

Chapter 14

Crafting Cultural Identity: A Phenomenological Study of Traditional Bahraini Architecture and Community Engagement

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Introduction

Traditional crafts represent a crucial aspect of cultural heritage, providing not only artistic charm but also serving as a foundational element in the economic fabric of traditional communities (Tiwari, Patel & Lakhani, 2023). However, these crafts encounter challenges in adapting to a modernized world driven by mass production and consumption (Boylston, 2019). The Bahraini community boasts a rich tradition of handcrafts integral to its livelihood. Examples endure in villages like Bani Jamra, specializing in textile weaving, Karbabad in basket weaving, and A'ali in pottery making (BACA, 2016). However, despite their historical significance, these crafts persist as fading traces of Bahraini heritage, with only minorities continuing their practice.

The research investigates the dynamic interplay between preserving architectural heritage in buildings associated with traditional crafts and the phenomena of sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place. It delves into how the preservation positively influences cultural identity, fosters community engagement, and contributes to the economic sustainability of traditional crafts over time. Moreover, the study aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which architectural heritage interacts with the sense of place individuals attach to these locations. It acknowledges that the act of preservation extends beyond physical structures, acting as a catalyst for shaping the quality of place within these communities. Additionally, exploring the memory of place helps in understanding how the historical significance of architectural heritage contributes to a collective memory, influencing cultural identity and community engagement.

Thus, the research seeks to answer the question "How does the preservation of architectural heritage associated with traditional crafts influence the sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place within Bahraini communities, and how do these dynamics contribute to the cultural identity, community engagement, and economic sustainability of traditional crafts over time?" It connects the preservation of architectural heritage with the intricate layers of sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place within the context of traditional crafts and community dynamics in Bahrain.

Employing a qualitative approach with case studies and interviews, the research focuses on Bahraini buildings associated with traditional crafts, examining their architectural preservation, cultural significance, and influence on community engagement. The objectives include assessing preservation, examining its influence on cultural identity, exploring impacts on community engagement and traditional craft practices, and investigating the role in economic sustainability. This research aspires to contribute insights into the role of architectural preservation in sustaining traditional crafts within a community. It aims to illuminate the interconnected dynamics of architectural heritage, cultural identity, community engagement, and economic viability of traditional crafts, providing valuable perspectives for heritage conservation and community development efforts.

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How to Cite This Chapter:

Husain, M. K., & Allani, N. B. M. A. (2024). Crafting Cultural Identity: A Phenomenological Study of Traditional Bahraini Architecture and Community Engagement. In Nia, H. A., & Rahbariyanazd, R. (Eds.), *Innovative Approaches to Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Urban Development: Integrating Tradition and Modernity*, (pp. 206-219) Cinius Yayınları.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38027/N14ICCAUA2024EN0081>

The research follows a structured format to systematically answer the research question and provide a base of information on cultural and architectural heritage, and how the preservation of them can be attempted under the lens of phenomenology; and through enriching the quality of place. In addition, the literature outlines the challenges faced by traditional crafts due to modernization and their struggle to adapt to a global market dominated by mass production. This contextualizes the need for the study and underscores the importance of investigating the impact of architectural heritage preservation on these crafts.

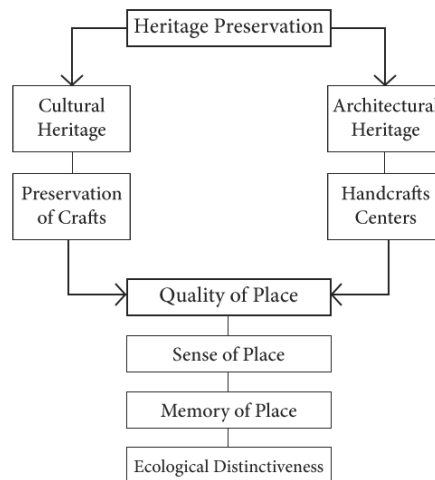


Figure 1. Structure of the Study (Developed by Author).

Literature Review

The architecture of societies forms the most important production of the society's culture and is a standing witness to its history and heritage, architecture is also the art of projecting and transforming culture into built environments that represents the expression of humanity in individuals and communities of a given time and place (Gomariz, 2022).

In other words, architecture is not only about creating physical entities but a tool that creates spatial forms containing meaning, inherent idiosyncrasies or epistemologies (Gomariz, 2022), this presents the chance for studying and understanding the community's socioeconomic transformation through the changes that occurred on the practice of architecture since buildings represent the physical space where social settings and everyday activities transpire.

Moreover, the phenomenological creation of the built environment is a production of people's way of life and needs and therefore can be a cultural 'material' that is tangible and in a constant state of changing and developing within the context of the socioeconomic structure of the community, and therefore is a perfect representation of identity because of the constant people-place-time interactions (Shaheen & Metawi, 2022).

Architectural and Cultural Heritage

The built environment is an expression of a combination of factors such as art, science, technology and craft, these contribute into the creation and realization of architectural heritage in addition to the consideration of the interconnected social needs, beliefs and aspirations of people. Understanding all of these components can reveal the architectural heritage value of a building along with the cultural interaction, and the results of communal experiences within these buildings (Shaheen & Metawi, 2022).

There are certain attributes to architectural heritage that are represented through specific qualities, components and characteristics which can be categorized into three categories; the first being the urban characteristics of the building (formation, building materials and techniques), secondly; the features of human connection to the site (meaning and historical/ social relationships) and lastly, the costumes and practices associated with the building such as certain traditions and rituals (Shaheen & Metawi, 2022).

The identity of architectural heritage is fluid and continuously evolving, and while its foundational values (respect for cultural heritage, innovation in conservation practices, and global collaboration) remain constant, the methods of expressing and applying these values are in a state of perpetual adaptation to the changing world. As it faces new

challenges and opportunities, some modifications on heritage preservation strategies may be applied to counter emerging threats, such as integrating new technologies, and engaging with the community. This adaptability is crucial for ensuring that architectural heritage remains relevant and effective in protecting the world's cultural heritage for future generations (Maleckas, 2024).

On the other hand, cultural heritage can also be considered a key element and a basis for any nation's self-identification, a statement that highlights the great importance for protecting and preserving cultural traditions to ensure the continuation and revitalization of cultural identity and sustainable development of a community. However, culture as a concept has no clear, unambiguous definition despite the efforts and interests of historians and researchers; hence its total dependency on the social activity of each individual society (Goussous, 2022).

Exploring the idea of culture can be essential as it consists of a collection of distinct characteristics to define a society or social group- spiritual and material, intellectual and emotional traits, in addition to art, literature, way of life, traditions and value systems (Goussous, 2022), the preservation of culture can be achieved through protecting its traditions, history and values of past generations.

Furthermore, cultural heritage as a concept broadly encompasses the ways of life that societies have cultivated over time and transmitted across generations through their customs and practices. It includes locations, artifacts, architectural structures, artistic works, and societal values. Thus, cultural heritage consists of both tangible and intangible elements, with the tangible often serving as physical manifestations of intangible cultural values (Doğan, 2020). Watson and Bentley (2007) suggest that historic buildings and neighborhoods help residents maintain a connection to their origins. These structures preserve collective memory and embody cultural and personal identity. By sustaining social interactions, they ensure the ongoing continuity of society and culture, thereby transmitting cultural identity to future generations (Doğan, 2020).

This is because the built environments of cultural heritage are landmarks and witnesses to cultural diversity and richness, they are usually defined by specific and distinct historical features including the essential components of the economic structure of the community, social coordinates of politics, and the beliefs of the society (Gomariz, 2022). The preservation of these built environments is not only achieved by upholding the state of the buildings; but through ensuring that these buildings remain alive and functioning, and for them to hold special appeal to the inhabitants of the society and to tourists as well (Lourenço, 2013).

To conclude, it is evident that the built environment is more than mere structures; it is a tapestry woven from art, science, technology, craft, and the social fabric of communities. The architectural heritage, with its multifaceted components and evolving identity, serves as a cornerstone for cultural continuity and communal identity. As societies navigate the complexities of modernity, the preservation and adaptive reuse of these heritage sites become imperative. This not only safeguards the physical integrity of historical structures but also ensures the perpetuation of cultural values and communal ties, ultimately fostering a resilient and vibrant cultural heritage that can be cherished by future generations.

The Preservation of Arts and Crafts

Community's cultural heritage consists of multiple factors as was previously mentioned, arts and crafts are some of its main pillars that also extends beyond their artistic aesthetic and serve as documented knowledge and extend through time to inspire future generations of artists and designers encouraging the development of inventive and forward-thinking adaptations and artwork (Tiwari, Patel & Lakhani, 2023).

Fine arts and crafts represent a cultural heritage passed down through generations, essential for preserving the skills and knowledge involved. UNESCO recognizes these crafts as invaluable intangible cultural assets deserving protection within its designated categories (UNESCO, 2003). Heritage Crafts are often regarded as part of cultural heritage, encompassing both tangible and intangible elements. The tangible aspects include the crafted items, materials, tools, natural resources, workshops, and workplaces. These crafts manifest their material dimension through the transformation of materials using tools, skill, and knowledge. In this context, crafts can be seen as "the most tangible of intangible heritage." (Zabulis et al., 2020).

In today's rapidly changing world, preserving traditional crafts holds great significance due to their role in representing and reflecting cultural heritage, skills, and creative talents passed down through generations. These crafts enrich cultural identity and heritage, but they face the risk of being lost or forgotten amid modern challenges like industrialization and mass production. This shift has led to the replacement of handcrafted items with factory-

made goods and machines. Additionally, the younger generation's reluctance to continue traditional professions exacerbates this decline (Tiwari, Patel, & Lakhani, 2023; Połec & Murawska, 2022).

The demand for handcrafted products has declined with the rise of advanced industrial goods, leading many artisans to leave their craft and migrate to urban areas in search of better economic opportunities. This shift has resulted in the loss of numerous traditional crafting skills and techniques, as the younger generation shows less interest in learning these trades. Consequently, the prominence of handicrafts in society has diminished, overshadowed by industrial products known for their durability and cost-effectiveness. In today's globalized economy, it is crucial to recognize and safeguard this heritage to prevent its permanent loss (Yang et al., 2018).

The preservation of traditional crafts cannot be achieved through the traditional idea of handling them as mere "remainders of the past", but as an active, interactive and allows artisans or craftspeople to critically examine and adapt their traditional practices (Połec & Murawska, 2022). It involves a conscious awareness of the cultural and environmental implications of their craft, leading to innovative adjustments that align with contemporary values and sustainability. This process ensures the preservation of heritage while embracing modern challenges and opportunities.

Architectural Phenomena

The phenomenology of architecture surrounds humanity and is always interacting and affecting people's moods, behavior, and the way they react with their environment. When architecture is manifested as lifeworld, it refers to the phenomenon of a building that can be understood through an array of actions, events and experiences associated with the individuals and communities that use said building (Seamon, 2015).

Furthermore, architecture as atmosphere is a reference to when a building includes a unique character or ambience, which contributes to its quality of place. Moreover, the concept of architecture as environmental and place wholeness delves into the idea that a structure can be lived in terms of its role in it either encouraging or discouraging a seamless integration and interconnection between the architectural environment and its inhabitants. This perspective emphasizes the dynamic relationship between the built environment and its users, highlighting the impact of design on the lived experience and interconnectedness within a space (Seamon, 2015).

That is to say that meaningful places should foster a sense of belonging by involving people in significant events that occur there. Martin Heidegger, a 20th-century philosopher, emphasized this connection between place and human interaction in his book *Being and Time* (1927). Heidegger (1927) claims that "when space is intuited formally, the pure possibilities of spatial relations are discovered" (p. 147). He further elaborates on the relationship between belonging and involvement, stating that "belonging somewhere has an essential relationship to involvement" (Heidegger, 1927, p. 420).

Fostering interaction, engagement, and community within shared spaces cultivates a sense of belonging and promotes feelings of health and balance, thereby enhancing the overall human environmental experience (Issa & Al Slik, 2024). Moreover, architecture, as an art form, serves as a means of mental stimulation. It engages both the eyes and the brain through perception, which relies heavily on memory—a fundamental component for productive thought. Architectural design draws upon memories and experiences, navigating the balance between trusting and questioning sensory input. All aspects of perception are continuously reassessed and refined through understanding, reflecting a form of intelligence rooted in sensory responsiveness (Youssef, 2015).

Ultimately, humans form deep emotional connections to spaces through the phenomenology of memory, a sense of place, and ecological distinctiveness. Involvement in various activities within these spaces further solidifies this bond. The interaction between individuals and their architectural environments creates a dynamic and meaningful experience, fostering a sense of belonging and enhancing overall well-being. By drawing on memories, engaging the senses, and promoting community engagement, architecture can create spaces that resonate deeply with people, reinforcing their cultural and personal identities (Figure 2).

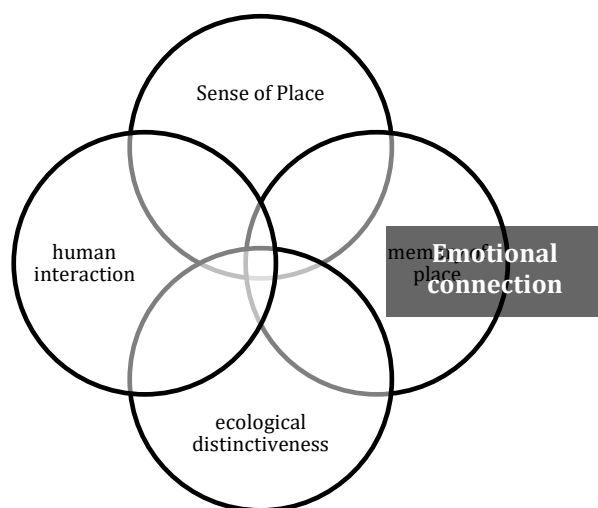


Figure 2. Embodiment of architectural phenomena for emotional connection (Developed by Author)

Material and Methods

When appropriately harnessed within buildings of cultural and architectural heritage, these phenomena have the potential to elevate the quality of place within them, establishing a profound connection between the occupants and their environment. This research aims to investigate and prove the important connection and substantial role that architectural phenomena play by answering the question “How does the preservation of architectural heritage associated with traditional crafts influence the sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place within Bahraini communities, and how do these dynamics contribute to the cultural identity, community engagement, and economic sustainability of traditional crafts over time?”

Furthermore, the study’s objective is to demonstrate how these phenomena can be effectively employed in the preservation of traditional handcrafts in Bahrain. This dual application not only enhances the cultural significance of the architectural heritage but also contributes to the preservation and perpetuation of traditional handcrafts. The broader impact lies in fortifying the knowledge and fostering a sense of pride among individuals, creating a harmonious interplay between architectural elements, cultural heritage, and traditional crafts.

In essence, the literature establishes a foundation for understanding the intricate relationship between architecture, cultural heritage, and traditional crafts. Architecture is depicted as more than just physical structures; it embodies the essence of a society’s culture and history, serving as a testament to its identity. Furthermore, cultural heritage encompasses various elements, including arts and crafts, which are crucial for preserving cultural identity in the face of modern challenges such as industrialization and mass production.

Through the lens of phenomenology, architecture is explored as a dynamic entity that influences human behavior and experiences within built environments. This understanding forms the basis for investigating how architectural phenomena can be leveraged to preserve traditional handcrafts in Bahrain.

Methodology and Case Study Selection

The research goal will be accomplished by employing qualitative research methods, specifically through observational case studies conducted on two distinct buildings that highlight the crafts of textile weaving, and basket weaving. These buildings were re-designed and developed recently to showcase and preserve Bahraini traditional crafts contributing to the ongoing preservation programs adapted by the government. In addition, an interview was conducted with Mr. Habib Al-Jamri who practices the craft of textile weaving in the factory and as a trainer of the craft in Al- Jasra Crafts center as well.

The observations were carried out to analyze the buildings under the lens of architectural phenomena and explore the fundamental essence of the embedded experiences to be lived within the enclosed area of each built environment, the observations allowed for a larger understanding of the utilized concepts of architectural phenomena, and aligned it with the observation of human behavior within these spaces and how affected their attitudes are by the concepts of phenomena applied within the design of the buildings.

The data collection process faced some limitations, such as the lack of visitors at the textile mill during the observational period, which restricted the results to observing the architecture of the space rather than people's behaviors within it. Despite this, the limitations were mitigated by supplementing the findings with insights from Mr. Habib's interview- a craftsman working at the mill (Appendix A). This adaptive approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of both the architectural and human aspects of the studied environments.

In an attempt to preserve the sense of these crafts that seem to be struggling to survive, The Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA) has been paying attention to the renovation of the spaces that are still practicing them, two of these buildings were selected to showcase two different handicrafts, and the way the design process was handled.

The choice of qualitative methods aligns well with the research goal of understanding and reflecting upon the relationship between architectural design and cultural heritage. The observational case studies allow for an in-depth exploration of the built environment, focusing on the physical attributes of the buildings as well as the experiential aspects perceived by individuals within those spaces, in addition to observing architectural phenomena that are manifested in these environments and how they contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage.

Additionally, conducting interviews with practitioners of traditional crafts provides valuable insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of individuals directly involved in these crafts. This qualitative approach allows for capturing nuanced information about the cultural significance of the crafts, the challenges they face, and the role of architectural design in supporting their preservation.

Furthermore, by focusing on buildings specifically chosen to showcase traditional crafts, the research can provide actionable recommendations for future preservation efforts and contribute to ongoing cultural revitalization initiatives in Bahrain. Overall, the chosen methodology effectively addresses the research objectives and allows for a nuanced exploration of the interplay between architecture, cultural heritage, and traditional crafts.

The Textile Mill of Bani Jamra

The textile mill is located in the northern governorate of Bahrain, specifically the village of Bani Jamra. The textile mill was built in the location of the original textile mill; and was officially opened in 2020. It was designed by the Swiss architect Leopold Banchini (Allam, S, 2022) and is located in a small corner in near proximity to the entrance of the village; surrounded by a large-scale graveyard and residential buildings. (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Showing the location of the textile mill in relation to the village entrance (Photo source: Google Maps), and the façade design in relation to the car parking area and surrounding buildings. (Mohamed, J, 2021)

The observational visit was conducted on 4th December 2023, the mill was noted to consist of a one-storey building with a central courtyard surrounded by the other spaces such as the weaving room, multi-purpose room and the small marketplace. However, the building location and size give the building a sense of estrangement due to the large difference in scale between the façade's small size and it also being surrounded by larger residential buildings and an even larger graveyard. This contributes significantly to the inattentive experience of people towards the building and creates a sense of indifference to its structure, as it becomes somewhat overshadowed.

Despite its beautifully designed exterior design that integrates traditional construction techniques and materials, such as the application of palm tree rachis and wooden posts, coupled with the incorporation of natural elements

like palm trees directly into the façade, the building can easily be overshadowed by the cars that get parked around it as it is surrounded by a paved area that residents of the village use to cater for their need of parking space, this inadvertently covers the building's façade, thereby enclosing the building and adding to its disproportionate size within its surroundings (Figure 3). This spatial arrangement contributes to losing the sense of value of the place and the human centered experience to the more car-oriented headspace and town design.

House of Basket Weaving in Al-Qalah

The house of basket weaving was renovated and officially opened in 2022 by The Authority of Culture and Antiquities to commemorate the house's memory of place as it was the place of residence of Mr. Salman who was a prominent figure in his community as written near the entrance (Figure 4), in addition to remaining as a witness to the traditional craft of basket weaving from palm leaves that was widely practiced in the village of Karbabad and various other villages (BACA, 2016).



Figure 4. Showing the internal entrance of the house with a piece of wood with the original owner's name, and the façade design of the building. (Photo source: Author)

The house is located in Al-Qalah village in close proximity to Bahrain Fort which is a registered site of the UNESCO World Heritage List (BNA, 2022); and opposite of a residential neighborhood that was built by the Ministry of Housing in a traditional style to celebrate the rich history of the area and reflect a form of Bahrain's traditional architecture. In addition, the site has its own designated parking space that could accommodate up to 6 cars without disrupting the façade and entrance of the house (Figure 4).

The design of the façade beautifully reflects some of the traditional design characteristics, with a low boundary wall that integrates the pattern designs that were popularized in the houses of Bahrain of the late period that extended through 1930-1940 (Yarwood, 2005), and showcases acrylic lettering with the name of the building by the main entrance (Figure 4).

The building has a big landscape area that is filled with palm trees that not only have a deep-rooted meaning in the culture of Bahrain due to its wide abundance, but the main material used for the making of the baskets and 'Saffa' is derived from dried, and sometimes colored palm leaves and fronds. On the first hand, this integration creates an architecture as atmosphere phenomena and ecological distinctiveness through the strong connection to the environment. On the other hand, the cultural meaning of the palm tree adds personal connection and cultural meaning to the building as well.

Results

Architectural Analysis: Urban Characteristics and Building Materials

Enhancing the traditional identity of the mentioned buildings is pivotal in revitalizing the sense of pride and connection among people and their culture. It serves as a compelling factor in attracting visitors and tourists eager to explore and learn about cultural history and traditions. This objective was successfully realized in the design of the Banijamra factory. The deliberate choice to reflect the courtyard house design of traditional Bahrain and visually connect the courtyard to other spaces using glass walls, instead of solid walls, significantly contributes to the overall quality of the place within the building.

On the other hand, in the house of basket weaving; the building itself was originally built and used by Mr. Salman as previously mentioned, hence its traditional design and the strong sense of memory of place present in the building as historical memory creates a bond between people and places, it embodies a connection to history by

encapsulating the elements that define the location's identity like the front landscape area and traditional finishing touches. Tangible and intangible elements are perceived through perceptions, engaging the senses, intellect, and emotions (Vasilara & Konstantinidou, 2022), this intricate interplay captures the essence of the place, providing a well-rounded understanding of its historical and cultural significance.

Furthermore, the preservation of handcrafts and cultural heritage through the built environment of these buildings seems as a direct reflection of their architectural heritage which can be seen through multiple characteristics that seem to be shared in both buildings such as the traditional building materials; such as the terrazzo flooring which was popularized in Bahrain in the 1940s (Power, T, 2019), terrazzo is visible in the House of weaving baskets in its original and traditional form as it belonged to the original house structure in shades of beige and brown and smaller spec design; on the other hand, it can be seen in the weaving factory in a modernized version with larger specs and a grey color.

Also adding to the feeling of memory of place is the use of palm tree rachis as a finishing material for the ceiling of the central courtyard in the Banijamra factory together with wooden posts carrying the weight of the ceiling, this was inspired by traditional building techniques and is beautifully blended with modern architectural elements like the concrete columns and large glass windows; creating a distinct identity to the space by combining traditional and modern building techniques and materials. With that being said, the same can be applied in the house of weaving baskets, as the gypsum ceilings have a sleek modern design with track lighting but blended harmoniously with traditional wooden posts.

Additionally, there is a distinct ecological distinctiveness apparent in both buildings, the house of weaving baskets has a large courtyard at the front of the building filled with palm trees and various bushes and some of the windows overlook the garden which connects the interior with the external environment. However, it seems stronger in the weaving factory because not only does the building have large curtainwalls that completely link the interiors with the outside, but the interior courtyard has multiple palm trees planted; with openings in the ceiling for them to grow through and connect the space to the sky, in addition to various shapes of water features. All these elements establish a strong connection with nature and an interrelatedness with the outside environment.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of Traditional Identity and Architectural Features in Banijamra Factory and House of Basket Weaving (Developed by Author)

Aspect	Banijamra Factory	House of Basket Weaving
Enhancement of Traditional Identity	Reflects traditional courtyard house design in Bahrain, utilizes glass walls to visually connect spaces and highlight the architectural design.	Holds a strong sense of historical memory through adaptively reusing a traditional residential space.
Architectural Elements	Modern elements (concrete columns, large glass windows) blended with traditional materials (palm tree rachis ceiling, wooden posts).	Traditional Bahraini architectural elements (low boundary wall that integrates traditional pattern designs), modern gypsum ceilings with track lighting harmonized with traditional wooden posts
Finishing Materials	Modernized terrazzo flooring with larger specs and grey color.	Original terrazzo flooring in shades of beige and brown
Ecological Distinctiveness	Large curtainwalls linking interiors to the outside; interior courtyard with palm trees and water features	Large courtyard filled with palm trees and bushes; windows overlooking the garden

Features of Human Connection

Engaging in multiple activities within a building can elevate the quality of place. Firstly, it fosters a dynamic and vibrant environment, catering to diverse interests and preferences. This multiplicity of activities creates a sense of inclusivity, encouraging people with different needs and preferences to coexist within the shared space. This can be noted in both buildings; on the one hand, the textile mill houses various activities such as observing the weaving process and getting the chance to participate and attempt to use the machinery available at the site; which as provided by Mr. Habib, seems to be the main attracting point at the building (Appendix A).

In addition to the selling areas that provides people with the chance to own unique handmade pieces of textiles like scarves, bags, pouches, and face masks.

This can also be seen in the house of weaving baskets; the building is consisted of two-storeys with a small reception area leading into the basket making room, which features a floor sitting for people to observe the craftsmen while they work, and a selling area featuring all sorts of products made within the building. The staircase leads upstairs which houses an interactive learning area for people to attempt basket making or 'Saffa' and children to draw and color. The synergy of diverse activities can lead to unexpected and enriching interactions among individuals. Sharing and exchanging ideas, social connections, and shared experiences contribute to a lively and stimulating atmosphere, enhancing the overall quality of the place.

Furthermore, the variety of activities accommodates different moods and occasions, providing flexibility in space utilization. Spaces can transform based on the activities taking place, ensuring that the environment remains relevant and adaptable to the evolving needs of its occupants such as the multipurpose room in the textile mill which groups of visitors use as a majlis (Appendix A) enhancing and strengthening community ties and engagement.

All the above suggests that multiple activities within a building contribute to a holistic and enriched experience, creating a multifaceted environment that appeals to a broad spectrum of users, emits a strong sense of place by strengthening the bond between the space and its user, resulting into enhancing the overall quality of the place. (Figure 4)

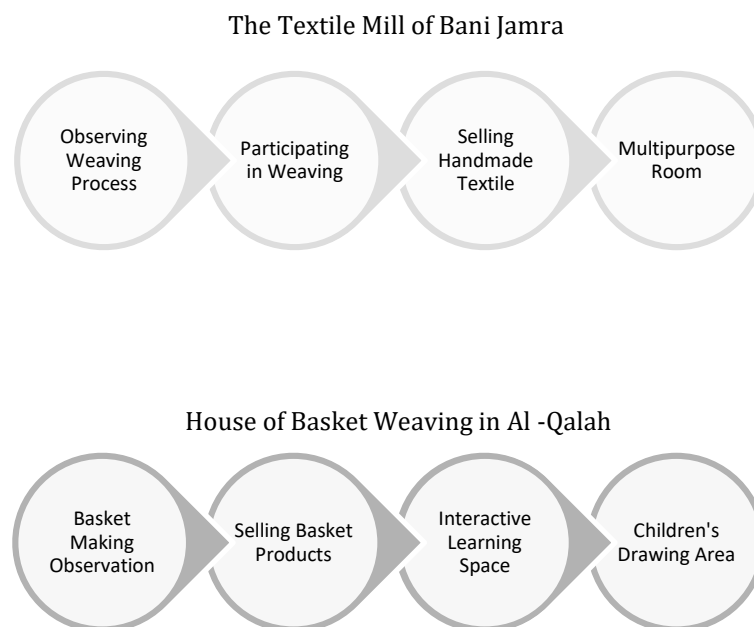


Figure 4. Showing the multifaceted nature of both buildings that creates a wholesome experience and forms human-place relationships (Developed by Author)

Customs and Practices

Architectural heritage can also be represented through the practices and customs associated with the buildings, including the artisanal techniques that are being promoted and presented in both buildings through specifying room for practicing and showcasing the crafts of weaving textiles and baskets which also ensures the preservation of the heritage skills passed down through generations. Additionally, allowing the visitors to participate in the creation of the pieces created a stronger relationship and attachment between them and the culture.

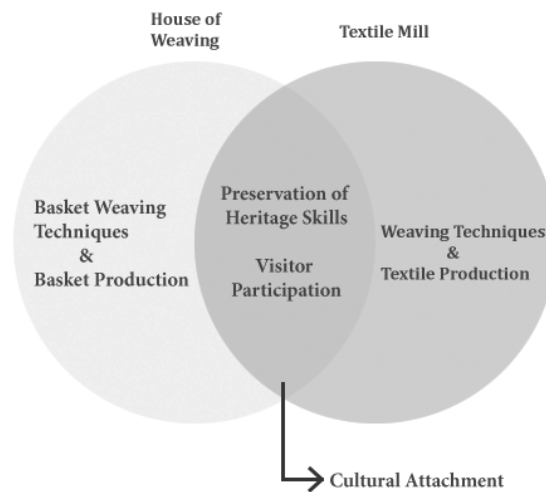


Figure 5. Creating cultural and emotional attachment through customs and practices in both buildings (Developed by Author)

In conclusion, an in-depth examination of the architectural elements within the buildings allows for a comprehensive analysis. By summarizing and comparing these elements, we can extrapolate the common factors that contribute to the overall phenomenological experience of the structures. This approach not only enhances our understanding of the design principles at play but also provides valuable insights into the shared characteristics shaping the perceptual impact of these buildings.

Table 2. Architectural element comparison (Developed by Author)

	Textile Mill	House of Weaving Baskets
Ecological Distinctiveness	Water features	Courtyard with palm trees at the front of the building
	Palm Trees	
	Natural Materials	
Activities	Shopping	Shopping
	Observation of craft making	Observation of craft making
	Participating in weaving	Participating in weaving and coloring sessions
	Spend time lounging around	
Cultural Reflection	Inspired layout from courtyard houses	Renovated old building
	Display of items on the walls	Display of items on the walls and light fixtures made of palm leaves
Building materials	Wood and concrete columns	Brick and mortar
	Palm tree rachis for the ceiling	Gypsum ceilings
	Terrazzo	Terrazzo

Discussion and Conclusion

The results underscore the significance of enhancing the traditional identity of buildings to revive a sense of pride and cultural connection, attracting visitors eager to explore cultural history. The Banijamra factory exemplifies this success, deliberately reflecting the courtyard house design of traditional Bahrain. The use of glass walls, connecting the courtyard visually to other spaces, enhances the overall quality of the place, showcasing a thoughtful integration of traditional and modern architectural elements.

Similarly, in the house of basket weaving, the building's original design, coupled with a strong sense of memory of place, creates a bond between people and locations. Tangible and intangible elements engage the senses, intellect, and

emotions, providing a comprehensive understanding of historical and cultural significance (A. Vasilara & E. Konstantinidou 2022).

Moreover, the preservation of handcrafts and cultural heritage is evident in the architectural heritage of both buildings. Shared characteristics, such as traditional building materials like terrazzo flooring, showcase a blend of tradition and modernization. The use of palm tree rachis for the ceiling in the Banijamra factory and traditional wooden posts in the house of weaving baskets exemplifies a harmonious combination of traditional and modern building techniques and materials.

Ecological distinctiveness is apparent in both structures, with the house of weaving baskets featuring a courtyard filled with palm trees, and the weaving factory displaying a stronger connection with nature through curtainwalls, interior courtyards with palm trees, and various water features.

In terms of human connection, engaging in diverse activities within both buildings creates a vibrant environment, fostering inclusivity and diverse interactions. The textile mill and the house of weaving baskets offer various activities, from observing craft processes to interactive learning areas. This multiplicity of activities not only caters to different interests but also strengthens community ties and engagement.

Customs and practices associated with the buildings play a crucial role in representing architectural heritage. Both structures promote artisanal techniques by specifying areas for practicing and showcasing crafts. Allowing visitors to participate in the creation of pieces fosters a stronger relationship and attachment to the culture, ensuring the preservation of heritage skills passed down through generations.

In summary, the results demonstrate that the architectural and cultural aspects discussed in the literature are effectively realized in the studied buildings, showcasing a thoughtful blend of tradition, modernity, and ecological consciousness while fostering vibrant community engagement and preserving cultural heritage.

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should diversify sample selection, consider longitudinal studies for a comprehensive understanding over time, and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration. Community engagement is crucial for a more holistic perspective, and integrating quantitative and qualitative methods can provide a richer analysis. Comparative studies across regions, coupled with an assessment of economic and social impacts, can contribute to universal principles and best practices. Research should explore the sustainability of architectural preservation, leverage technological innovations, and offer policy recommendations for urban planning and cultural preservation.

To conclude, the research findings validate the literature's assertions, demonstrating that the architectural and cultural aspects discussed in the literature are effectively realized in the studied buildings. The thoughtful blend of tradition and modernity, coupled with ecological consciousness, fosters vibrant community engagement and effectively preserves cultural heritage.

The relationship between the results and the original hypothesis

The research findings intricately align with the research hypothesis and aims, which explore the dynamic interplay between preserving architectural heritage in buildings associated with traditional crafts and the phenomena of sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place. The preservation positively influences cultural identity, fostering a strong sense of pride and connection within the community. Notably, the deliberate reflection of traditional Bahraini design elements in the Banijamra factory and the house of basket weaving creates a meaningful bond between people and locations, contributing to a heightened sense of place.

The emphasis on architectural preservation as a method for shaping the quality of place within communities is substantiated by the results. The thoughtful integration of traditional and modern architectural elements, as observed in both buildings, enhances the overall quality of the place. Similarly, the multiplicity of activities within the spaces fosters inclusivity and vibrant community engagement, further supporting the idea that preservation contributes to the quality of place.

The exploration of memory of place is inherently addressed in the findings, especially in the house of basket weaving, where the original design and strong sense of memory of place create a bond between individuals and the location. The

use of tangible and intangible elements engages the senses and emotions, providing a comprehensive understanding of historical and cultural significance, aligning with the concept of memory of place.

In summary, the research uncovers nuanced ways in which architectural heritage interacts with the sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place, validating the hypothesis that preservation positively influences cultural identity, community engagement, and economic sustainability. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how these elements intertwine within the context of traditional crafts and community dynamics in Bahrain.

The observational case studies conducted on the textile mill and the house of basket weaving shed light on the profound impact of architectural design on cultural identity and community engagement. By analyzing the architectural elements and human interactions within these spaces, the research reveals how preservation efforts contribute to fostering a sense of pride, connection, and engagement within the community. Embracing traditional design elements, fostering diverse activities, and promoting cultural practices, these buildings become vibrant expressions of Bahrain's cultural heritage, enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike.

In conclusion, this research delves into the intricate relationship between preserving architectural heritage in buildings associated with traditional crafts and the phenomena of sense of place, quality of place, and memory of place within the Bahraini community. The study reveals the profound impact of preservation on cultural identity, community engagement, and economic sustainability over time.

Through qualitative research methods, including case studies and interviews, the research focuses on specific buildings showcasing textile weaving and basket weaving crafts. The findings underscore the significance of enhancing traditional identity to revive a sense of pride and cultural connection. The Banijamra factory exemplifies success by deliberately reflecting traditional Bahraini design elements, showcasing a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity.

Similarly, in the house of basket weaving, the original design and the strong sense of memory of place create a bond between people and locations. Tangible and intangible elements engage the senses, intellect, and emotions, providing a comprehensive understanding of historical and cultural significance.

Preservation of handcrafts and cultural heritage is evident in both buildings, emphasizing traditional building materials like terrazzo flooring and the use of palm tree rachis. The ecological distinctiveness is apparent, fostering a stronger connection with nature through various architectural elements.

Human connection is enhanced by engaging in diverse activities within the buildings, creating a vibrant environment that fosters inclusivity and diverse interactions. The multiplicity of activities not only caters to different interests but also strengthens community ties and engagement. Customs and practices associated with the buildings play a crucial role in representing architectural heritage. Both structures promote artisanal techniques, allowing visitors to participate in the creation of pieces and fostering a stronger relationship with the culture.

Despite limitations, including a confined sample size and potential bias in subjective evaluations, the research contributes valuable insights into the role of architectural preservation in sustaining traditional crafts within a community. Future research should diversify sample selection, consider longitudinal studies, and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration for a more comprehensive understanding over time.

In summary, the research findings effectively align with the original hypothesis, showcasing a thoughtful blend of tradition, modernity, and ecological consciousness. This research significantly contributes to the discourse on heritage conservation, community development, and the nuanced interplay between architectural preservation and cultural identity in the context of traditional crafts and community dynamics in Bahrain.

Acknowledgement

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview with Mr. Habib Mohamed Al- Jamri (Craftsman of weaving)

When did you start learning the process of weaving and what drove you to do so?

Mr. Habib: I have inherited the craft from my father who learned it from his father as well. As a kid, I used to spend my time with my father while he worked on weaving textiles and through curiosities decided to try and learn the craft at 13 years old. The main goal was not for me to professionally pursue the craft, but just to learn and enjoy the creation process, but this changed with time and as I grew it turned into a hobby and a profession, not only do I practice the craft myself, but I work in Al- Jasra Crafts center as a trainer as well.

What kind of visitors does the factory attract?

Mr. Habib: We get all types of visitors, tourists and Bahrainis equally who enjoy learning about and observing the practice of the craft.

Do you think the design of the place helped increase the awareness regarding the craft of weaving?

Mr. Habib: Of course! Ever since BACA re-built the factory with this eye-catching and beautiful design, it has significantly increased the number of visitors such as tourists, residents and photographers. A lot of people visit the factory only for photographing purposes like artistic pictures, professional photos or even for commemorating memories. Just last week we had a group of thirty photographers come in and had a photo session within the factory; and later on, expressed their delight and admiration to the design of the space.

Were you included in the design process, or asked for your input beforehand?

Mr. Habib: The architect sat down with us and collected our feedback and needs for the space, however not everything we required was adapted such as the length of space needed for the threads to be pulled and fixed on the machine in the threading room. But we were pleased with the overall design afterwards.

What is the most attracting area in the factory for the visitors?

Mr. Habib: The threading room, people really enjoy observing the process of weaving and how the machine moves and creates beautiful textiles, they tend to ask a lot of questions and learn about the types of threads and fabrics used and the entire process. In addition, we like to entice the visitors to experience the process themselves by using the machine under our supervision for approximately 10 minutes per visitor and this creates an interactive experience for them and leaves them happy and invested in the craft.

Do kids usually visit the factory? And how do they behave within the space?

Mr. Habib: Yes we get a lot of schools and kindergarten school trips, the space can carry around 20 kids at a time. However, we feel like the space was not designed with children use in mind, due to the big number of steps in the space, creating some issues with kids running around and tripping over the steps. Any children visiting need to be very closely monitored to avoid any accident. Moreover, the same issue is faced when elderly people visit, we did have a few accidents where older people did not pay attention the steps and ended up tripping and falling down, it is very concerning and tend to be a source of annoyance and inconvenience.

What is the multi-purpose room usually used for? If you could provide a small brief about the use of the space as it also houses another weaving machine.

Mr. Habib: This room is solely used for gatherings and as a majlis space for the visitors, we make sure that the place is equipped with tea and coffee for hospitality. Groups of visitors often enjoy spending some time together in there. However, the weaving machine in there is merely decorative.