

Land-uses as Quality of Making Successful Streets in Sulaimaniya City Centre, Iraq

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ABSTRACT--*Although, the diverse activities and uses are one of the significant key factors to improve quality of streets, some places and shops in Mawlawi Street are disappeared or used by few number of people, while others are used by high number of people. Moreover, just some attractions and points of interest (POIs) are located in the Global Positioning System (GPS). This issues lead to lake of finding urban diversity in Mawlawi Street. This paper examines and find out the diversity of activities and uses that improves the quality of streets and makes successful streets in Sulaimaniya City Centre. It is also to identify POIs provided in GPS. The study employed a mix-methodology method. 330 questionnaire surveys, 20 semi-structured interview, and qualitative and quantitative observation, were conducted in Mawlawi Street. The results show that the diverse activities and choices are important key to make streets of Sulaimaniya City Center successful. There is also a need to define and insert many places on map for enhancing diversity. To secure the quality of the Street, this study suggests to improve the quality of goods and shops, provide night activities, and refresh some left places and shops along the Street.*

Keywords: quality of streets; successful streets, Mawlawi Street

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Shamsuddin, et al. (2008), the street is one of the earliest components of urban spaces known to man and the most prominent ‘public open space’ which plays an important functional role. Although there are many studies launching functional characteristics of urban places, the identification of the diverse activities that contribute to successful street have

not been adequately addressed. Locally, also there is no any study examining what types of activities in the streets of Sulaimaniya City Centre are. Whereas in the research of Khder et al., (2016), it is recommended to study land use of Mawlawi Street. Moreover, it is observed that some places and shops in the street are disappeared and unused, while others are used by high number of people. These issues determine the problem of this research. This study supposes that Mawlawi Street consider as a successful Street because of its variety of human activities and uses.

This study refers to the word "quality". According to Oxford Dictionary (2007), quality means a distinctive attribute or characteristic possessed by someone or something. Since this research studies the uses and activities of Sulaimaniya City Centre Streets, quality means a unique activities and uses possessed by Mawlawi Street in Sulaymaniyah in Iraq. This study begs the question: What are the diverse activities that improves the quality of streets and makes successful streets in Sulaimaniya City Centre. This question is to examines and find out the diversity of activities that improves the quality of streets and makes successful streets in Sulaimaniya City Centre. The aim of this study is to establish the diversity of activities that contributes in making successful street in Sulaimaniya City Centre.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Street Uses and Activities in General

Historically, streets of city centers were used as multi-functional spaces which are to serve basic survival, communication and entertainment needs and to perform several political, religious, commercial, civic and social

functions. Even in current times, streets are an important part of public open space in the city. People depend on streets for functional, social, and leisure activities, for travel, shopping, playing, meeting, interaction with other people; and even for relaxation (Mehta, 2009, p.380). Street is a place where people sell, buy and enjoy commercial activity (Al-Obeidy and Dabdoob, 2017). Pedestrian activities on the street are important to review because the need of users in the street depends on their activities and reasons of use. Outdoor activities in public space can be divided into three categories: necessary activities (going to school or work, waiting for a bus or a person, shopping, etc.), optional activities (taking a walk, standing around enjoying life, or sitting) and social activities (children at play, greeting and conversation, seeing and hearing other people) (Abdul Rahman, et al., 2015).

Popper (2009) observed that ultimately there are three main functions served by streets. Firstly, streets function as open public space which facilitates interaction and socialisation between fellow human beings. Secondly, being a location for goods and services is another function of streets. Thirdly and most importantly, streets act as travel corridor serving the movement of goods and individuals from one location to another, and this can be regarded as the primary function of streets.

In addition, the heart of economic and social activities in a city is traditionally situated in the city centre, as it is regarded the main source of commerce and labour (Rastegar, N. et al., 2014). Sholihah (2005) mentioned that people use streets as a place to offer goods and a place to display as much as they were "allowed". Streets, besides being a public space, have traditionally served as a place to do commerce. While people use the street as a place for trading, numerous other forms of economic-based informal street activities, such as street vendors and street musicians, occupy most of the street space (Sholihah, 2005). Moreover, street is a community focal point for social activities such as the

everyday activities of conversation and as a place to meet (Ja'afar, 2006; Shamsuddin and Ujang, 2008).

3. Diverse Activities and Uses in Relating to a Successful Street

The diversity is one of the significant key factors in attracting people to use streets, which can improve the environment's quality (Al-Obeidy, 2015). Users' activities on the street were very much dependent on their reasons for using the street and also concerning the quality of the environment (Gehl, 2010). The reasons for use may affect the activities on the street. Moreover, diverse activities and choices are one of the place attributers which strengthen place attachment and making successful public places. Diversity in activity generated by pedestrian movement (Jacobs, 1961; Montgomery, 1998). This means that the good quality of streets is related to the presence of people in the street. The users of public places can be encouraged to use the street through increasing the degree of street dependency. According to her, place dependence is associated with the perceived strength of association between a person and specific place which is related to the quality of the current place and the quality of other substitute places that are comparable to the current place. Besides, diversity is a vital attribute in an urban setting through the mixture of different things providing degree of choice and the range of uses available to people. Thus, successful streets are those can invite and welcome people due to the diversity of its activities.

Robin (2008) determines four qualities of a successful street, namely: access and linkages, comfort and image, uses and activities, and sociability. Activities that occur in a place—friendly social interactions, free public concerts, community art shows, and more—are its basic building blocks: they are the reasons why people come in the first place and why they return. Activities also make a place special or unique, which, in turn, may help generate community pride. Sociability is a difficult but unmistakable quality for a place to achieve. When

people see friends, meet and greet their neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, they tend to feel a stronger sense of place or attachment to their community—and to the place that fosters these types of social activities.

According to aforementioned literatures, variety of activities and goods that occurred in street are related to the quality and success of streets. Successful streets can be generated by activities and uses that is generated by street users. As much as the people depend on street activities, the street will be more successful. Hence, through addressing perception of street users, this study examines and find out the diverse activities that improves the quality of streets and makes successful streets in Sulaimaniya City Centre.

4. METHODOLOGY

This research asks people about the degree of their agreement and how they use and depend on the street to do their daily activities. To achieve that the mixed methods were selected for the research because the two methods have strengths and weaknesses, thus it helps balance out any potential weaknesses in each data collection method (Gray, 2014). This research employs two types of data collection techniques, quantitative and qualitative techniques. 330 questionnaire surveys are used to provide quantitative data. This study uses multiple choices, and 4 point Likert scale questions in order to provide greater uniformity of responses and get mean value of degree of diversity. 33 pilot survey was conducted before starting the actual survey to ensure that the questions are understood by the respondents and length of time are suitable for answering questions. Besides that, this study uses observation technique to get quantitative and qualitative data. The use of this method allows the researcher to obtain updated and more accurate information from the existing environment. Diverse types of shops, goods, and activities were recorded and accounted in Mawlawi Street quantitatively to find out diverse activities. Researcher also observes how people

use the street in different times during the days. This is supported by taking photographs. Moreover, this study uses semi-structured interviews similar to Ujang's (2008) study, which goes one step further by closed-form questions (similar to those used in the questionnaire) with probes designed to obtain additional, clarifying information. The main purpose of interviewing is to allow one to enter into the other person's view and know his perception and feeling.

On the other hand, this study identifies POIs of Mawlawi Street on google maps, then compare them with existing scenario of recent land-uses. This data supports other techniques to get clear information.

5. CASE STUDY

Sulaymaniyah, also called Sulaimani or Slemani, is a city in the north-south Iraqi in the Kurdistan region. The modern city of Sulaymaniyah was founded on 14 November 1784 by the Kurdish prince Ibrahim Pasha Baban who named it after his father Sulaiman Pasha. Mawlawi Street is selected as a case study of this research due to its importance as one of the busiest and famous commercial streets located in the city center of Sulaymaniyah in Iraq (Figure 1). It contains different types of activities on its both sides, including hotels, green groceries, retail shops, restaurants, book shops as well as informal activities such as vendors and hawkers. (Hazhar et al., 2016). It is also well-known in the diverse shops and goods like vegetables and fruits (Khalid, 2013).

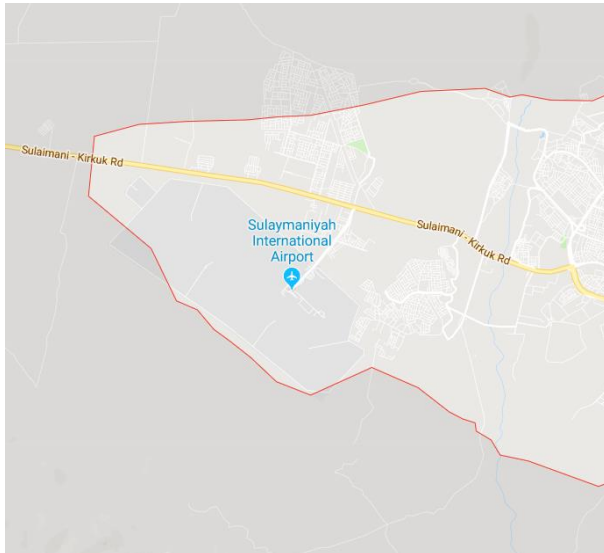


Figure 1. Mawlawi Street as a case study.

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 320 respondents participated in the survey and 20 respondents in the field interview. The participants in this study are referred to as street users who are considered to be the respondents of the questionnaire surveys and interviews. As in Figure (2), the majority of the survey respondents were males 83%

(N=267), while females constitute the remnant percentage. Perhaps using the Street by much more males than females because availability of many men shops and goods like electrical appliances shops, and ready-made clothes shops. In terms of race, the survey indicates that Mawlawi Street dramatically has the highest number of respondents who were Kurd 77% (N=245), while Arab were only 20% (N=65). This is of course due to the high Kurd population in Sulaimaniya which is one of the cities of Kurdistan region.

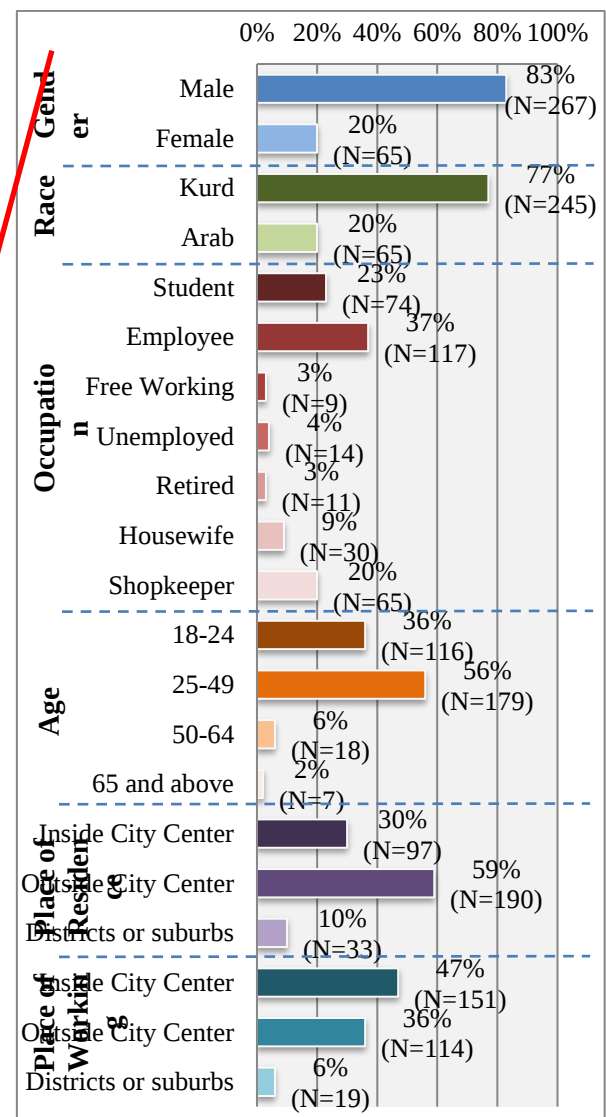


Figure 2. Summary of the profile of respondents participating in the questionnaire survey.

In terms of occupation, the result of the survey found that various occupants used the Street, especially

employed respondents. Nineveh Street is used by 37% (N=117) employees, 23% (N=74) students, 20% (N=65) shopkeeper, 9% (N=30) housewives, 4% (N=14) unemployed, 3% (N=11) retired, and 3% (N=9) free working. This shows that Mawlawi Street are used by many people with different backgrounds for daily activities. On the other hand, most of the respondents were aged between 18-49 years old.

Questionnaire surveys also indicate that 59 % (N=190) of respondents lived outside Sulaimaniya City Centre, 30% (N=97) of them lived inside, and 10% (N=33) of them lived in districts or suburbs. In addition, the most of street users 47% (N=151) work inside city center, 36% (N=114) works outside, and 6% (N=16) works in districts or suburbs. This result implies that Sulaimaniya City Center is an important place for living and working.

The result shows that Mawlawi Street are located within prime mixed-use areas in the Sulaimaniya city centre, although there is a lack of diverse day and night activities (see Figure 3). The positive perception is associated with choices of shops and products available, choices of food and mixture of people within different background, while the negative perception is associated with full of activity in day and night. As shown in Table (1), 97% of respondents agree that Mawlawi Street sell everything they need, 81% of them agree that the Street has more choice of food and eating place, 67% of them agree that there is a mixture of people in the Street, and only 40% of them agree that the Street has full of activity in a day and night.

Table 1
The percentage and mean value of successful street.

Diversity as a quality of successful street	Diversity of activities			
	Sell	Food	Full of Activity	Mix
Successful Street (%)	97%	81%	40%	67%
Mean Value	3.9	3.25	1.58	2.7

Note:

1. 'Successful Street' is referred to a statement : 'This street provides what I really need'.
2. The percentage indicates the degree of agreement only.
3. Mean value out of 4, where as 1=Strongly disagree 4=Strongly agree

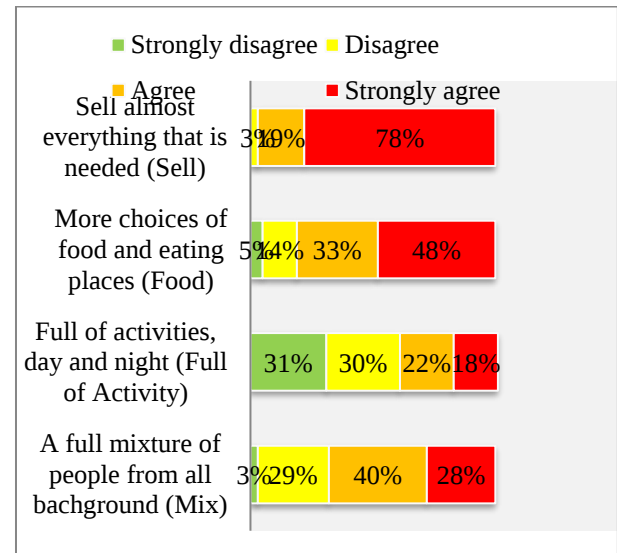


Figure 3. Characteristics associated with diversity and choice of Mawlawi Street.

This result was also supported by field of interview and observation. Most of interviewees assert that Mawlawi Street has a diverse of shops and goods, restaurants and fast food that is opened at daytime and closed after 7.00 pm at night-time. It means there is no night activities. It was also observed that shops, offices, and restaurants start to open from (9.00) to (10.00) am till (7.00) to (8.00) pm. And the top time is between (3.00-6.00) pm. In addition, some of interview respondents point out that the Street has become serve high range of people in low and middle income, and less range of high income people. They impute the reason behind that to availability of normal quality of goods in the street not high quality that is demanded by high income people, besides availability of many shopping complexes malls outside the city center that offer a comfortable, safe, and conditioned environment with high brand of goods and shops, as well as car parking.

This issue will have a negative effect on the success of street because it will make the street for a certain class of people not all people.

Diversity and choices have been influential in encouraging attachment and attraction to the shopping streets. It is associated with the variety of goods, specialties pertinent, and eating places to the needs of the streets' users. Their needs are fulfilled because they can get almost everything that is needed chose for their daily lives and appropriate to their way of life and culture. The survey respondents refer to (21) types of shops and choices that the Street offer (Figure 4). Mobile shops, ready-made clothes shops, nuts shops, electrical appliances shops, moneychanger, confectionery, photography studio, and vegetables and fruit shops were mentioned by most of the respondents respectively.

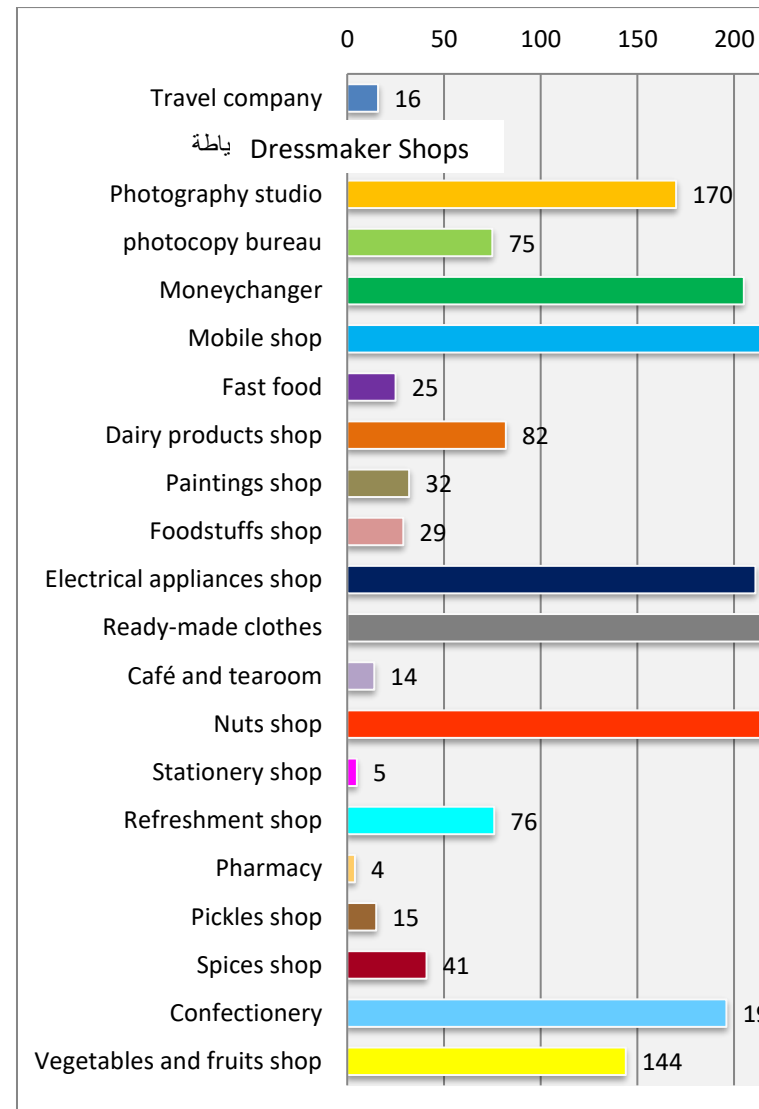


Figure 4. Preferred types of shops and goods.

Based on the analysis of the building uses, the street is composed by the various types of functions within traditional shophouses, underground stores, low rise buildings offices and departmental stores, hotels and modern shopping malls. Results from observation indicated that the ground floor levels are predominantly occupied by commercial uses including (43) types of goods and shops as shown in Figure (5). Mobile shops, electrical appliances shops, ready-made clothes for men, and legumes and flour stores that are also linked with another street parallel with Mawlawi Street make up the majority of the shophouses.



Figure 5. Types of shops and goods in the Street, field of observation.

(12) mobile and electrical shops, (5) coffee shops, (4) restaurants, (2) for each of men clothes, women jewellerys and accessories, and book shops. GPS is also referred to (1) birds shop, gifts shop, hotel, and computer appliance shop (see Figure 6). This result does not reflect the existing urban diversity-identified by the field of observation- that the Mawlawi Street has.

On the other hand, data was obtained from GPS referred to only (31) attractions in the Street including



Figure 6. Points of interest and their numbers in Mawlawi Street, Source: Google Maps.

Users are the key elements in generating the liveliness and attraction for shopping. Their presence and intention create the spirit of the place (Ujang and Dola, 2007). Findings from the survey indicated that Mawlawi Street is used not by people from all walks of life and their varied background. Most of users were from low or middle income group who have salary equal one million Iraqi Dinars (around 830 US Dollars) or below. Other people from higher income who have salary above one million Iraqi Dinars prefer to go to the shopping malls outside city center for shopping, entertainments, eating, and playing more than city center streets because there

are many problems related to the streets like traffic jams, low or medium quality of shops, goods, and restaurants that is not suitable to this group of people and their lifestyle as mentioned by many interviewees. So, Offering diverse activities and choices in the streets is an important factor to welcome and attract people within different backgrounds. Although there is a lack of variety of different people used the Street as mentioned by the respondents of interviewees, it is observed that the Street has witnessed visiting much many people especially in the rise time from (3.00-6.00) pm, where it is difficult to walk and may be compelled to stop walking at several times along the Street. At this time may cannot stand more than one minute on the sidewalk and find place to set in refreshment shops.

According the survey, Mawlawi Street witnesses the presence of large numbers of respondents during daylight as follows:, 32% (N=102) respondents every day, 8% (N=25) respondents once every two days, 25% (N=81) respondents once a week, 5% (N=15) respondents two times a week, 23% (N=72) respondents once every two weeks, and 8% (N=25) respondents once a month (see Figure 5.37). It is evident from this research that the degree of dependency on the Mawlawi Street is very high, although the variety of shops and products are limited to some group of people and only daily times activities. The most frequent to the Street is in once a day 32% (N=102), Once a week 25% (N=81), and once every two weeks 23% (N=72) (see Figure 7). The frequency of people to use Mawlawi Street depends on how many they need to go to the Street.

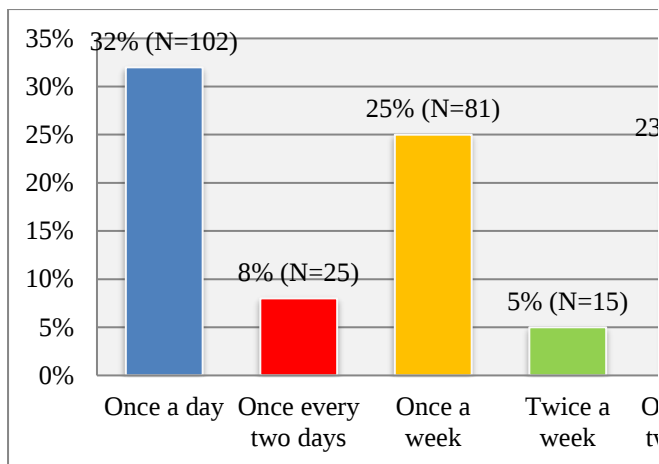


Figure 7. Frequency to the Street.

For being Mawlawi Street more successful, respondents recommend to improve the quality of merchandise more than influx of new merchandise (Figure 8). It is a same issue in terms of restaurants and fast food. This result is also supported by interviews. Many interviewees assert that the Street does not need new shops and products, but it needs availability of good quality of clothes, fruits, vegetables, and fast food for example. Moreover, they feel that the Street needs to invite more people from different backgrounds. May here improving the quality of merchandise in the Street is one of the good points to the inviting the mixture of people.

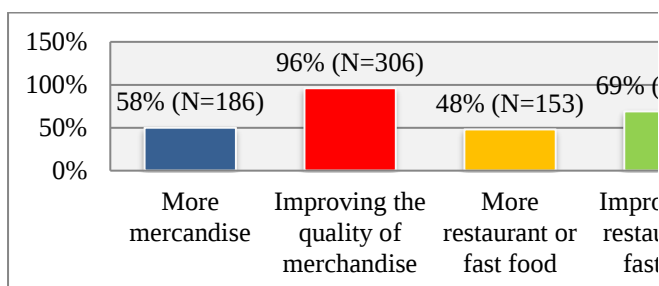


Figure 8. Peoples' opinion in what street needs to be more successful.

CONCLUSIONS

The results shows that the diverse activities and choices are important key to make streets of Sulaimaniya City Center successful. Findings from the mixed method indicated that the variety of shops and products that people need as one of the strongest characteristics of the Mawlawi Street and therefore the ability of the streets to accommodate needs and desire of the users and choices offered for different economic and socio-cultural background are vital for continued dependency. In conclusion, to achieve successful streets, diversity and choices should be the one of the main keys in improving the quality of streets. Availability of everything that people need, choices of food and eating places, full of activities in a day and night, and mixture of people from all background are important in determining the successful of streets. Determining what people need and making the people depend on the street for day and night activities will enhance the quality of streets in city centers.

These findings support Jacobs (1961) theory that the activities both produce and reflect quality in the built environment and therefore the success of urban places is influenced by the ability of places to effectively accommodate human activity. This has ensured the presence of people on the streets at different times of the day. With various types of uses at different scales of transaction, the shopping streets are places for multi-types of engagement. The findings also reinforce the idea of Ujang and Dola (2007) research that diversity is a vital attribute in urban setting through the mixture of different things providing degree of choice and the range of uses available to people. And vice versa, this study concludes that the quality of activities and uses in the streets can determine their visitors or users. It means that providing streets with high range of choices will invite all people from different backgrounds. The finding suggests that improving the quality of goods and shops in the Street, providing night activities, refresh some left places and shops along the Street are required to be able to secure the quality of street.

Diverse activities should be considered as a quality of making successful streets in city centres of Iraq. In terms of activities and uses, this study concludes that Mawlawi Street is considered as a successful street in Sulaimaniya City Center. But this is a part of success being achieving successful streets is also related to another qualities like access and linkages, comfort and image, and sociability. For future research, it is recommended that another different keys quality should be studied in order to get a holistic view of successful street and to cater for larger demographics in future design and planning developments of city center streets in Iraq.

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