composition. The majority stated that the stall form doesn’t reflect the architectural identity of the Souk, which made them look and feel odd, thus, hard to blend with the Souk’s environment.

Undeniably, the size of the stall was another major dilemma; where the majority of women sellers claimed that the new stall is too small from the inside and too huge from the outside. They felt frustrated to work inside them.

**Stall size.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the size of the stall was asked as follows:

Q.3 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the stall's size?

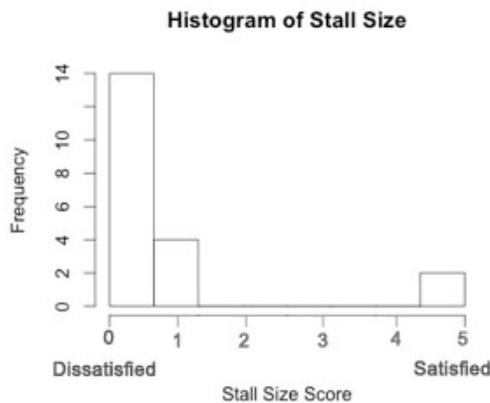


Figure 67. Satisfaction with the size of the stall.

For this question, the results showed a critical response toward the stall size. The mean score for this question was 1.6.

Ninety percent of women sellers (18 of 20 participants) were completely dissatisfied with the current size of the stall. A female seller who was displaying a wide range collection of traditional *Darra'as* (female traditional dress) for girls and women, found it difficult to display all designs in the stall. She described it as *“I feel pressured and controlled by the design and how the stall functions, which is totally against our needs as women sellers.”* The stall design became challenging for those sellers due to its

awkward proportion, they felt uncomfortable sitting inside or working around. While another female seller who was quite large and overweight complained, *“I am not feeling comfortable with the size of the stall because it is tiny for me to work inside and I can’t stack goods in a functional way.”* She seemed frustrated with the way she tried to arrange her goods, *“Now the stall is smaller in size, so the products are condensed and cluttered on top of each other; it is very difficult for me and my customers to browse through products from one single corner.”* Another female seller who had been selling in the Souk for more than 45 years was sitting on top of everything and described it as ‘riding a camel’ expressed her emotions with regret of how she missed her old stall, when she had control of shaping the stall and managing its size according to her needs, *“I felt depressed and disappointed because my old stall meant everything to me; it’s like they took my home and redesigned it according to their preference.”*

As a result, the scores for this question showed a critical response toward the stall size. Most of the women sellers were dissatisfied with the size of the new stall due to its huge exterior structure versus its tight interior space, which they thought dysfunctional and uncomfortable to work inside.

Another significant transformation of the stall was its new building materials. Since the stall has changed in form and flexibility, the government’s development plan sought to build the stalls with fixed and durable materials such as concrete and steel in order to unify the stalls’ area with one standard design.

**Stall materials.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the stall materials was asked as follows:

Q.4 How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with stall's materials (concrete and metal)?

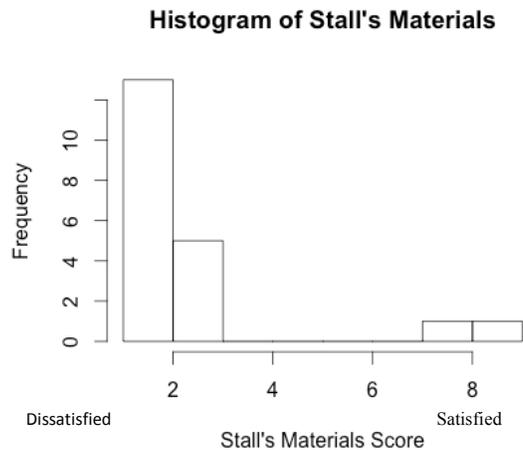


Figure 68. Sellers' satisfaction with the materials of the stall.

The mean score for this question is 2.45.

Ninety percent of women sellers (18 of 20 participants) were completely dissatisfied with the current building materials used for the current stall. In fact, lots of women sellers found the introduction of concrete block and steel structure to their stalls was against the Souk's traditional architectural character. It made them feel uncomfortable and odd, as one female seller who was in her sixties and had been selling in the Souk for four decades was carrying shiny gold plated bangles and was organizing them in boxes on top of the stall's counter. She contended:

*"I don't like to feel stuck inside a concrete and steel stall and forced to work inside it. It felt like a cage. Before the renovation process, the stall was considered as the Bedouin tent, we come to the Souk as a transit place and then return home at the end of the day. It was flexible and lightweight."*

Speaking about the use of local building materials and local climatic conditions, the high temperature and severe climate conditions of the region were major influences on shaping the local traditional architecture in Kuwait. That is to say, direct sunlight and heat were often avoided inside buildings and were treated by several lightweight building materials, such as mud brick walls, stone, wood, straw mats or wooden latticed windows (Al-Ajmi, 2009). Therefore, concrete and steel were unsuitable for hot weather and considered as nontraditional materials for local traditional architecture (Khattab, 2001).

One big concern with the use of concrete to build the stalls was its ability to absorb and reflect excessive heat during the day, particularly, in the city's severely hot summer season. Yet, when another female seller who was in her mid-fifties wearing colorful patterned dress under her Abbaya was asked about her opinion of the use of concrete and steel for her new stall. She explained, *"What is good about the concrete and steel is their durability and resistance in this hot climate. Regardless of how bad they look or feel in the inside."* Then she explained the reason why she was not feeling comfortable inside the concrete stall, *"Not really, it still feels rough and dusty. The worst thing was that the concrete absorbs heat during the day and releases it at night, so it is too hot to work inside all day."*

As a consequence, the selection of building materials to build the new stalls impacted women sellers' sense of territory, control and belonging to the Souk's traditional environment. It felt modern and unwelcoming to most of those women sellers. One female seller who had been selling in the Souk for 28 years and never missed a day out of the Souk was passionate for her work no matter how harsh the weather was. She stated:

*“Before, the wooden platform was so light and easy to move and relocate inside the Souk. It helped me to build my own stall, its lower height made it perfect for me to sit in the middle and build the stall around me. They took that privilege from me! I feel sad because they took from me something I used to own for years something that I belong to and it belongs to me.”*

As a result, the responses showed a high level of dissatisfaction of women sellers regarding the materials used for building the stall. The majority stated that the stall was built from rough and rigid materials such as concrete and metal and both were heat absorbent and reflecting materials, which is improper to use in Kuwait’s severely hot climate and for outdoor markets. Most of women sellers were dissatisfied with the choice of materials used for building the stall as they store and reflect heat during the day and also they do not represent the traditional historical architecture of Kuwait City.

In a larger sense, the drastic change of politics and layout of the Souk consigned women sellers with less power and authority over the spatial boundaries within the Souk’s historic structure. The conflict between women sellers’ needs and the stall design created tension and loss of authority over their personal space. What is more, the location of each stall and its view inside the Souk were also put under the policy control by the development plan. The act of relocating the stalls might place women sellers under psychological pressure or threat of leaving the Souk. Yet, they showed stronger sense of attachment to the Souk, which had a great influence on their adaptation process with the new layout.

Before the development, the location of the stall was chosen based on how women sellers were closely related as relatives or friends. Stalls were clustered to increase the sense of territory and security inside the Souk. Most of the women sellers

owned their spots years ago, each spot represented their personal space and, which symbolized their strong bond with the Souk.

**Stall location.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the stall location was asked as follows:

Q.5 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied do you feel about the stall's location?



Figure 69. Satisfaction with the location of the stall.

The mean score for this question was 7.3.

Seventy percent of women sellers (14 of 20 participants) were satisfied with the current location of their stalls. For women sellers, owning a spot inside the Souk would strengthen their sense of authority even after the development plan, it represented a whole traditional experience to them as a 68-year-old female seller, who had been selling in the Souk for four decades, expressed, while organizing her stalls and listening to old music on the radio,

*“ I like my spot in the Souk because it is located in the center of activities and crowd all day. Adjacent to my stall there is an old fabric shop that sells pretty*

*fabrics and always puts on old traditional music and spreads traditional essence (bokhoor scent). The smell spreads out all over the Souk which makes it joyful and reminiscent of the old days; especially it reminds me of the smell of old houses of the city. Being close by that shop makes me happy and lightens my heart and eases every day's hassle."*

Traditionally, any women seller can give her stall location to her daughter or close relative seller inside the Souk. Most of the current women sellers have inherited their stall locations from their mothers when they were used to sell in the Souk in the past.

Inheriting the trade and stall's location gave women sellers a stronger sense of authority and emotional bond with the Souk. One female seller, who was 27 years old, was wearing a beautiful blue beaded necklace adorned with an evil eye pendant. It was a gift from her grandmother to her mother, then, she inherited it and wore it to keep their protective spirits around her all the time. She explained, *"I have the best location, which is stall no.1 and it is enough said that it was my mother's stall before. I love it so much and I feel comfortable all day in it."* As the female seller next to her was happy because she felt lucky owning a spot next to her daughter, who had been a seller too in the Souk for 33 years,

*"I like my spot in the Souk. As I said, it is located in a busy area, I can see everyone and enjoy looking at the whole Souk. Also my daughter sells next to me, so we are always together. I don't feel lonely at all."*

Another aspect that reflected the satisfaction level of those women sellers even after the development plan, was that they were assigned randomly to new spots inside the Souk, which changed the distribution of the stalls as they used to be before the development.

Another aspect of relocating the stalls showed how some of those women sellers were able to adapt to the new location due to the strong feeling of attachment with the Souk. A woman seller who has been in the Souk for almost 50 years and was in her late seventies, looked weak with slow walking steps. She found it hard to walk after relocating her stall at the far end of the Souk. She shared her experience with a big smile regarding her new location of the stall:

*“ I try to adapt myself with the new location, since my stall location was changed after the development plan. I think that my relationship with people and the Souk in general is stronger than just the location of the stall.”*

As mentioned earlier, the stall’s location and its view have a special place in the heart of most of those women sellers, regardless of their years spent in the Souk. Stalls were arranged in two rows back-to-back and facing men shops on each side. That arrangement limited each stall to one front view, in some cases, combined with a side view of an adjacent stall if a walkway passes between every set of four stalls. A lot of the women sellers felt that they have no choice but to accept their new spots with fixed views. They felt contented by just being sellers under the roof of Souk Wajif, which indicated their deep emotional bond with the Souk even after relocating their stalls. One female seller who owned her stall for almost 40 years illustrated how the Souk has an introverted nature that influenced the whole interior space.

*“ It was designed with simplicity and a welcoming atmosphere yet introverted and protected, which influenced the shape of its interior space. Moreover, by placing the stalls and walkways alternatively in the central space reduced the monotony of the interior space and prevented the sense of claustrophobia especially in busy seasons.”*

The results for this question reflect higher scores regarding the stall location. Women sellers felt satisfied regarding their stalls' location inside the Souk, even after relocating their stalls after the development plan. They felt willing to change their spots as long as they stay inside the Souk, which indicated their strong physical and emotional bond with the Souk.

**Views from the stall.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the views from the stall was asked as follows:

Q.6 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the views from your stall?

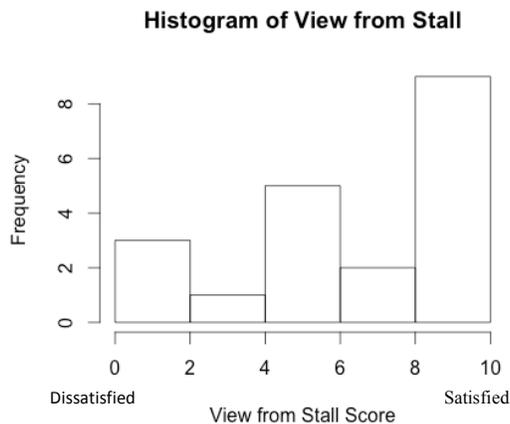


Figure 70. Satisfaction with the views from the stall.

The mean score for this question is 6.75.

Fifty-five percent of women sellers (11 of 20 participants) expressed their satisfaction with the current location of their stalls. All the shops and walkways overlook the interior space of the Souk, which was the central space occupied by women sellers and their stalls. When women sellers sit inside the stall they were just facing the identical

men shopfronts, which was totally the opposite view from men's shops and the passing buyers on both sides, their view was diverse and colorful. It focused on the long vibrant strip of stalls. It was noticeable that women sellers overcame the permanency of views by focusing on the stalls' visual appeal to attract visitors, as a female seller who owned her stall at the main entrance of the Souk for almost 35 years and now lost her favorite view of the street stated, "There is nothing special about the current location of my stall. But, the pedestrian flow inside the Souk and the way I chose to display my goods made a definite stop for the visitors." She explained how she arranged her stall so the visitors enjoy its look while passing in the Souk,

*" It's something I do with passion, each piece has a story to tell and a spot in the stall. So, I arrange the colored fabrics on top of each other to create a colorful wall. Then I arrange the cosmetics and beauty products above the wall in small containers. Then the shiny jewelry and headpieces are placed on top. This way I can better control my stall and from far distance it looks rich and beautiful."*

The results of this question indicated that fifty five percent of women sellers were satisfied with the view from their stalls, whether the stall overlooked a nice view of the Souk or by just being surrounded by busy pedestrian walkways inside the Souk's interior space. The location itself embodied a deeper meaning to those women sellers than the actual allocation done by the development process. On the other hand, forty-five percent of women sellers were not satisfied with the location of their stalls. Reasons such as loss of authority over their stalls, and the number of years spent in the same location made them feel uncomfortable to be relocated inside the souk.

**Meaning of light and psychological comfort.** In opposition to monotonous artificial lighting, which is commonplace in nontraditional spaces, light existence in traditional Kuwaiti architecture was never thoughtlessly conceived (Touman & Al-Ajmi,

2015). In Souk Wajif, daylight has a deeper meaning, particularly, for those women sellers. They considered it as a symbol of inner peace, as one female seller who was 35 years old and was greeting the passing visitors and invited them to check her pretty necklaces considered the Souk as a “breathing space” for them in a traditional society. She explained:

*“Once Bedouin women traders decided to work outside the walls of their houses, their lives changed completely from being isolated from public life into independent confident traders inside Souk Wajif. Being in the light gave us inner peace that didn’t make us feel shameful or judged anymore. It is our source of power and confidence.”*

With time, people started to associate the presence of women traders in the Souk with morning light. This association unchained women traders from the discriminating social constructs at that time (Al-Sabah, 2001). Another female seller who was in her late thirties and was full of energy, with her face covered with *Burqa*; yet I saw her eyes smiling through it so happily. She clarified, “Light represents truth because light reveals. Sunlight eases any kind of sadness or tiredness I kept inside my heart.” She continued: “ In the past, stepping outside the house to sell in the market was totally an unacceptable matter and was considered shameful for traditional women. It is different now.”

Not only due to the harsh climatic conditions of the region that was impacting the traditional architecture of Kuwait, but also the cultural and religious beliefs of the society targeted simple design with inward seeking architecture. Consequently, women felt protected and sheltered even outside their homes. As a female seller who was selling in the Souk for 42 years was setting up her stall with soft cushions and fabrics thought that making her stall more comfortable would allow her to feel homier and cozier to work all

day. She thought that the “*combination of the penetrating light beams and the cozy setting of my stall added extra comfort to the space.*”

Moreover, due to the coherent relation between lighting quality in an interior space and the importance of its position as a whole, every space in local traditional architecture had its own special lighting characteristics which distinguished it from others. This method was also applied in public spaces such as traditional Souks, which were completely inward seeking and didn’t have any openings to the outside (Hawker, 2008).

### Natural light and level

**Natural daylight.** From the interview questions, a question regarding natural light inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.7 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the quality of natural light inside the stall?

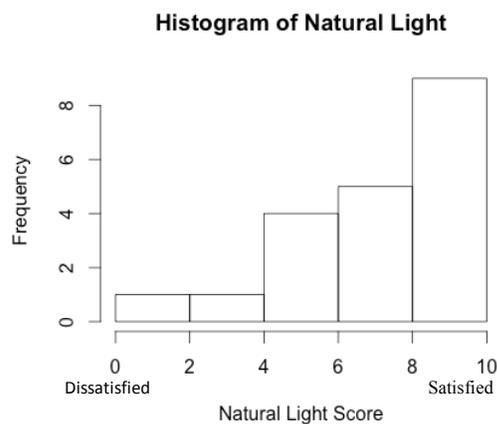


Figure 71. Satisfaction with the quality of natural light.

The mean for this question was 7.5.

Seventy percent of women sellers (14 Of 20 participants) were satisfied with the level of natural light inside the Souk. Due to the high intensity of sunlight in Kuwait, traditional architecture often avoided direct light inside buildings and made use of several components, such as porches, stoned or wooden latticed windows or roof light wells whose function was to modify the undesirable aspects of sunlight and glare. Therefore, making use of direct sunlight through a limited number of openings would provide shade and cooler interior spaces (Ragette, 2003).

One female seller, 66 years old and selling for more than 40 years in the Souk, sews traditional clothes for girls with beautiful handmade embroidery, she saw light as a welcoming element, as she described, *“the Souk’s central space was a space where daylight penetrates to fill that space with positive energy. For me, daylight brings joy and hope to my heart. It takes away all stress caused by daily responsibilities.”*

To sum up, the results showed that the majority of 20 women sellers were satisfied with the quality of natural light inside Souk Wajif. The majority preferred the natural lighting method in the Souk such as indirect sunlight and shaded areas.

***Artificial lighting level.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding artificial light inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.8 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with artificial lighting?

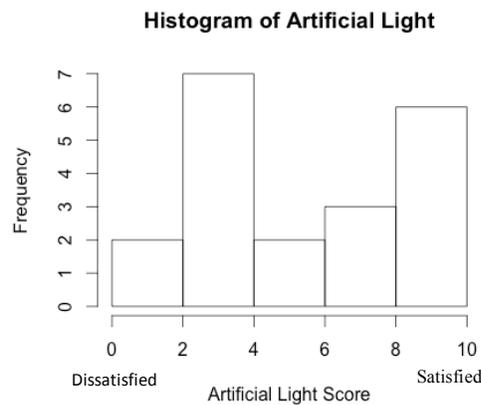


Figure 72. Satisfaction with the artificial lighting.

The mean score for this question is 5.8.

Forty-five percent of women sellers (9 of 20 participants) were somehow dissatisfied with the quality of the artificial lighting level inside the souk. After the development plan, the Souk was supplied with new lighting fixtures. They looked like the old gas lamp lanterns but with electrical light bulbs. Forty-five percent of the women sellers liked the new lighting fixtures, as one female seller who was selling in the Souk for four decades felt lucky to have her stall located in front of a shop that sells traditional lamps. She adored those lamps because her father used to make and sell them when she was a child; hence it reminded her of him all the time. She stated, *“At night the traditional gas-lamp fixtures replace the daylight, I like the soft light they produce, because it creates a warm and welcoming feeling in the Souk”*.

Usually, those gas lamps lighted the sidewalks, but apparently they seemed insufficient for some women sellers to work at evening with enough light source to function. A seventy two year old female seller who suffered from low vision found it so difficult to work and stay in dim place, she thought that the amount of the electrical light

fixtures was not sufficient to cover the stalls area, *“The lighting is so dim especially around the stalls. At my age I need more light to see and move safely around the stall.”*

On the other hand, 40% of women sellers (8 of 20 participants) felt satisfied with the artificial lighting level inside the souk. Only fifteen percent of women sellers (3 of 20 participants) showed neutral response regarding the artificial lighting level. Apparently, there seems to be more need for better quality of light during evening time, especially for older women sellers. As one female seller who was in her early seventies wore thick eyeglasses over her *burqaa* and also cannot see properly in the dark claimed:

*“ Lighting is important for showing the displayed goods for the customers in a clear and attractive way. The stalls area is dark; the poor lighting impacted the colors, patterns and textures of the goods, which changes the customer’s mood and buying decisions.”*

In summary, the scores for this question showed that 8 of 20 women sellers were satisfied with the quality of artificial lighting, while others weren’t satisfied at all. 9 of 20 women sellers were not satisfied with the artificial lighting level. The variation in scores might be linked to other factors such as age, vision and time of the day that were influenced by the level and quality of artificial light.

***Temperature inside the stall.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding the temperature inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.9 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the temperature inside the stall during working hours?

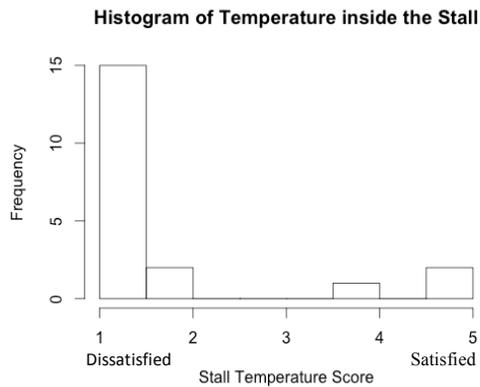


Figure 73. Satisfaction with the temperature inside the stall.

The mean for this question was 1.65.

Eighty-five percent of women sellers (17 of 20 participants) were completely dissatisfied with the temperature level inside their stalls. With this in mind, most of the women sellers were elderly (average age 51), who required additional level of comfort in order to be capable of working inside the stall during hot weather. One of the demands of those women sellers was to provide the Souk with cooling fans as a solution to cool down the high temperature. As one female seller who was in her sixties holding a traditional fan to cool herself down suggested:

*“ The temperature in the summer time is extremely hot and dry. There is no air-conditions inside the Souk since it is open-air place. I am an old woman and with my age and weakness I can’t bear the hot temperature, I also can’t take off my Burqaa and Abbaya (Kuwaiti traditional clothes) so my face all day is covered, which made me need more fresh air.”*

Another female seller who was selling in the Souk for more than 40 years wore a loose cotton green dress under her *Abbaya* to allow air to circulate around her body; she thought that her traditional dress was functioning as a barrier from the hot temperature,

*“ I am lucky that I wear Abbaya and Burqa. It is like wearing a shelter, but still, it needs ventilation, so I wear a lightweight loose cotton dress under it to bear the hot temperature.”*

Other handy solutions women sellers used to protect themselves were evident by using cold water and traditional hand fans, as the same female seller who was holding the traditional fan previously explained, *“I just drink water a lot, splash some water on my face. Then I cool myself with a hand fan.”*

As a result, the high responses of dissatisfaction were related to the high temperature inside the stall. Women sellers felt exhausted and uncomfortable to work in high temperatures, particularly during summer season.

**Wind/dust protection.** As mentioned previously, the Souk was originally built in traditional design with openings from both sides, which made it difficult to protect its interior space from extreme weather conditions such as humidity, wind and dust storms. Most of those women sellers stated that there wasn't any other option than closing the stall in a bad weather condition. From the interview questions, a question regarding wind/dust protection inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.10 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the Wind/Dust Protection inside your stall?

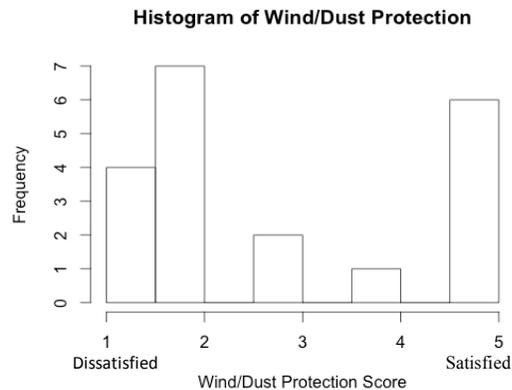


Figure 74. Satisfaction with the wind/dust protection inside the stall.

The mean for this question was 2.9.

Sixty-five percent of women sellers (13 of 20 participants) were not satisfied with the wind and dust protection inside their stalls. A female seller who has been working in the Souk for 47 years showed how her products were covered with a protective nylon cover, explained how the Souk cannot offer enough protection against bad weather conditions, *“Well, the Souk is covered only to protect us from the burning sun and provide us with shadow, occasionally, from rain in winter. But it is impossible to prevent the dust storms from dirtying our stalls inside the Souk.”* Then she continued, *“We close the stalls and return back home, because it is dangerous to work in such a dusty weather especially for the eyes and lungs.”* Under those circumstances, the traditional dress appeared to be extremely convenient as a shelter and the best solution in providing physical protection against heat and dust storms.

As a result, responses showed a high level of dissatisfaction regarding the ability for women sellers to protect their stalls from environmental conditions such as wind and dust. There isn’t much to do in this situation to protect the stalls since the Souk was

traditionally designed as an open-space market. Women sellers stated that in this type of weather condition, they close their stalls and leave the Souk until the weather gets better.

**Social factors:**

In a traditional society, particularly in a public setting like the Souk, privacy becomes a critical issue for women who needed to stay in the Souk the whole day around men strangers. In the past, women sellers used to build the stalls in a way that surrounded their bodies and protected them, which formed a private zone for them to sit, eat or just relax away from unwanted attention. However, the increased size of the current stalls and the interior space affected their sense of privacy and control.

Privacy and safety inside the stall were also factors influencing their sense of ownership. The point to be made is that they needed to feel comfortable to continue developing a sense of purpose in their job and along with a feeling of accomplishment. Unfortunately, most of women sellers felt threatened to lose their stalls after the current development plan. As one female seller who was eating a late snack inside her stall at evening time, described her stall as her 'nest under threat' because she felt threatened by the recent development, *"I want to be in the Souk no matter what developments take place inside. If the Souk is gone, I am gone too."*

The new stalls seemed to be designed without considering women sellers' needs and requirements, which made them feel uncertain about their role and existence in the Souk. Their sense of ownership was reduced and controlled by the Souk's recent development. As the same female seller who owned her stall for 40 years and was selling traditional slippers argued,

*“I wish that the municipality gave us a chance to deliver our concerns and needs in the Souk, without ignoring us. The Souk is very unique to our culture; it represents the Kuwaiti women challenge and identity through history. Above all, its uniqueness came from being exclusive just for independent Bedouin women sellers and their traditional goods.”*

As mentioned previously, privacy becomes a critical issue in traditional markets for women who needed to stay in the Souk the whole day around men strangers. In the past, women sellers used to build the stall in a way that surrounded their bodies and protected them, which formed a personal space to work comfortably. However, the current stall design impacted women sellers’ sense of privacy inside the Souk.

***Privacy inside the stall.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding privacy level inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.11 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied do you feel regarding your privacy inside the stall?

Scores showed a mean of 7.65.

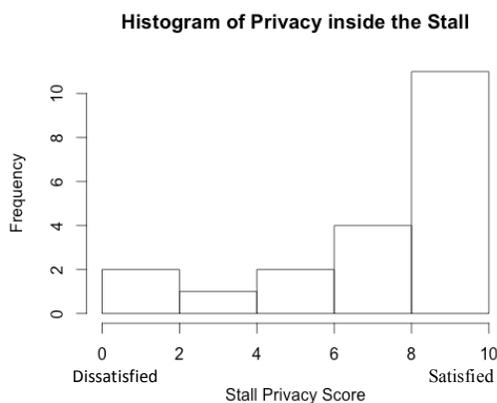


Figure 75. Satisfaction with privacy inside the stall.

Seventy-five percent of women sellers (15 of 20 participants) showed a high confidence level while being inside the current stalls. Mostly, they all felt self-contained inside their stalls not because of how their stall functioned, but because of their traditional dress they wore during working hours. A female seller who owned a stall in the first row of the Souk facing the main busy entrance, described her experience in the Souk as:

*“I feel content with my own privacy not because of how the stall is built, but because I cover my face and body with Abaya and Burqa, which is a tradition. I have my own privacy and show respect of myself through my traditional dress, especially around men in the Souk. I feel better to talk and deal with men strangers and customers when I am wearing it and without it I can’t be selling in the Souk.”*

Another female seller who was in her seventies believed that wearing traditional dress in the Souk not only offered privacy but also preserved her social status, *“When I cover my body and face in a place full of strangers, it protects me from undesirable attention and male gaze inside the Souk. Plus, it preserves my social status, traditional identity and respect from others.”*

There were two factors most of women sellers considered helpful in maintaining their privacy level inside the Souk: which were (a). the smart display arrangement and (b) traditional dress. As one female seller showed her clever built-in shelves to display her products without clutter, has mentioned:

*“My privacy depends on display arrangement and traditional dress, which give me extra comfort and feeling safe around. Plus, it makes me more confident to talk with strangers and customers.”*

However, a female seller who was in her mid seventies and had difficulties in climbing her high stall, was dissatisfied with her privacy level inside. Although she wore her traditional dress, but still the design of the stall forced her to arrange the products on top of the stall, then sit on top of the displayed products, which made her uncomfortably exposed to the passing visitors. She argued:

*“I don’t have complete privacy in the stall. The way I sit on top of the stall differs from what it used to be, I am totally exposed to people but thank God I wear traditional Abbaya and Burqa, it is a protective cover just like a shelter.”*

A female seller who was in her early seventies wearing beautiful stone rings and holding a *mubkhar* (burner) to spread incense inside the Souk explained:

*“ I enjoy my privacy inside the stall as it feels like our old traditional courtyard house, where I am in the center and everything displayed surrounded me with the perfect height so I become more in control of selling and negotiating with customers.”*

She thought that her traditional dress played an important role in defining her privacy and emotional comfort,

*“ When I wear the Abbaya and Burqa I own total privacy in place; it gives me total confidence by concealing my identity to the public as well as respect, and that’s what the old Souk was known and characterized with, which was preserving women sellers’ identity and privacy at the same time.”*

As a result, responses showed a high satisfaction level for the privacy level women sellers experienced inside their stalls. They expressed great comfort with both being inside the stall and wearing traditional dress, which provided a better sense of control and psychological comfort.

Undoubtedly, the random products arrangements of products inside the stall might decrease privacy and comfort level of the woman seller. That was due to different arrangements that were not related to sellers' personal preferences. Then safety becomes an issue for those women sellers. At the same time, the word safety would express the emotional security women sellers developed over the years inside the Souk, which was influenced by the safe environment and trust among sellers. It was well known in old Kuwait City that people valued and trusted each other's business such as properties and belongings. The social responsibility was strongly evident in the local community where it was safe for women traders to work and leave their stalls for a while inside the Souk. Moreover, it was rare to find the Souk closed at night with gates. The Souk was protected with guards during the night, which created a safe environment for women to work there. But they no longer exist in the Souk, which was an indication of modern transformation of the sociocultural life of Kuwait City.

Accordingly, the development plan sought to preserve the secured nature of the Souk, even without the physical presence of the Souk's guards. That was achieved by designing the stall with a small door and a lock in order to increase the safety of women sellers and protect their goods inside the stalls.

***Safety inside the stall.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding safety inside the stall was asked as follows:

Q.12 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied with your safety inside the stall?

The mean for this question was 5.25

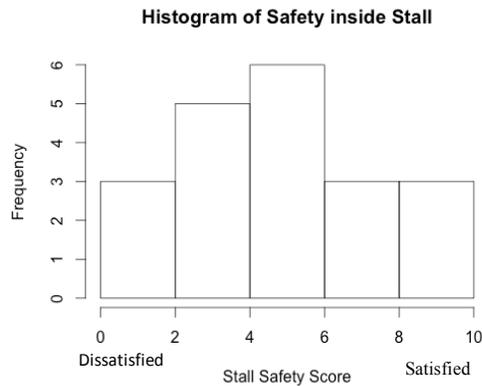


Figure 76. Satisfaction with safety inside stall.

Seventy-five percent of women sellers (15 of 20 participants) showed a high satisfaction level of their safety while being inside the current stalls. Safety inside the Souk included emotional security and physical protection inside the stall. One of the oldest female sellers who had a family business in the Souk for decades explained how the Souk’s environment was changing over the years and particularly after the development plan:

*“The stalls were designed with no attention to security levels like it is still open and anyone can jump inside and steal goods.”*

Apparently, her confidence and feeling of safety inside the Souk was a matter of trust in God and people, *“I just trust the people here in the Souk, we are a big family and I trust in God’s will, I close everything tightly with a cover and believe that God is protecting us from robbery or damage.”*

In the same way, another female seller who mentioned how cautious was her family when she just started selling in the Souk 30 years ago and faced hard times to convince them that the Souk is a safe place for her to work. She reflected on how safe she felt in the Souk,

*“I can say that the new design of the stall is kind of average and exposed; I don’t feel that it was built to protect me as a seller. But the good thing is that the Souk’s environment is safe, I never experienced any threatening action.”*

In brief, the stall design offered women sellers better control over using the door and lock during and after working hours, but it was somehow critical for older women sellers to stack the goods over the high counter and then sit on top of it, which might cause serious accidents and injury. One female seller who has been selling in the Souk with her mother for more than 25 years pointed out:

*“ The interior space of the stall is quite safe; there are no sharp corners or openings. The only concern to me is the height (1.00 m high with service top counter), which is unsafe & products may fall down from the stall.”*

As a result, responses were somewhat neutral. Some of the women sellers felt unsafe being inside the stall due to the new height that required them to climb the stall most of the time, which might be dangerous for older women sellers to fall off the stall. Other women sellers felt safe inside the stall due to its confined feeling and sense of enclosure.

Moreover, it is significant to consider the shape, size and circulation around the stall in order to enhance the level of social interaction and activates between the sellers and the customers. Usually inside traditional Souks, proper walkways and effective circulation paths around each stall would significantly impact the buying and selling transactions between the seller and the customer. Therefore, the development plan had renovated the existing pedestrian walkways inside the Souk and increased their widths. Sidewalks were paved with stone tile floors in an attempt to improve the pedestrian movement inside the Souk and increase the circulation’s efficiency around the stalls area.

By that, socialization, a daily act inside the Souk, became a continuing process whereby women sellers acquire their personal identity through well thought design. The physical design characteristics would foster the level of social interaction of those sellers; it would enable them to effectively communicate with each other and with the visitors as well. Mainly, the social position of women sellers enabled them to share local norms, values, behaviors and social skills with the visitors of the Souk, on a daily basis and as a unique cultural experience.

***Circulation around the stall.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding circulation around the stall was asked as follows:

Q.13 On a scale of 1-10, how unsatisfied or satisfied are you with circulation around the stall?

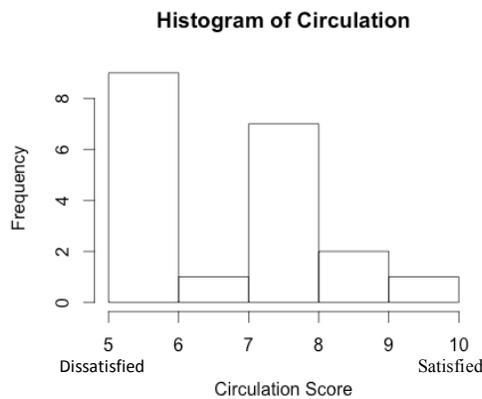


Figure 77. Satisfaction with circulation around the stall.

In this question, the mean was 6.95.

Notably, fifty percent of women sellers (10 of 20 participants) showed satisfaction level of the current circulation around the stalls area. They felt the change between how

the old Souk was compared to the new developed stalls area in terms of movement and circulation around the stalls area. As one female seller who had been selling in the Souk for 38 years and was well known for her great trading skills amongst her friend sellers said:

*“The circulation and movement around the stalls area is good even after the development plan. Two sides determine the movement around the stall now; one side overlooks the main walkway; the other side serves the smaller walkway between every 4 stalls. This gave me better control over selling transactions.”*

Another effective aspect of the wider walkways was its positive impact on social interaction between the seller and the visitors of the Souk, as the same female seller explained,

*“ Since the walkways now are wider than before, it gave me more freedom to communicate and interact with my customers. Now I have better control of the stall than before, and the customer can move freely and browse the goods easily.”*

Apparently, women sellers seemed comfortable with the circulation level around the stalls; they felt more organized in terms of the stall’s layout, movement and sense of control. Responses showed that women sellers responded neutrally regarding the circulation around their stalls after the development plan, probably because of the wider walkways and organized stall layout.

By the turn of events, particularly after the accidental fire of Souk Wajif, the government sought to apply new rules and restrictions to increase the safety of the stalls and the area around them. One of the rules women sellers have to work with was the prohibition of decorating their stalls or to hang any kind of ornamentation or decorative lighting on the metal structure of the stalls. That particular restriction might hinder

women sellers from the freedom to personalize their stalls according to their personal preferences.

***Ability to decorate the stall.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding ability to decorate the stall was asked as follows:

Q.14 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with your ability to decorate the stall?



Figure 78. Satisfaction with ability to decorate the stall.

The mean for this question was 4.3.

Forty-five percent of women sellers (9 of 20 participants) were not satisfied with the new rule that restricted their freedom to decorate their own stalls. Most of those sellers expressed their frustration with the new rules; they saw it as a verdict against the traditional character of the Souk. A female seller who has been selling in the Souk for almost 50 years and used to hang small Kuwaiti flags and ornaments on top of her stall before the development phase argued, “ *I don’t agree with the rules placed by the municipality. It contradicts with the traditional way of selling in the Souk. I feel now that I lost my status and ownership of my stall.*” When she was asked why she felt that way,

she said, “ *Because I used to manage my stall and decorate it the way I prefer, the time I want and in the form I find comfortable to me, now everything in the Souk follows strict rules, and I have to obey or otherwise I will lose my stall and my job.*”

On the other hand, forty percent of women sellers (8 of 20 participants) were not feeling restricted by the new rule. As they thought they do not need to apply additional decoration to their stalls, since it is already packed with eye-catching patterns and colors of the displayed products.

A clarification from the Government’s officials was needed to understand the reasons behind the new rules and regulation of Souk Wajif, As Mr. Saad Al-Zaid (head of architectural and historical restorations in Souk Al Mubarakiya) stated, “ The main reason behind the new regulations of the Souk was to protect the historic structure from destruction and damage that might be caused by accidental fire such as the one that destroyed the Souk back in 2013. Also, the new rules took into consideration the Souk’s users and sellers’ safety from physical injury caused by misplaced goods inside the stalls area” (Al-Rai, 2014).

One of the unforeseen aspects of the new rule was the way those women sellers felt about the lost sense of authority over their stalls. Yet, the intense focus on the physical adaptation inside the stalls depended heavily on personal efforts of those women sellers. Some of those women sellers found various solutions to cope with the new government’s new safety rule. They handled the new setting with adeptness and confidence, as one female seller explained, “*I am not upset at all, because I decorate with my own preference and avoid hanging anything on the metal structure. I focus on the display and arrangement of goods and that is on its own a decoration!*”

Another solution to avoid decorating the stall was through a built-in display system, which was a smart idea by a female seller who joined the Souk with her cousin after they both graduated from high school 10 years ago. Their stalls looked neat and organized in a smart way. She explained:

*“ Few months ago, I used to hang a shelf that was attached to the metal frame of the stall. I used three shelves where all the cosmetics and beauty products were arranged. This solution gave me more space to fold and stack the traditional clothes and dresses on the stall’s counter. ”*

As a result, responses showed that most women sellers weren’t satisfied with their ability to decorate their stalls; this is due to the latest municipality’s rule of managing the Souk. Accordingly, this change in rules made women sellers feel threatened about their sense of ownership and control inside their own stalls.

To understand the embodiment of place in its proper context, concepts such as making of place and identity expression were tied to how women sellers construct meaning through the physical and social experience inside Souk Wajif.

Not surprisingly, for women traders, Souk Wajif became the breathing space for them, which enabled them to step out of their homes into the public sphere independently. Thereupon, daylight in Souk Wajif became associated with their freedom and independence in the society, which signified hopefulness, optimism and confidence to join the Souk and become a valued symbol of local culture.

***Overall space inside the Souk.*** From the interview questions, a question regarding the overall characteristics of the Souk was asked as follows:

Q.15 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the overall space in the Souk?

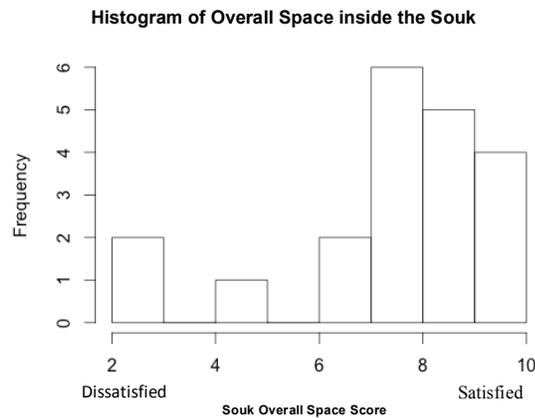


Figure 79. Satisfaction with space within the Souk.

The mean for this question was 7.85.

Eighty-five percent of women sellers (17 of 20 participants) expressed high satisfaction with the overall space inside the Souk after the renovation. One female seller considered Souk Wajif as the only place that had encouraged the cultural practice of her and other women sellers for decades. She has been selling in the Souk for almost 45 years and said:

*“The simple feel of the Souk brings inner peace and comfort to me. The government plan kept the Souk as it was regardless of how the new stall looked. I value the Souk as a whole. It is a place that I can’t be separated from.”*

Considering the overall space of the Souk, the majority of women sellers agreed that the main reason behind the positive aspects of the space inside the Souk was its untouched parts and architectural details. It stoked them with nostalgic feelings of the past times and became the refuge to them from the modern life in the city. One female seller who was in her 50s selling traditional makeup and beauty products previously

talked about the stall also has stated her opinion about the overall environment of the Souk:

*“ The beauty of the Souk comes from its simple design and spontaneous atmosphere and historical architectural details that were untouched till this moment. Its unique location in the heart of the modern Kuwait City represented a refuge to all who wanted to escape from daily routines and life’s pressure.”*

The unchanging charm of the Souk’s traditional design became a connecting element between those women sellers and their past. A female seller who was 58 years old used to come with her mother to the Souk in her childhood, and used to play with other kids around. She explained why she was emotionally connected with this place:

*“I love everything inside the Souk, every single detail has a story to tell and memory to remember. Nice people, smell of traditional bakhour (scented wood chips or incense), traditional coffee and old songs. Everything allowed me to live my old days in the Souk, when it was built with the simplicity of traditional architecture. Beautiful spaces, spacious and welcoming.”*

Women sellers expressed a strong nostalgia for the Souk, even when they were still selling in it. One female seller joined the Souk by chance, after her sister got married and gave her the stall to continue in the Souk instead of her. It was unplanned but she loved it, and she said, “I am in love with the place, I spent all my life working here, I always have nostalgia for the Souk, the memories and the old buildings.” Although the same female seller who joined the Souk with her cousin previously talked about her solutions of her stall was gladdened that the authenticity of the Souk’s atmosphere was well preserved,

*“ Although people changed and the city became modernized, this Souk became our escape from modern life. Its beautiful architecture and details are simple but pleasing to the heart.”*

Another reason that showed the depth of feelings for most of women sellers who felt attached to their stalls and overall space in Souk Wajif was their memories with the place. One female seller who was 50 years old and was selling for 35 years every day cooked a meal to share with her friend sellers; she was famously known as ‘*Om el Khair*’ which means *mother of goodness*, a name that she felt honored to be called because Bedouins are famous for their generosity. She said:

*“All people I met here liked to visit the Souk from time to time because they feel nostalgic to the old city since it is the only live legacy left from our old Kuwait, and it keeps arousing beautiful memories.”*

It was insightful to know how much the Souk meant to those women sellers, as it constituted a significant part of their life as a whole and personality specifically. One female seller who was selling gold plated bangles and necklaces at the other end of the Souk mentioned, *“This place represents my second home, because I live and worked here all my life as a seller. It is part of who I am as a traditional woman.”*

As a result, responses showed a higher level of satisfaction at 7.85 with the overall space inside the Souk. The majority of women sellers expressed their appreciation to the authentic aspects of the Souk that was still preserved, such as the traditional architectural elements inside the Souk.

### **Impact of Development Plan on the Bond between Women Sellers and the Souk**

Some of the major deficiencies in the development plan of the Souk were the insufficient lighting over the stalls area, lack of cooling fans, and lack of electrical outlets, which impacted the quality of light, vision, and function inside the stalls. One

female seller who was in her late fifties used to remember the differences between the old and the new Souk. She thought that the development plan was not bad,

*“ Not bad, it is good to preserve the true identity of the Souk and make some renovations for the floors, columns and shops. But they ruined the stalls area by making those concrete blocks. Also the Souks lacks direct lighting above the stalls and also the air-cooling system, which the government refused to provide!”*

**Impact of development plan.** From the interview questions, a question regarding the impact of the development plan inside Souk Wajif was asked as follows:

Q.16 On a scale of 1-10, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the development plan of the Souk?

In this question, scores showed that the mean was 4.35.

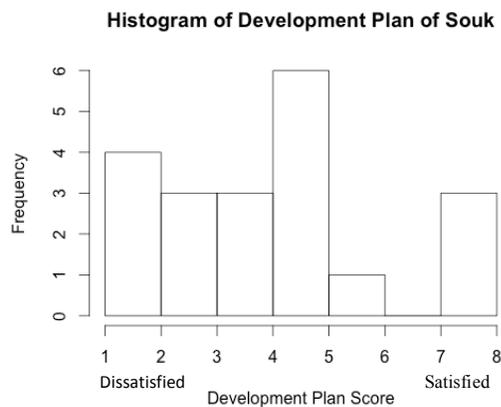


Figure 80. Satisfaction with the development plan of the Souk.

Fifty percent of women sellers (10 of 20 participants) showed high satisfaction level with the development plan in Souk Wajif. To better understand how women sellers were affected by the renovation process of the Souk, it was essential to focus on the impact of the development plan on their identity expression and level of attachment to the

space inside the Souk. Obviously, most of the women sellers were satisfied with the overall development process inside the Souk. Yet, there were several aspects that weren't well thought of in the development plan, which negatively impacted the Souk's physical and social environment.

One of the female sellers thought that the development plan was necessary to preserve the Souk's historical identity but failed in preserving the stalls area as it used to be. She was in her mid-sixties and held a traditional fan and a bottle of water to cool her self during the day. She thought:

*“ The development plan was necessary for renovating the Souk; but my concern is with how they ruined the stalls and replaced them with concrete blocks. The new stalls do not address our needs as women sellers. They are too high, not comfortable to sit inside and not functional when I try to adjust the display.”*

On the other hand, fifty percent of women sellers were not satisfied with the development plan inside Souk Wajif. The big concern for the majority of those women sellers was the fear of losing the identity of the Souk and its authentic atmosphere after the renovation process.

The women sellers, after the development plan, did not expect the new stall design; they were completely disappointed in terms of how the stalls blocked the central space and ruined the visual interplay of material culture and the interior space inside the Souk. The same female seller mentioned earlier who owned a stall at the Souk's main entrance said, “The development plan is good for major maintenance issues but not to change the identity of the traditional architecture and the sellers to modern lifestyle.” She thought that the new stalls do not relate to the traditional character of the space inside the

Souk, “*They look ugly I have to say, and blocked the central space and vision from seeing the beautiful colors and goods displayed in the shops.*”

Definitely, the renovation process affected both the sellers and visitors of Souk Wajif, which meant that there was a need for careful consideration when preserving the identity of the Souk. With this in mind, women traders stressed the need to protect the Souk from modern development, or in another word, the Souk’s environment needed to be preserved with careful development.

In summary, the results of this question showed a neutral response regarding the overall development plan inside the Souk in terms of renovation and maintenance. Some of women sellers thought that the renovation process was important to preserve the Souk from loss, while other women sellers thought the development plan was not completely successful because it was implemented without considering their needs such as efficient lighting and cooling fans and proper furniture.

## **Person**

### **Identity and Embodiment of Place**

**Traditional Bedouin identity.** All 20 female sellers were identified as Kuwaiti Bedouins, from tribes who settled in Kuwait City neighborhoods during the 1960s and 1970s. They are all Muslims and live in a traditional lifestyle. Their traditional identity was recognized by the traditional dress they wear in public, their concealed faces by the *Burqa* they cover with, and traditional artifacts they sell in the Souk. Seeing signs of their identity was important in instilling pride and spirit, both as a collective cultural identity and an individual sense of belonging in the Souk.

As Browns, Perkins and Brown (2003) explained, the physical and social bond between individuals and places, the degree of *place attachment* might change as individuals and physical environment develop, the environment ages or any changes that interfere with the social and physical activities in place. This study posits that place attachment is a major factor in bonding with both the physical and social environment of the Souk, regardless of the major development plan that went through. The analysis of personal observations and interviews collected from 20 female sellers in Souk Wajif focused on unraveling the ways cultural identity interact within two scales of the interior environment and how this process impacted the degree of place attachment in traditional markets.

As a cultural identity, female sellers attributed the strong Bedouin spirit present in the Souk as being responsible for saving Souk Wajif from closure, a few years ago and lately, after the development plan. One female seller who had selling in the Souk with her aunt for 32 years and expressed her pride to keep this tradition alive, remarked:

*“The traditional stall became the symbol for Bedouin women traders in the Souk’s history. Nothing can substitute its value and meaning in Kuwaiti history.”*

Through the stall women sellers expressed their cultural identity through many years and fought for it through difficult times such as the oil boom and modern life, the invasion and lastly the great fire. Women traders kept their identity preserved by attaching themselves to the Souk, their life was constructed around being in the Souk and selling artifacts as a cultural practice. This practice reflected how traditional women were preserving their identity by wearing traditional clothing in modern Kuwait City and preserving the old traditions and customs of selling in the market. The simplicity of the

stall and intricate artifacts created a beautiful cultural dialogue in the Souk's interior space.

For this reason, women traders associated their identity with the Souk's cultural identity (Al-Sabah, 2011), as it is the only legacy left for them to connect with the past and influence the future, as an inherited cultural practice through generations. Therefore, the feeling of being attached to the Souk appeared to maintain women traders' sense of pride and place making. Yet, physical layout and design elements can evolve or change according to the social constructs and authority of women sellers in defining their personal space inside the Souk. Over time, their social and physical bonds with the Souk have secured their notion of place making, which was significant in understanding how a traditional place became an extension of their self-identity.

**Space embodiment.** As one woman seller, who owned her stall for 28 years in the Souk and showed great gratitude to be part of the Souk's community, said:

*“The Souk is designed to bring people together, the cultural identity of the Souk isn't just formed because I sell individually in my stall, but because the Souk's social environment is always engaging and active all day. It is a combination of traditional women sellers selling goods, colorful stalls, interested buyers and walking tourists inside the central space of the Souk.”*

The reflection of this woman seller indicated that those sellers embodied the space as a cultural group more than individuals, which gave them a stronger sense of place making and identity.

In the case of Souk Wajif, women sellers believed that working as a clustered group would have a strong positive impact on their sense of community, collective identity and spatial power. Spatial power is gained by a result of sociocultural forces, which vary in how they construct the space inside the stall and holistically inside the

Souk. In that, it would help women sellers to identify themselves by the notion of place making and place embodiment. As one female seller who was in her late fifties and owned a stall next to her sister at the very far end of the Souk, said:

*“ I enjoy the company of my friends female sellers all the time, we share a lot, enjoy chatting about daily happenings; we form a strong traditional community by supporting each other on a moral and material basis.”*

From a spatial point of view, the way women sellers related to their stalls extended beyond physical parameters. The way the space surrounded their bodies and the comfort of being sheltered inside an enclosed space, resembled the comfort of working inside their courtyard homes. This form of embodiment enhanced their emotional and physical bond with the space inside the Souk.

However, related evidence gathered from various studies such as Low (2011) revealed that the embodied space is being shaped by particular socio-cultural practices such as material culture. The physical environment and the socio-cultural context are factors, which impact the embodied mind and space of the individuals (such as women sellers). Such socio cultural practices can be given material form in the artifacts that aid and manifest culture, like the stall, the displayed artifacts and the traditional dress women sellers' wear to express their cultural identity. One female seller who was in her sixties selling in the Souk for more than 40 years felt proud that Souk Wajif constituted a major part of her personality. She believed that wearing the *Burqa* gave her the power to be less introverted when interacting with the customers of the Souk. It offered her an emotional security to build her strong personality like her mother. She said:

*“ The Burqa and Abbaya gave me confidence to interact with the customers without worrying about what they think of me when I am speaking loud, bargaining or dealing with rude customers. No one would know who I am and*

*that gives me self-confidence and power inside my stall, I worked and lived here all my life, the Souk is part of my personality.”*

This suggests ownership or some kind of connection between a person or a particular location or a building. It also suggests a notion of privacy and sense of belonging to the Souk.

The point is not just that the body shapes the embodied space, but the experiences of the interact-in-the-world also shape the embodied space. Tewfik (2002) cited the example of the architectural originality of traditional Souk Wajif and its powerful role in manifesting the traditional identity of Bedouin women sellers, which was through the presence of their stalls. His idea of the stalls in Souk Wajif was illustrated as a set of fixed cubicles that embodied the spatial experience of women sellers at different time frames. His documentation of the Souk's evolution through time came from a strong conviction that the clustered stalls inside the Souk had much greater influence on the Souk's experience overtime than it would be possible from only one individual woman seller's memory or experience. He noted that the stall embodied socio-cultural practices in two important ways. First, the stall is an extension of the body in that a woman seller physically manipulated it by shaping its products in order to create a sense a confined space around her body, which reinforced her comfort zone through a feeling of shelter. Second, the stall in its design was a “physical residual of generations of traditional female cultural practice” (Tewfik, 2002, p.68). Any particular female seller in Souk Wajif became the intellectual heir of a set of social practices, all constructed in the form of the stall and traditional dress.

At this point, it is clear that there is numbers of different, if interrelated, senses of the term embodiment in every culture. In that, it is the mind, body and place grouped

under the sociocultural constructs to form the experience in Souk Wajif. Women sellers' identity, the stall and *Abbaya* were the main influences in constructing and embodying place as a cultural experience.

According to Creswell (2015), a specific place refers to the conceptual fusion of space and experience every culture forms. That fusion extends between subjective and objective experiences, where in the case of the Souk, women sellers were forcibly aware with their bodily sense of space to adapt to their conscious level of awareness, thus adapt to subtle changes in spatial experience. Every woman seller reflected both her personal (subjective) point of view overlapped with the (objective) perception shared with other sellers of the Souk. It is important how the mind, brain, and body interact to construct personal experience in physical space. In that case, the new stall challenged women sellers to recreate their experience within space inside the Souk, under spatial supremacy of the development plan.

To that end, the adaptation process women sellers experienced with the renovated Souk was heavily impacted by the aesthetic and functional aspects of the stall. Women sellers in Souk Wajif felt forced to use the concrete stalls, which caused them to redefine the physical attributes of the stall and work in confined boundaries. Not surprisingly, the displayed artifacts in the stall acted to manifest the female seller's knowledge and perception of themselves, that is, through their cultural identity.

## **Findings**

This dissertation indicates that attachment to place develops to different degrees within different spatial ranges and dimensions. Among the results the study highlighted was that social attachment was reinforced by the physical attachment of women sellers,

and, the degree of attachment varied with age, personal experience, and length of settlement in the traditional market. The following findings were related to the design of the stall, choice of building materials, and adaptation process to the recent development inside the Souk, which significantly influenced the level of place attachment and identity expression of those 20 women sellers:

1. Women sellers felt forced to use the fixed stalls, in different location or neighbors; there is no choice to pick the stall's location as it used to be. The government assigned each stall to random sellers. Thus, women sellers lost their sense of ownership and the social connection between each other.
2. Being in a fixed stall with one forced view increased suppression of social interaction between women traders and customers.
3. The physical design of the stall functions against the spatial and social needs of women traders; the new height of the stall top surface would require women traders to sell all day standing on their feet. Before they used to sit comfortably and selling their goods inside their stalls.
4. All women sellers disagreed with the choice of building material used for the new stalls because they are not well thought out in relation to the local weather conditions.
5. Some women sellers showed slight adaptation to the new design by making few alterations to the interior space of the stall to avoid standing all day. This was achieved by fixing wooden platform to the walls inside the stall to sit on it, and use the space underneath as a storage space.

6. The older women traders in age, the more they feel attached to the Souk and in denial of the new design. It drastically affected their sense of place, ownership, and control of the stalls.
7. Younger women sellers seemed to be more adaptable and flexible in using the new concrete stalls and introduced effective design solutions to better function in space such as hanging metal screen display system and attaching wall mounted wooden shelves to create a more enclosed feeling of privacy and control over their displayed goods.

## **Conclusion**

Inside Souk Wajif, place attachment was perceived as women sellers' connection to their past history through symbolic experience of space, emotional ties and identity expression. They have experienced the place inside Souk Wajif through three merging factors of the stall's form, function and meaning, which enabled them to create their sense of place and then emerge into identity expression.

This study was built upon a deeper investigation of how place attachment and identity expression helped female sellers to maintain their cultural identity and how they reacted upon the recent development plan of Souk Wajif. Drawing from interviews with 20 traditional women sellers, the outcome showed that although women sellers felt neutral about the overall development plan and renovation process of the whole Souk, the stall design created a major tension in the relationship between women sellers and their notion of place making, identity, and place attachment.

To elaborate, the participants were asked to express their emotional and physical bond with the Souk through two scales, the stall and the overall environment of the Souk. With this in mind, the discussion was supported by three main questions using both scales. The first part questioned those participants what does the space meant to them as women sellers? The answers were classified into four factors that formed meaning inside the Souk: identity expression, memories, temporal connections, and community.

The second part investigated the purpose of selling in the Souk and the major factors that caused them to become traditional sellers. Factors such as representation and pride, trade inheritance and preserving the identity of traditional Bedouin women were the main reasons behind the purpose of selling in Souk Wajif.

The third part explored the connection between the reasons behind selling in the Souk and how the stall enabled those women sellers to reach their aims. There were three main aspects related to the role of stall in achieving the goals for those 20 women sellers, which were: sense of ownership, ability to socialize with the visitors and other women sellers, and lastly, family ties and support.

Overall, the findings emphasize the need for further investigation to understand the relationship between the current stall design and the emotional bond and identity expression of traditional women sellers inside Souk Wajif. Exploring the notion of space creation and embodiment that is supportive could provide a way to reinforce women sellers' sense of ownership. Similarly, understanding the adaptation process of women sellers to the newly renovated space inside Souk Wajif could also provide significant insights into how the current stall design must be reconsidered by rethinking new effective design solutions that respect the traditional architectural character of the Souk.

This insight could affect how designers assess and evaluate sociocultural aspects during the restoration of historical sites. Furthermore, it would be vital to understand how this affects women sellers' cultural identity and place attachment inside Souk Wajif. Some of these suggestions for future research and possible implications on the stall design of Souk Wajif are discussed in Chapter Five.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Summary, Conclusion and Implications**

This final chapter restates the purpose of this study and its importance. It also summarizes the research model, the hypothesis, the data used for this study, the data analysis, and the final outcomes of this study about place attachment and female identity in Souk Wajif, Kuwaiti. The chapter concludes with implications for future research and implications for future design practice and design education.

#### **Summary**

As the purpose of this study is to explore the intersection of identity and place attachment inside the redesigned Kuwaiti traditional markets, the experiences of the twenty women sellers showed that the interior environment of Souk Wajif overlapped with their self-identity through varying environmental scales: the stall and the Souk's overall environment. A significant amount of this research involved the investigation of the influence of physical environment on creating meaning of place, related precedent literature indicated that the concept of place attachment - place making - identity construction is a multidimensional construct influenced by the confluence of various influences. What women sellers saw in their stalls and overall environment and how they interpreted them sheds light on the intersections of physical and social factors through which place attachment develops, a concept that is highly influenced by individual's emotions and personal experiences through time. They have experienced the place inside the Souk through three merging factors of the stall's form, function and meaning.

## **Discussion**

The exploration of the intersection between women traders' identity and place attachment in Souk Wajif involved two theoretical constructs, space and material culture (Tewfik, 2002). To clarify, the theoretical understanding of space examines the social and material constitution of space in a particular environment (Thrift, 2003). The meaning constructed from interior space and material culture was juxtaposed with time in order to explore the level of attachment women traders' developed for the Souk over time factor. Part of this exploration involved the physical characteristics of the current stall design, the social characteristics of the stall, and the overall space inside the Souk by the perception of women traders. Both theoretical constructs were based on the notion that a person's sense of identity is influenced by several components or rely on certain resources. Research on these components was examined and two main influences (physical and social variables) were selected for the present study.

A cultural dialogue of self-identity is set up between women sellers and the Souk's interior environment through the practice of constructing their stalls using material culture, and therefore, the study's theoretical model of place attachment (Figure 41) informs us how the concept of place attachment is influenced by physical and social factors, sense of ownership and length of residence. Using quantitative and qualitative approach, the selection of the two specific variables was based on their significant relationship with place attachment revealed in the literature review. Additionally, the number of variables was also limited to ensure that the scope of the study was manageable. The two selected variables were physical characteristics and social characteristics of the stall. These served as independent variables for the study and data

collected for the same were analyzed with regards to their relationship with identity of women sellers of Souk Wajif. Translating the physical and social factors of place into a model for understanding place, person and place attachment with respect to time factor.

### **Scale I: Stalls**

Stalls were the primary element inside the Souk, as spaces of cultural exchange and identity. Allowing space for displayed goods such as the stall surface expose the unseen, the multiple textures and colors by which one can be attracted to explore, the rich visual perspective of the extended rows of stalls inside the Souk creates pleasant feeling. Yet, their critical condition created a major tension between its function, use and visual appeal. Their transient nature was replaced with permanent structure. The soft materials were swapped with rigid concrete blocks. Yet embodied space was a result of engaging the senses with spatial elements and experiences inside the Souk. In the process of constructing the traditional identity, women sellers become an extension of the embodied space of their stalls, their self-identity extends from the cultural identity of the Souk, Using spatial constructors to position their traditional identity, which is that is defined through the complex overlap of material and (im)material world.

### **Scale II: The overall space inside the Souk**

The exploration of the Souk's interior as a whole can be appreciated to delve deeper into the person-interiors relationship. By investigating the architectural and spatial elements, it is possible to draw a picture on the process by which 'place attachment' is developed and 'identity' is constructed inside the Souk. Spaces inside the Souk were composed of architectural elements that created the whole; walls, floors, walkways, columns, lighting and ceiling planes, which defined the boundaries of this

spatial experience. Each was interrelated with the female sellers' sense of belonging and identity expression in different manners to various degrees. By breaking down the space into the composed constructors, a greater understanding of the interaction and influence between the Souk's interior environment, the facets of identity and degree of attachment is conveyed.

The study revealed that there were commonalities and differences between the views of traditional female sellers, such as recognizing the social construction of space versus the actual transformation of space that both were constructed through peoples' social exchanges inside the Souk. One aspect of the commonalities was that women sellers in Souk Wajif felt forced to use the concrete stalls, which caused them to redefine the physical attributes of the stall and work in confined physical boundaries. Not surprisingly, the displayed artifacts in the stall acted to manifest the female seller's knowledge and perception of themselves, that is, their cultural identity. Besides, there seemed to be a huge disconnect between the current stall design and its function. Most women sellers considered that the space inside the stall was not well thought out in terms of size, form, and function.

Relevant precedent studies for the 17 independent variables were discussed in Chapter Three, which were dominated by research conducted in disciplines of environmental theory, psychology and related fields. Architectural principles of traditional souks were discussed and found relevant to traditional markets in Kuwait City. Measurement of each of the physical and social variables in relation to place attachment were also discussed in Chapter Three, which concluded with the presentation of the proposed model of place attachment in traditional markets. Eight factors of place

attachment (physical factors, social factors, cultural factors, personal factors, memories and experiences, place satisfaction, interaction and activity features, and time factor) were discussed in Chapter Three that formed the basis for selecting two main influences (physical and social) with 17 measures as independent variables for the present study. The 17 measures were divided into two categories: physical variables with 10 measures (stall design, stall form, stall size stall materials, stall location, views from the stall, natural lighting, artificial lighting, temperature inside the stall, and wind/ dust protection inside the stall), and social variables with 7 measures ( privacy level, safety level, circulation around the stall, ability to decorate the stall, family ties and support, overall space inside the souk, and impact of development plan on the souk.

To elaborate, the participants were asked to express their emotional and physical bond with the Souk through two scales: the stall and the overall environment of the Souk. With this in mind, the discussion was supported by three main questions using both scales. The first part questioned those participants what does the space meant to them as women sellers? The answers were classified into four factors that formed meaning inside the Souk: identity expression, memories, temporal connections, and community. The second part investigated the purpose of selling in the Souk and the major factors that caused them to become traditional sellers. Factors such as representation and pride, trade inheritance, and preserving the identity of traditional Bedouin women were the main reasons behind the purpose of selling in Souk Wajif. The third part explored the connection between the reasons behind selling in the Souk and how the stall enabled those women sellers to reach their aims. There were three main aspects related to the role of stall in achieving the goals for those 20 women sellers, which were: sense of

ownership, ability to socialize with the visitors and other women sellers, and lastly, family ties and support.

Below we delve deeper into the process of place attachment and identity using a modified version of the place attachment model (Figure 60) that is updated given the study’s findings, through both the physical factors (Figure 81) and social factors (Figure 60) to unravel the design elements that got involved in the creation of personal experience and identity of female sellers. Results are shown in (Figure 82 & 83).

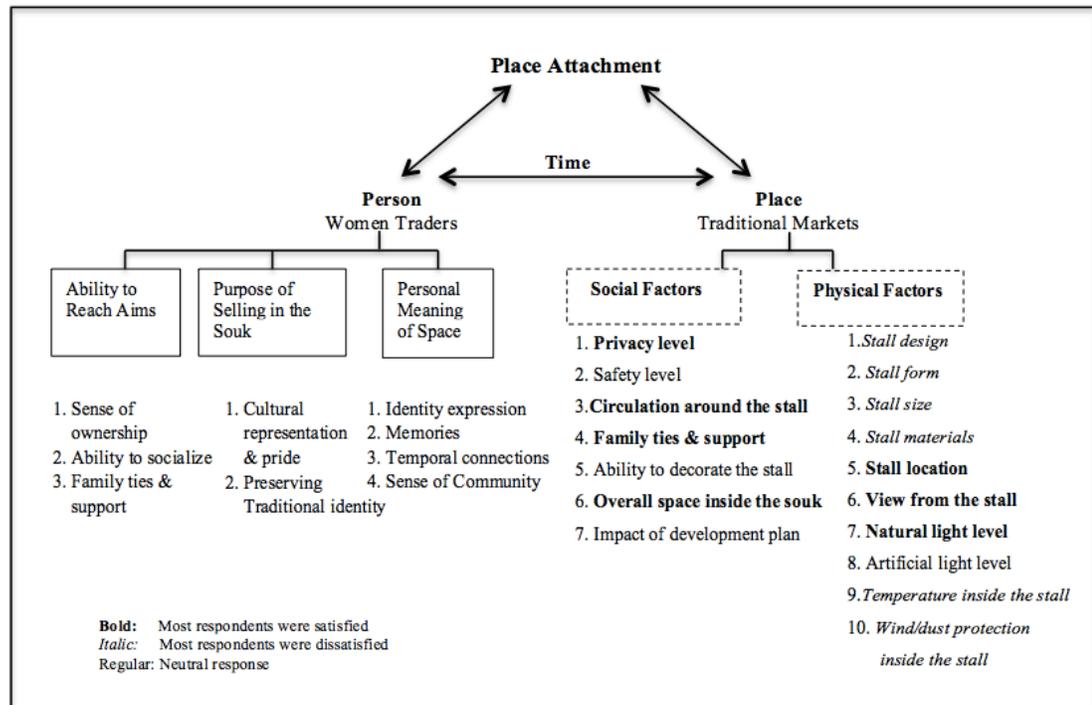


Figure 81. Updated place attachment model.

## SCALE I: Stalls

**Physical Factors :** Quantitative Analysis of Survey Responses

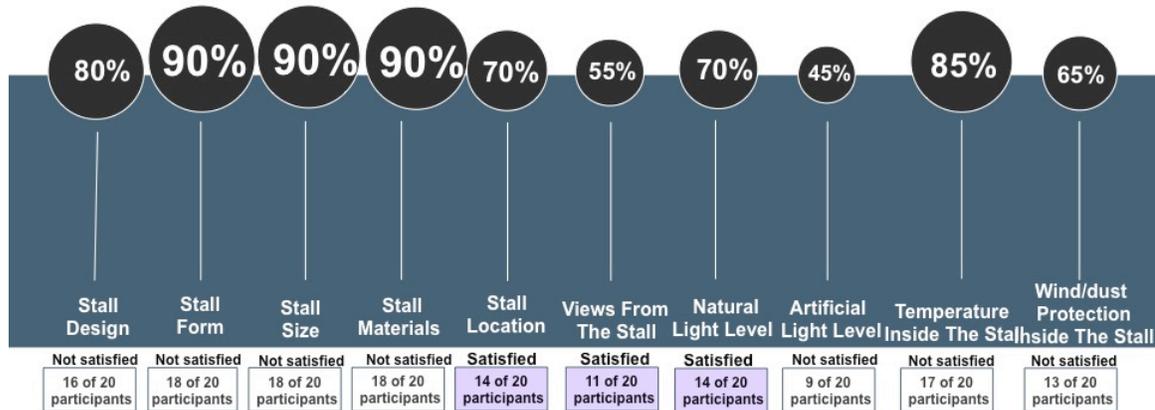


Figure 82. Percentage of women sellers' satisfaction/dissatisfaction level with physical factors of the stall (Dashti, 2016)

### Physical Factors

#### 1. Stall design

The majority of women sellers were not completely satisfied with the aesthetics and physical characteristics of the stall, they thought that the traditional character was absent in the new design as it looked odd inside the Souk, which didn't relate to their ethnic identity as it used to be. Besides, there seemed to be a huge disconnect between the current stall design and its function, in terms of individual construction techniques and flexible products arrangement.

#### 2. Stall form

As most women sellers were challenged to the new form, particularly when it comes to the arrangement of displayed goods. In an attempt to organize the central space inside the Souk, the development planners thought that it would be more effective and

appealing to fit the stalls in a modular grid system. The resulting nonorganic spatial arrangement converted the shape of the stalls from being irregular and spontaneous to geometrical and static. Women sellers weren't satisfied at all with the stall's form in terms of its current shape and structural composition, the majority stated that the stall form doesn't reflect the architectural identity of the Souk, which made them look and feel odd, thus, hard to blend with the Souk's environment.

### 3. Stall size

Most women sellers considered that the space inside the stall wasn't well thought of in terms of size and function, the majority of women sellers claimed that the new stall is too small from the inside and too huge from the outside. They felt pressured and controlled, which increased the level of discomfort and caused frustration to work inside them.

### 4. Stall materials

The use of building materials was also another major issue that women sellers tried hard to cope with, especially during hot summer season. Concrete is rough in texture, collects dirt and dust, it has the ability to absorb and reflect excessive heat during the day, which is exhausting. They thought that the wrong selection of concrete and metal structure not only changed the form of the stall but also it eliminated its transient nature of the stalls, and was against the Souk's traditional architectural character.

### 5. Stall location

Inheriting the trade and stall's location gave women sellers a stronger sense of authority and emotional bond with the Souk. Also, relocation of stalls showed how some of those women sellers were able to adapt to the new location due to the strong feeling of

attachment with the Souk's environment. The stall's location and its view have a special place in the heart of most of those women sellers, regardless of their years spent in the Souk. They felt willing to change their spots as long as they stay inside the Souk.

#### 6. Views from the stall

Lots of women sellers were satisfied with the view of their stalls. It was noticeable that they overcame the permanency of views by focusing on the stalls' visual appeal to attract the Souk's visitors. Whether the stall had a nice view or by just being surrounded by busy pedestrian walkways inside the Souk. The location itself embodied a deeper meaning to those women sellers than the actual allocation done by the development process. On the other hand, some women sellers were not satisfied with the location of their stalls, they felt great loss of authority over their stalls, and the number of years spent in the same location made them feel uncomfortable to be relocated inside the souk.

#### 7. Natural light level

The majority of women sellers were satisfied with the quality of natural light inside Souk Wajif, they preferred the natural lighting method inside the Souk such as indirect sunlight and shaded areas. Historically, the central interior space inside Souk Wajif was symbolized as the 'light tunnel' for its sellers and visitors. Metaphorically, the light tunnel signified the threshold that took women sellers out of the shadows into the public sphere, the marketplace, social life and the world in large. Therefore, the concept of 'light tunnel' inside Souk Wajif is perceived as an unrivaled portrayal of the transitional phase women traders went from being socially marginalized to being centralized in the Souk. It becomes a spiritual source of power, confidence and optimism.

#### 8. Artificial light level

Some of the women sellers were dissatisfied with the quality of the artificial lighting level inside the souk. The distribution of light fixtures was only limited to the sidewalks leaving the central space dim. The quality of artificial lights was insufficient for some women sellers to work at evening with enough light source to function. Other factors must be considered such as age, vision and time of the day the level and quality of artificial light.

#### 9. Temperature inside the stall

Most of women sellers felt dissatisfied with the temperature inside their stalls, which was related to the choice of building materials of the stall and lack of ventilation inside the Souk. Since most of women sellers were elderly, they felt exhausted and uncomfortable to work in constant high temperature, particularly during summer season. One of the demands of those women sellers was to provide the Souk with cooling fans as a solution to cool down the high temperature. Some of the effective solutions to cope with the heat were wearing loose cotton dresses and using traditional hand fans. They believed that their traditional dress functioned as a physical barrier from the hot temperature.

#### 10. Wind/ dust protection inside the stall

The majority of women sellers felt helpless to protect themselves and their goods during sandstorms and winds. They were dissatisfied with their inability to protect their stalls from environmental conditions such as wind and dust. There isn't much to do in this situation to protect the stalls since the Souk was traditionally designed as an open-

space market. In this type of weather condition, they close their stalls and leave the Souk until the weather gets better.

## Social Factors

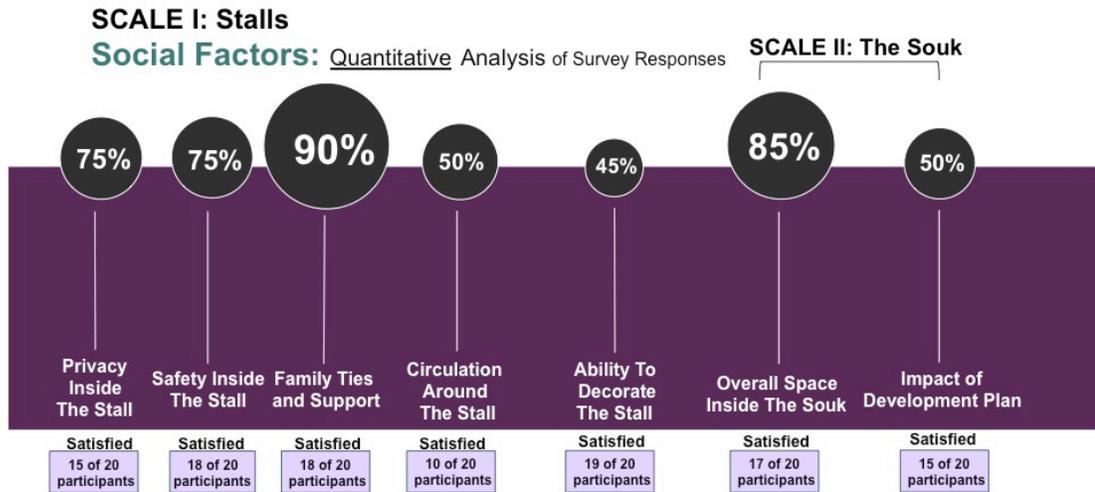


Figure 83. Percentage of women sellers' satisfaction level with Social factors of the stall (Dashti, 2016)

### 1. Privacy level

There were two factors most of women sellers considered helpful in maintaining their privacy level inside the Souk: (a). the smart display arrangement and (b) traditional dress. Most of women sellers showed high satisfaction level for the privacy level experienced inside their stalls. They expressed great comfort with both being inside the stall and wearing traditional dress, which provided a better sense of control and psychological comfort. Although few of them felt uncomfortable due to the stall design that forced them to arrange the products on top of the stall, then sit on top them being completely exposed, which made them uncomfortably visible to the passing visitors.

## 2. Safety level

Safety wasn't considered as a critical issue for most of the women sellers, mostly was perceived as a personal concern . Some of them felt unsafe being inside the stall due to the new height that required them to climb the stall most of the time, which might be dangerous for older women sellers to fall off the stall. While other women sellers felt safe inside the stall due to its confined feeling and sense of enclosure.

## 3. Circulation around the stall

Sidewalks held messages of their own, as spaces of transit and movement, they form the daily path to interact with both sellers and visitors of the Souk. Between the stalls and the Souk's interior spaces, the sidewalks allow the visitors and sellers to travel through time, they become as spatial connectors moving from one space to another, in movement, all senses are engaged through body movement, which arouse old feelings, personal experiences and memories of the Souk. Also sidewalks enhance visitors' circulation around stalls, which improved the display arrangement and level of social interaction between sellers and visitors. Apparently, women sellers seemed comfortable with the circulation level around the stalls; they felt more organized in terms of the stall's layout, movement and sense of control. Responses showed that women sellers responded neutrally regarding the circulation around their stalls after the development plan, probably because of the wider walkways and organized stall layout.

## 4. Family ties and support

Sense of community was one of the unique aspects that made Souk Wajif a safe place for traditional women sellers to work and socialize spontaneously. Most of women sellers expressed their gratitude to having their family ties support inside and outside the

Souk. For them, stalls enhanced the sense of community, protection and belonging by offering social support. The type of support included emotional (e.g. love, care, trust), tangible (e.g. financial or material goods), companionship (e.g. sense of belonging), informational (e.g. advice), and intangible (e.g. personal advice).

#### 5. Ability to decorate the stall

Although the majority of women sellers expressed their frustration with the new rules of limiting stall's decoration; they were not feeling restricted by that restriction. As they thought they do not need to apply additional decoration to their stalls, since it is already packed with eye-catching patterns and colors of the displayed products. Some of women sellers used smart solutions such as the built-in display system to avoid violating the laws.

#### 6. Overall space inside the souk

Considering the overall space of the Souk, the majority of women sellers agreed that keeping the old Souk's with its untouched parts and architectural details was the main reason behind its value and their emotional bond with it. It stoked them with nostalgic feelings of the past times and became the refuge to them from the modern life in the city. The unchanging charm of the Souk's traditional design became a connecting element between those women sellers and their past.

#### 7. Impact of development plan

Most of the women sellers thought that the development plan was necessary to preserve the Souk's historical identity but failed in preserving the stalls area as it used to be. The big concern for the majority of those women sellers was the fear of losing the

Souk's historical identity and its authentic traditional atmosphere prior the renovation process. The majority agreed that the development plan was not completely successful because it was implemented without considering women sellers needs such as efficient lighting and cooling fans. To them, the renovation process affected both them as sellers and visitors of the Souk, which highlighted the need for careful consideration when the government plans to preserve the cultural identity of the Souk as one of the most valuable historical landmarks.

### **Material Culture**

Material culture was another elements of women sellers' identity that was brought forward within the stall. Traditional goods, accessories and makeup become a medium to exchange local culture and Bedouins identity. Also, traditional dress (*Abbaya and Burqa*) was another means by which the dynamic production of identity was constructed. It increased sense of privacy, comfort and protection for women sellers to be work around men inside the Souk.

### **Time**

The temporal dimensions of place attachment come through the emotional bond with the stall and the Souk; women sellers built connections between the past, the present, and the future, highlighting their challenge and pride in preserving their cultural identity inside the Souk. Good memories and childhood recalls played a significant part of their emotional bond and personal experiences inside the Souk over the years. Another reason that showed the depth of feelings for most of women sellers who felt attached to their stalls and overall space in Souk Wajif was their memories with the place.

Pointing to the physical and social factors that seemed important to women sellers allowed us to recognize which factors were more important and why to those sellers. Among the physical factors that were mostly preferred were: location of the stall, views from the stall, and natural light level. The reasons behind this preference goes back to the existing historic feel and architectural elements inside the Souk, such as the walkways, old building materials, indirect natural light, wooden doors, simple interior design, which offered unified feeling and equal opportunity to provide a good location and view from each stall. In contrary, the most disliked physical factors were: stall design, stall form, stall size, stall materials, temperature inside the stall, and wind/dust protection inside the stall. Reasons such as the dysfunctional design elements of the stall increased the level of discomfort among most of women sellers, and amplified the disconnect between the stalls and the surrounding traditional sense of the Souk.

Other factors such as artificial lighting level, safety inside the stall, ability to decorate the stall, and the impact of the development plan were neutral in response, some women sellers felt concerned with issues such as lack of lighting fixtures or their safety inside the stalls, while others coped with.

Although the design characteristics of the stalls did not serve well its function nor cultural context inside the Souk; the strong social bond enabled those women sellers to create meaning and sense of place within the physical and social boundaries of their stalls. Among the social factors that were mostly preferred were: Privacy level, circulation around the stall, family ties and support, and overall space inside the Souk. Women sellers felt protected and comfortable wearing traditional dress and socializing with the Souk's visitors. They perceived the stalls as the connecting element between

their family members as well as the Souk's visitors, which enhanced their social interaction and emotional bond with the Souk. There weren't any social factors that were disliked by women sellers, they showed great importance of the social aspects in their identity and place making.

It appeared that the physical and social parameters of the Souk were major influences in the identity construction of those women sellers. Along with the dysfunctional stall design, women sellers linked the lack of artificial lighting fixtures, cooling fans and proper protection from harsh weather conditions directly to the lack of consideration by the officials in charge. For most of those women sellers, the design of the stall, the lack of lighting fixtures, the wrong choice of building materials, the lack of cooling fans all deconstructed their sense of ownership, as they were in conflict with their identity and how they can preserve their existence in the Souk as a cultural symbol of local culture. One of the biggest challenges aside from the odd stall design was the difficulty to convince the seller's daughters to continue selling in the souk, younger generations were more attracted to westernized lifestyle, which is why this cultural practice in particular is perceived as a threatened tradition to disappear.

The interpretation of women traders' answers added deep insights derived from material culture, space and personal experiences. Drawing from the narratives of those sellers illustrated an underlying, consistent effort to reassert their presence as traditional Bedouin sellers within a sociocultural context that is, at best, ambivalent toward the growing trend of modern expansion in the Souks of Al Mubarakiya. Moreover, the interpretation of analysis indicated that regardless of the insecurities of protecting their

stalls from modern development, those women traders constructed a space inside Souk Wajif that reflected their traditional identity and cultural practice.

Unfortunately, there were several aspects that were not reasonably considered through the design of the new stalls for women sellers of Souk Wajif. One of the most debatable transformations inside the Souk was the form of its stalls because women sellers thought it did not reflect the traditional identity of the space inside the Souk. The size of the stall was another major problem; the majority of women sellers claimed that the new stall is too small from the inside and too huge from the outside. Not to mention that the quality of artificial lighting was also a necessary element that was not well thought of, especially that most of women sellers were elderly and required adequate lighting to work. On the other hand, natural light was a source of psychological comfort women traders experienced daily in the Souk; it became the daily source of energy, power and joy.

## **Conclusion**

Coming from interior design, this study focuses on unraveling how interiors get implicated in the process of identity construction and place attachment, and what this means to designers and practitioners of interior design. Furthermore, it offers a more nuanced approach that is tied to its qualitative methodology, one that exposes the intangible and immaterial ways by which embodied space and identity is formed. Understanding how interiors come to be part of a person's emotions and self-definition is crucial to the field of interior design, on both theoretical and practical level. One common understanding that is formed by peoples' interaction with the environment that

is for spaces to become places, a sense of meaning and connection must be formed between an individual and the environment (Strickland & Hadjiyanni, 2013).

As Perkins and Brown (2003) asserted, the degree of *place attachment* might change as individuals and physical environment develop, the environment ages or any changes that interfere with the social and physical activities in place. This study posits that place attachment is a major factor in bonding with both the physical and social environment of the Souk, irrespective of the major development plan that went through. Long-time sellers, recent additions to the Souk, young women and elderly great-grandmothers, those with formal education and those without all told essentially the same story of attachment to the Souk. In addition, neither their variation in age, time spent selling in the Souk, nor educational level had any impact on the persistence of their perspective on cultural identity. Moreover, drawing from the interviews with women sellers of the Souk, the narratives of those sellers illustrated an underlying, consistent effort to reassert their presence as traditional Bedouin sellers within a sociocultural context that is, at best, vulnerable toward the growing trend of modern expansion in the *Al-Mubarakiya*. In line with that effort, the design characteristics of the stall enabled those women sellers to create meaning and sense of place in the Souk. It appeared that the physical and social parameters of the Souk were major influences in the identity construction of those women sellers.

To return to the main research questions, the answer to the first question clearly showed that female sellers kept their identity preserved by attaching themselves to the Souk. Their life was constructed around being in the Souk and selling artifacts as a cultural practice. This practice reflected how traditional woman sellers were trying hard

to preserve their Bedouin identity through their traditional clothing, the presence of the stall, and selling in Souk Wajif. To answer the second main question of this study, two basic characteristics appeared in their presence as traditional sellers in Souk Wajif narratives. First, they shared both a strong physical and emotional bond specifically with their stalls and the Souk as a whole. Although their presence in the Souk was threatened by many factors including the development plan, they insisted that the Souk became as an extension of themselves and became their second home. Second, their memories, personal experiences and Bedouin identity and were major influences on manifesting the immaterial aspect of culture, while the artifacts, products and traditional dress represented the material aspect of local culture inside Souk Wajif.

The interpretation of analysis revealed that the social attachment women sellers expressed in Souk Wajif was reinforced by their physical attachment. A possible explanation for the strong emotional and the physical attachment is that women sellers expressed their nostalgic connection with the overall environment of Souk Wajif in the past, whereas the dysfunctional stall design significantly affected the level of physical attachment for women sellers. Still, they shared strong bond with their stalls that was showed through their attempts for adaptation inside the Souk. Fascinating among the findings is the notion that place attachment is both individual and collective concept. As it turns out, identity also is constructed individually and collectively for women sellers of Souk Wajif. Both place attachment and identity have the capacity to be collectively into the establishment of community and resistance to change the traditional sense of the Souk.

For this reason, women traders associate their identity with the Souks' cultural identity (Al-Sabah, 2001); it is the only legacy left for them to sell in the Souk as an inherited cultural practice through generations. In this case, women traders inside Souk Wajif need to be attached to it to maintain their sense of pride and place making. Their social existence is tied to the physical appearance in the Souk. Yet, there are forces that challenge their daily practice inside the Souk and might interfere with their social and physical attachment. With this in mind, the notion of place-making in a traditional environment such as the Souk is significant in understanding how a place becomes an extension of one's self-identity and the society as a whole (Lewicka, 2010). Therefore, preserving the traditional character of public environments has a significant role in reinforcing place attachment and identity, particularly, to women traders in Souk Wajif and visitors from both genders.

In these transactions of identity and place attachment through both scales, the broader discourse on cultural and societal values occurs. The stall design as it turns out, can be a mediator in all these processes, from programming to spatial layout, material selection, and furniture. With respect to place attachment, studies of place attachment and identity have come to be seen as an important analytic tool for understanding traditional souks' environment, recent studies have examined the link between people-place bonding and historic public environments in supporting physical and psychological wellbeing (Asadpour, 2011). The study begins to further the field's theoretical basis to include ones that are interior-centered (Clemons & Eckmsn, 2011). On a theoretical level, the findings revealed that in traditional interior environments, place attachment and identity occur through varying scales, from the overall interior space to the walls, ceilings, lighting and

building materials, as well as traditional architectural elements. In case of Souk Wajif, stalls, in their capacity to interact with both the sellers and visitors, become a primary interior medium through which cultural identity is manifested and place attachment is constructed. The entire process of the development plan was problematic, particularly regarding women sellers' opinion and spatial requirements, which wasn't solicited at any stage of the development plan. For example, age, health and functional needs were critical factors to be considered during early stages of the design process.

The spatial scales of place attachment model begins to unearth the contradictions that evolve due to conflicting messages and perceptions, bringing to the foreground a more complicated version of interiors. The built environment cannot be considered uniform or identical, no longer can spaces be stereotyped with one meaning and one understanding. Instead, spaces and their components must be considered as diverse as its cultural and social landscapes. Traditional souks environments cannot be conceived only through a single public nature, instead, what enriches possibilities is thinking of their public and cultural nature as adjustable environments, yet maintains its traditional identity within the expanding urban sprawl of the city.

Part of the concern is that the physical and social quality of the stalls speaks to women sellers about how they viewed and valued themselves inside Souk Wajif. It has been argued that the neglect to this particular area of Souk Wajif was due to the fact that there aren't enough traditional women sellers who are originally Bedouin to fill the stalls in the Souk as it used to be prior the invasion period in 1991 (Al-Qabas,2013). Officials saw another reason that impacted the dynamics of Souk Wajif was the decline in selling traditional goods as daily necessities like it used to be, it transformed into a historical

scene. One of the biggest issues raised that women sellers weren't consulted for the redesigned Souk, which is due to the fact that they formed less than 60% of the Souk's population (Al-Rai, 2013). Most of women sellers left the Souk due to their age and health conditions, others just left because the society's norms and traditions has changed and there is no more demand for Bedouin women to sell for a living. Perhaps, unconsulting women sellers speak to their current position in Kuwaiti society; as they are perceived as a marginalized subgroup that doesn't perform cultural practice as it used to be in the past.

The findings begin to elucidate how lived experiences and identity construction in place do not exist in isolation, yet within a broader social, cultural, economic, political, technological and historical context. By exposing the many factors that impact how traditional women sellers belong to a space, the study unearths areas of intervention. Societal expectations of how traditional souks should be preserved and untouched and be safely kept as historic landmarks for future generations.

To conclude, with the drastic change that was caused by the transformation of Souk Wajif, the challenge most of women sellers faced was the redesign of the stall inside the Souk. Yet, women sellers shared a common thread between attachment, emotions, personal experience and perception of space inside Souk Wajif. The unchanging charm of the Souk's traditional design became a connecting element between those women sellers and their past. Women sellers expressed a strong nostalgia to the Souk, even when they were still selling in it. Every respondent told essentially the same story of attachment to the Souk regardless of time selling in the Souk, their age, or their level of education. In addition, neither their variation in age, time spent selling in the

Souk, nor educational level had any impact on the persistence of their cultural identity. With this in mind, Souk Wajif offered a fenestrated moment of time that empowered feminine engagement within a traditional male dominated society. That moment was the conversion for those women sellers to be empowered from being socially overshadowed to being an active member in the Souk's sociocultural fabric.

### **Implications**

Although focused on the interior, the study's implications extend on varied system of scales that comprise our spatial environment. We acknowledge that the same process of place attachment can occur at larger scales that range from the world and the nation to the state, to the city, to the neighborhood, the building and the interior. The place attachment model presented in the study is thereby can be extended to include all these different scales, with more research being devoted to better understand each of these relationships. The studies on place attachment point out to critical questions that remain unanswered and identify new areas of research investigation. One of the areas of significant developments in place attachment is the application of the concept to various topics and areas of inquiry, such as the application on socially responsive community design and forced displacement (Manzo, 2013).

Within the influence of physical and social attachment of both the stalls they inhabit and the Souk, women sellers navigate larger societal and cultural messages. By attempting to appropriate the concept of place attachment and theorize the relationship between identity and interiors as one dependent on varying spatial scales within the interior environment, this study begins to move discourses away from a solid understanding of interiors. Scholars, educators, and practitioners of interior design who

recognize that design parameters that range from programming to spatial layout, material selection, cultural requirements, and gender needs can play a role in these meaning-making processes, which can help push the boundaries of what it means to create spaces and places in which people who belong to a particular cultural group live and work in traditional spaces unthreatened by modern development.

In that sense, the study's theoretical implications intertwine with the practical ones, for among others, educators, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. Interior design curricula strive to balance the psychological, cultural and social dimensions of space with the physical ones. Weaving human-centered concepts, ones that relate to human experiences and originate from a wide range of fields (i.e., psychology, anthropology, philosophy, etc.) into the foundation of interior design curricula may help better prepare future designers to be critical thinkers, ones who work towards a more holistic understanding of the human experience and gender needs in space, and the role of interior environment in it.

On an educational level, it is important to understand how the manifestation of cultural identity can be taught and expressed through architectural design. Place attachment is relatively unexplored concept for interior design particularly in relation to the various influences on it. Throughout the study there is an underlying understanding that cultural experience and identity development in place do not exist in isolation, but within a broader sociocultural context. In the interior design or architectural curriculums, there is a great emphasis on the psychological, social, and physical aspects of space and place, which are considered the physical foundation of knowledge.

Exploring this relationship and expanding our understanding of the ways in which students interact with the traditional interior environments will allow for a greater construction of holistic, supportive environments to design, and contribute to the creation of a critical design thinking. This line of work can be extended to other traditional environments such as historic plazas, buildings, parks and museums.

### **Implications for Design Practice**

Understanding a little more about how the environment interacts with facets of identity and greater sociocultural discourses on class, race and gender, designers, architects and planners can be more aware to what questions or issues to address during programming and the design process- what are for examples the broader implications of material selections that cannot be easily maintained or do not reflect the traditional character of the place? Where self-identity should be manifested and how inside the stalls area? Interdisciplinary inquiry into a deeper exploration of how people interact with the traditional environments they inhabit can set a trajectory for the creation of innovative design solutions that can improve the lives of everyone.

Immediate implications are the considerations of the power that each scale within the interior environment yields. The traditional souk's environment cannot be thought of as a uniform workspace; rather it is a series of connected scales, each of which communicate and are imbued with their own meaning: from the souk's overall traditional environment to spaces within shops, to spatial constructors within central spaces such as the stalls. The construction of self-identity is mediated by mediums of various scales within the environment. Why is it that stalls were emphasized with more frequency than other spatial elements as a primary identity definer inside the souk? Perhaps it is because

the stalls become an extension of the human body and naturally attract human senses, connecting more directly physical bodies with the physical form. Furthermore, interior forms can be sending messages that intertwine with broader issues of class, race, gender or other cultural values and designers must recognize the weight of these linkages and not regard these spaces, and elements as isolated features that are disconnected from this larger discourse.

Similarly, participatory design is key to enable designers with a greater understanding of how users' multidimensional identity and emotional-physical needs relate to interiors and how place attachment is constructed.

### **Implications for Policymakers**

As mentioned above, the issue of preserving the cultural identity and the role of women are ones of extreme importance for traditional architecture. It is not only the responsibility of the government to look after the quality of traditional markets or historic places from dereliction. Yet, the responsibility of the policymakers is also to ensure the application of laws and practices in traditional spaces are well considered and harmonized to maintain a baseline quality of all traditional markets and historical places from loss. Appropriating place attachment within the context of people-interiors relationship allowed us to expose the multiplicity of ways by which interiors are seen, experienced, constructed, and perceived as well as how these perceptions are not only dependent on the environment but also the users' experiences. To elaborate, users can be an inspiration or a constraint in the design process (Oygur & McCoy,2011). Participatory design is significant in restoring historical environments such as the traditional souks; it opens up opportunities for design that could be otherwise unexplored. The persons in a

space become more than a passive user, they are actively engaged with their environment through their bodily senses and in turn, the environment becomes actively engaged with their being (Strickland & Hadjiyanni, 2013). This in turn may mean that place attachment is an important item to consider when crafting communication about sociocultural change or preserving traditional architecture, in that it may help representatives speak more directly to local, more personal, and therefore more self-motivated, concerns (Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2013).

### **Implications for Further Research**

Further research can build upon the understanding about the various ways in which identity and interior environment intersect within the context of the larger culture. Future researchers could consider various different directions both in terms of the study variables and in terms of the methodology. While the present study considered three of the several influences of place attachment, the physical influences, the social influences and temporal connections, in order to understand a multidimensional concept such as place attachment and identity expression, future research studies could include other influences in conjunction with place attachment and identity expression. These other influences include ethnic diversity of the Souk, Souk's cultural and social activities & location of the souk in relation to sellers' place of residence. Also, future research studies may focus on the difference of place attachment between people who are visiting the souk describing their connection to place through social aspects and social variables, and others describing their connection to place in terms of its physical aspects or features. Moreover, this study can expand the literature from men's perspective on the construction of identity and place attachment inside Souk Wajif, which can set another

path to expand those two concepts from both gender's perspective, and understand the different dynamics of spatial needs, challenges and what constructors of men's identity are involved in this process. A greater understanding of how traditional souk's environments impact men sellers' identity and men visitors' level of attachment can also be investigated through the exploration of different spatial settings such as the stalls versus the existing shops, how identity is constructed inside those shops? and the role of men's goods in the construction of space and identity.

Finally, studies of other environments dedicated specially for female users (schools, workplace, housing, recreational, healthcare environments etc.) along with a diversification of the backgrounds of the users can expand the theoretical direction that is applicable to interior design (Clemons & Eckman, 2011).

In recognition to the study's limitations, the small sample size, the old age of participants, their socioeconomic, cultural and racial backgrounds, future research can continue building our understanding of the various ways by which place attachment, identity and interiors intersect within the context of the larger society. Informing further development of our theoretical framework. Specific information could be drawn from longitudinal studies that assess the long-term impact of the specific influences. For instance, it could be predicted that place attachment and identity expression be higher among younger female sellers compared to older sellers of the Souk. This might be due to the fact that younger female sellers felt the need to involve in that cultural practice before it fades from the city's urban development.

In closing, at the hands of interior design practitioners, traditional souks' interiors can be redesigned to manifest sociocultural values with the expression of its cultural

community will help maintain continuity of identity with its users and visitors. Both the process of design as well as individual design factors come into play with working toward the goal. Programmatic development can expand to innovative ways by which women sellers can enjoy self-expression within functional stalls design. Space planning can treat all spaces as equally important in the construction and expression of self-identity and examine how space usage can take advantage from furniture, lighting, building materials and traditional architectural references to enhance the experience of place. Meanwhile, material selections that enable easy maintenance, physical and psychological comfort, and connection to the past create a traditional souk environment that can be translated into supportive sociocultural environments for all.

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## APPENDIX A

### CONSENT FORM TO BE TRANSLATED IN ARABIC

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#### INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH

Place Attachment And Female Identity In  
Traditional Souk Wajif  
Implications for  
Interior Design

You are invited to be in a research study of investigating relationships between female sellers' identity and place attachment in Kuwaiti traditional markets. The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of, and measure, place attachment in traditional markets, and how women sellers produce space and express identity under the recent urban development. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a female seller in Souk Wajif. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Reem J. Dashti, an individual in the Doctoral program in the College of Design at University of Minnesota.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things: you will be asked to complete an interview. This study will take approximately 45 minutes to complete an interview session with women sellers and will be held at their stalls inside Souk Wajif.

#### **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. All data including interview and tape recordings will be kept in a secure location and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them. I will finish analyzing the data by May 2015. I will then destroy all original reports.

#### **Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or the management of Souk Wajif. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher(s) conducting this study is (are): Reem J Dashti and Dr. Tasoulla Hadjiyanni. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at 8582077759, , [dasht006@umn.edu . [Academic Advisor: Dr. Tasoulla Hadjiyanni, 612-626-1245, thadjiya@umn.ed

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528

Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records*

Date:

TO BE TRANSLATED IN ARABIC

**Interview of Women Sellers  
Inside Souk Wajif – Al-Mubarkiyah**

Let's start with some questions about you:

1. What is your age?
- 25-40
  - 41-55
  - 56 or older
2. How long have you been selling here?
- Less than 9 years
  - 10-19 years
  - 20-29 years
  - 30-39 years
  - More than 40 years
3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- Secondary school
  - High school or equivalent
  - Some college
  - Bachelor's degree
  - None
4. What is your cultural background?
- Kuwaiti Bedouin
  - Kuwaiti Non Bedouin
  - Non Kuwaiti
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your religion?
- Muslim
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many hours a day you spend inside the souk?
- Less than 3 hours
  - 4 – 6
  - More than 6 hours
  - Other? Please specify exact hours spent \_\_\_\_\_

The interview questions below focus on your experience as a woman seller inside the stalls of Souk Wajif

**First, let's talk about your stall in Souk Wajif:**

All the questions ask you to rate a specific part of your stall or the souk on a scale from 1 to 10, with ten being the highest. For this first set of questions, we will talk about being dissatisfied or satisfied. 1 means very dissatisfied, 10 very satisfied.

7. How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the following:

a) The quality of natural light inside the stall

Very Dissatisfied > Neutral > Very Satisfied  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the natural light?

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b) Artificial Lighting

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about artificial lighting?

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	Very Dissatisfied		>		Neutral		>		Very Satisfied	
c) Stall Size	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the size of the stall?

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	Very Dissatisfied		>		Neutral		>		Very Satisfied	
d) The View from your stall	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the view?

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	Very Dissatisfied		>		Neutral		>		Very Satisfied	
e) Stall's Form	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the stall's form?

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	Very Dissatisfied		>		Neutral		>		Very Satisfied	
f) Stall's Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the stall materials?

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g) Your ability to decorate the stall

Very Dissatisfied				>		Neutral			>		Very Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about your ability to decorate the stall?

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h) Circulation around the stall

Very Dissatisfied				>		Neutral			>		Very Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the circulation around the stall?

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i) Stall's Location

Very Dissatisfied				>		Neutral			>		Very Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the stall's location?

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j) Overall stall Design

Very Dissatisfied				>		Neutral			>		Very Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the stall?

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k) The temperature inside the stall during working hours?

Very Dissatisfied				>		Neutral			>		Very Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the air temperature?

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l) Wind/dust protection inside the stall?      Very Dissatisfied      >      Neutral      >      Very Satisfied  
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the wind protection?

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m) Your privacy inside the stall      Very Dissatisfied      >      Neutral      >      Very Satisfied  
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about your privacy?

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n) Your safety inside the stall      Very Dissatisfied      >      Neutral      >      Very Satisfied  
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about your safety?

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8. Anything else you want to say about the stall?

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Second, let's talk about the physical characteristics of the overall space in Souk Wajif:

9. How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the overall space in the souk?

Very Dissatisfied      >      Neutral      >      Very Satisfied  
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the overall space of the souk?

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10. How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the development plan of the souk?

Very Dissatisfied > Neutral > Very Satisfied  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why [repeat interviewee rating] about the development plan?

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11. In closing, what would you say is your purpose for selling in the souk?

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12. How does your stall allow you to meet your purpose?

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❖ Thank you so much for your participation ❖

13. Is there anything else you wish to say?

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Notes:

- ❖ The Women trader being interviewed is  veiled  unveiled
- ❖ Stall Location & no. \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ Photograph of the stall & its view



أسئلة المقابلة التالية تركز على تجربتك كبائعة داخل أكشاك سوق واجف

أولا، دعينا نتحدث عن الكشك الخاص بك في سوق واجف:

جميع الأسئلة تطلب منك تقييم جزء معين من الكشك أو السوق على نطاق ١-١٠ ، مع عشرة كونها أعلى تقييم. لهذه المجموعة الأولى من الأسئلة ، سوف تتم المناقشة مدى رضاك بالوضع سواء كنتي راضية أو غير راضية. ١ يعني غير راضية جدا ، و١٠ راضية جدا.

٧. ماهو مدى رضاك او غير رضاك للآتي:

أ) نوعية الضوء الطبيعي داخل الكشك

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن نوعية الضوء الطبيعي؟

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ب) الإضاءة الاصطناعية :

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن الإضاءة الاصطناعية؟

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ج) حجم الكشك :

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن حجم الكشك؟

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التاريخ:

مقابلة شخصية للبائعات في سوق واجف - المباركية

دعينا نبدأ مع بعض الأسئلة عنك :

١ . كم عمرك؟

٢٥ - ٤٠

٤١ - ٥٥

٥٦ او اكبر

٢ . منذ متى و انت تبيعين هنا؟

اقل من ٩ سنوات

١٠-١٩ سنة

٢٠-٢٩ سنة

٣٠-٣٩ سنة

اكتر من ٤٠ سنة

٣ . ما هو أعلى مستوى تعليمي وصلت إليه ؟

متوسط

ثانوي او ما يعادلها

دبلوم

بكالوريوس

بدون شهادة

٤ . ما هي خلفيتك الثقافية ؟

كويتية بدوية

كويتية غير بدوية

غير كويتية

اخرى \_\_\_\_\_

٥ . ما هي ديانتك؟

مسلمة

اخرى \_\_\_\_\_

٦ . كم ساعة في اليوم تقضيها داخل السوق ؟

اقل من ٣ ساعات

٤ - ٦ ساعات

اكتر من ٦ ساعات

اخرى؟ يرجى تحديد الساعات التي أمضيتها بالضبط \_\_\_\_\_

أسئلة المقابلة التالية تركز على تجربتك كبائعة داخل أكشاك سوق واجف

أولا، دعينا نتحدث عن الكشك الخاص بك في سوق واجف:

جميع الأسئلة تطلب منك تقييم جزء معين من الكشك أو السوق على نطاق ١-١٠ ، مع عشرة كونها أعلى تقييم. لهذه المجموعة الأولى من الأسئلة ، سوف تتم المناقشة مدى رضاك بالوضع سواء كنتي راضية أو غير راضية. ١ يعني غير راضية جدا ، و ١٠ راضية جدا.

٧. ماهو مدى رضاك او غير رضاك للآتي:

(أ) نوعية الضوء الطبيعي داخل الكشك

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن نوعية الضوء الطبيعي ؟

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(ب) الإضاءة الاصطناعية :

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن الإضاءة الاصطناعية ؟

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(ج) حجم الكشك :

راضية جدا	<	محايد	<	غير راضية جدا					
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن حجم الكشك ؟

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د) الاطلالة الخارجية من الكشك على السوق :

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن الاطلالة الخارجية ؟

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ه) شكل الكشك :

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن شكل الكشك ؟

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و) مواد بناء الكشك :

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن مواد بناء الكشك ؟

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ز) قدرتك على تزيين الكشك:

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن قدرتك على تزيين الكشك ؟

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ر) الحماية من الرياح / الغبار داخل الكشك؟

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن الحماية من الرياح / الغبار داخل الكشك؟

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م) خصوصيتك داخل كشك؟

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن خصوصيتك داخل الكشك؟

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ن) سلامتك داخل الكشك؟

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرر تصنيف الضيف ] عن سلامتك داخل الكشك؟

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٨. أي شيء آخر تودين أن نقوليه عن الكشك؟

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ثانياً، دعينا نتحدث عن الخصائص المموساة للفضاء العام في سوق واجف:

٩. ما مدى رضاك أو عدم رضاك عن الفضاء الكلي داخل السوق؟

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن الفضاء الكلي داخل السوق؟

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١٠. ما مدى رضاك أو عدم رضاك عن خطة التنمية داخل السوق؟

راضية جدا < محايد < غير راضية جدا  
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

لماذا [ تكرار تصنيف الضيف ] عن خطة التنمية داخل السوق؟

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١١. في الختام، ما هو غرضك للبيع في السوق؟

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١٢. كيف يسمح الكشك الخاص بك بتلبية هذا الغرض؟

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• شكرا جزيلا لكم على مشاركتكم •

١٣. هل هناك أي شيء آخر تودين قوله؟

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ملاحظات:

- \* البانعة التي تمت مقابلتها : محجبة ( ) غير محجبة ( )
- \* موقع الكشك ورقمه : \_\_\_\_\_
- \* صورة الكشك و الاطلالة الخاصة به.

