Iraqi urban development study: Dywaniah as a case study

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Abstract

The city of Dywania is located in the middle of the south area of Iraq where many archaeological sites are located – some of which have been revealed and some have not, such as Nafir, Nibbur and King Ghazi Palace. Meanwhile, the city embraces many touristic religious sites as prophets' shrines and their followers. Despite the above, we have not seen any noticeable development in the city although the government has spent a huge budget in the city during the past ten years due to the absence of a real and successful vision for development, depending on the city potentials; this is the situation in most Iraqi cities.

The reason behind the idea of this study is to identify a mechanism for developing Iraqi cities, taking Dywaniah as an example; interrelating between expanding ways by building modern cities and villages around the old city and transforming the people of the old cities gradually. Accordingly, making the cities commercial, economical, touristic, religious and archaeological centres according to the potentials the city has.

A scientific analytical method has been used to accomplish the goal of this study. In the study 500 people have been chosen randomly for the questionnaire and the percentage degree is used for the results. Also, this study includes the analysis of the current Iraqi society situation and the effective factors on development.

The study shows that it is not possible to rely on the personal initiative of the citizen in the development and construction of his city, as there is a need to stop spending large amounts of budgets to develop centres of ancient cities, because it is not feasible. The study also confirms the need to follow the style of working on the development of cities through creating modern cities and villages depending on scientific ingredients to create and establish cities surrounding the current centres and then developing these centres and turning them into commercial, economic, and industrial centres according to their components.

1 Introduction

We live today in the age of the explosion of civilization and technological changes and the world's serious attempt to urbanization and developed stages have been accomplished in this respect. As the richest nation in the area and the owner of economical, commercial, material and humanistic elements, we can reach the top of well living in a record of time.

However, on the other hand, after more than ten years since the liberation from the authoritarian regime that ruled the country for decades, the nation is still suffering from many problems, such as: poverty, poor planning and management as well as conflicting policies which in turn led to increasing the gap between population density and residential units, creating random neighbourhoods, increasing urban poverty and corruption. Therefore, it became necessary to diagnose the mistakes and to develop specific methodology for the development consistent with the reality of our society in order to achieve the real renaissance to suit the economic and financial potentials of our country, overcome administrative confusion, follow the scientific method behaviour, adopt the ingredients essential for the urban development and work effectively (Najwa [4]). Below are some examples:

- Planning and constructing integrated infrastructure.
- The administrative side and state policy towards the development of cities and activating its potential and exploit its wealth, whether you are religious or an archaeological tourist, commercial, etc.
- Allocation of the cities based on geographical factors.
- Support and increase the economic activities of cities.

Hence, the idea of this study is to focus on the characteristics of urbanization and systematic follow of the urban development style and exploiting the resources of the province independently after supporting them and putting it on the right track by the potentials of the state.

2 The importance of the study

The importance of this study is an attempt to shed light on the inability to develop the existing urban centres style used by the responsible authorities in the state, for example, the city of Dywaniah, did not witness any urban development during the past ten years despite huge budgets pent in the city. This may be due to the major and important reason which is the lack of building cities on the basis of true scientific engineering, but rather on personal opinions and interpretations by unqualified people in the state as well as the lack of clarity of vision by those responsible for the current reconstruction. Making every penny spent in the reconstruction of these cities just a waste in the financial potentials of the state and causes financial and administrative corruption that we are witnessing today. Meanwhile, highlighting the failure in following the mechanism of urbanization outside the existing cities, leaving these cities as they are and be included under the term "the old city".

The second importance in this study is the trying to mix between the notions of establishing modern cities surrounding the current urban centres and developing the centres of these cities, turning them into centres for investment, commercial, and industrial or tourism according to the potentials these cities possess. For example, the city of Dywaniyah, in terms of geographical location, is in the middle of the southern region of Iraq (as shown in Figure 1).

Figure 1: The geographical location of the province of Dywaniyah.

The city contains about 800 archaeological sites veiled so far, as well as the existence of the historical kingdoms such as Nufir and Nippur, the palace of King Ghazi, the existence of touristic religious places such as the shrine of Prophet Shoaib (p) and the shrine of Prophet Madian (p), as well as shrines in the centre of the city. Meanwhile, the town of Hamzah is not invested in the right way that makes it the centre of trade, economics, religions or entertainment.

3 The reasons behind this study

The Iraqi community are still suffering from problems and concerns that can occur, after the wars, disasters, injustice, and other different practices that had been used by the former political regime. The marginalization of creative mind, trying to reduce the importance of the cities within the state and neglecting the urban as well as the failure to adopt uniform geometric schemes which the departments of the city depend on for the purpose of development. Also, the change in the environmental conditions of the cities and the lack of livelihood sources for the population which led to their migration from their places to other cities was an essential tool in the society change and generate many social problems, the most important are:

1. Lack of family cohesion, which can be represented in two ways:
 - Lack of family cohesion as a single unit.
 - Lack of family cohesion and its coherence with civilized society.

2. Emerging many social deviations caused by patterns of behaviour and psychological pressures, which contributed, to the corruption of society, including:
 - Lack of interest by parents in children education, healthy grown.
 - The psychological discomfort, no clear aims by an individual and the purpose of his existence.
 - The necessary needs and requirements, which cannot be met by normal circumstances.
3. Low income, which was and still many families are living below the poverty line.

Because of what have been shown, such as fundamental problems facing urban development, working has become necessary to adopt the issue of developing the cities and society by the state and its institutions (Abdul jalil and Suham [1], Alaa [2]).

4. Failure in housing units compared to the population increase in the city of Dywaniah:

to the General Committee for Housing/the Ministry of Construction and Housing about the reality of housing in the province of Dywaniah for the purpose of determining the failure in housing units now and the future needs for those units until 2017. In collaboration with the Directorate of Dywaniah Census a census was conducted across the province, districts and areas affiliated to the province and the results showed that the increase amounted to 297 140 and the housing units required due to the increase = 49,518 in the rate of one unit for 6 persons; also, the study showed that the percentage of urban population = 52% and the proportion of rural population = 48%. While the population percentage in the centre of the province is 32%, as the study featured many of the conclusions included that the total deficit in housing units in the province of Dywaniah is 81,398 up to 2007. Depending on the rate of population growth by 3% in Qadisiyah province and as this ratio fixed for the next ten years until 2017, the number of the population will increase from 990,487 in 2007 to 1,287,622 in 2017 any increase of 297,140, which means to add 49,518 housing units. Thus, the sum of what is required from residential units until the year 2017 will be up to 131,000 units.

The building permissions granted for a period of the past ten years is estimated to be 25,000 building permissions and the building permissions to be completed for a period of the next ten years expected to be 40,000 in the housing units in the province which is about 66,000 housing units up to 2017.

The study also added that there is another problem in the housing deficit that is a large percentage of housing units are inappropriate for housing for being either old or they do not meet all the needs of comfortable housing (especially in rural areas).

The study reached the conclusion that there is an urgent need to develop a housing reality in the province through several main sides. The most prominent

way can be done supporting the citizen's personal initiative to build their house by themselves by overcoming all the difficulties, such as affording building materials in suitable prices, following a comfortable credit system, the delivery of essential services to the neighbourhoods newly formed and rural areas and the establishment of residential complexes. These suggestions can cover the shortfall in residential units through projects of general committee of housing, investment projects, and the projects of developing the regions (Department of Dywaniyah Housing [3]).

In what have been presented in the preceding paragraphs and what our society are suffering becomes impossible to achieve the solutions reached by this study by depending on the citizen's personal initiative.

4 The proposed development mechanism

The proposed development mechanism can be applied in this study through three stages:

4.1 Stage 1

- A – Restricting spending any budget from the budget of the province for the purpose of development and rehabilitation of the current city centre and announcing this step to the citizens.
- B – Transferring the budget of the province and spending it on the establishment of modern villages and cities which surround the province and this expansion will be in the form of united circles in which the ancient city will be in the centre or the expansion and will be in oval shape in which the ancient city is in one side in case the expansion could not be done in any specific direction (as shown in Figure 2).

Figure 2: The mechanism of the proposed expansion.

- C – Giving these projects to international companies specialized in design and implementation by following the highest international standards in terms of design, building, and management in a short period.
- D – Establishing villages and towns in different models and in equal sizes of the existing spaces that distributed in the old city according to the neighbourhoods (as shown in Figure 3). To ensure the transmission of neighbourhoods and no sense of injustice by citizens, the prices in the areas in the same province ranges from (120,000–2,000,000) per square meter.

Figure 3: A map of the city centre of residential neighbourhoods.

4.2 Stage 2

Through the completion of the modern cities, the citizens will be educated about what these cities contain, what services they provide and the potentials; it will be given to him when he concedes his residential unit at no charge. We have conducted a questionnaire and the results revealed the following percentages:

The total number of forms = 500 forms.

Number of forms damaged = 97.

Number of forms refused = 182 forms.

Number of forms approved = 221 forms.

The number of successful forms = 403 forms.

Approval rate in the number of successful forms = 54.8387%.

Rejection rate in the number of successful forms = 45.1613%.

4.3 Stage 3

At this stage, after the acquisition of the land, working on developing the city centres will begin after giving it to certified investment companies and turn them into centres for trade and economic through the establishment of markets and malls, amusement entertainment, supporting tourism, archaeology and religion which benefit both the state and society.

5 Conclusions

- 1 – No possible reliance on the citizen's personal initiative in the development and construction of his city.
- 2 – The need to stop spending huge budgets on developing the old city centres because it is not useful.
- 3 – Working on the development of cities through creating modern cities and villages that depend on modern scientific ingredients to create and establish cities surround the current centres and then developing these canter and turn them into commercial, economical, and industrial centres according to their components.

Appendix

The aim of this questionnaire survey is to develop the city of Dywania, turning it into a modern city.

Q 1/Do you agree to replace your residential unit with one in the same size and the number of floors in a modern city with complete services (as shown in the attached table), located outside the current city centre.

Yes

No

Q 1/Do you agree to replace your residential unit in case you are more than one family living in the same housing unit with a modern unit with complete services (as shown in the attached table), located outside of the current city centre .

Yes

No

Table 1: The services available in the modern city.

No.	Service type	Way of implementation
1	Health	Hospitals or health centres according to modern or developed needs
2	Roads	Modern highways with providing adequate and orderly parking places
3	Education	Schools in accordance with international and modern standards.
4	Trade	Malls and commercial markets in accordance with international standards.
5	Entertainment	Entertainment areas of family specialty with high and developed standards and providing beautiful green areas and yards
6	Electricity	Providing electricity services on an ongoing basis without interruption by linking to national towers and big malls in isolated places, in suitable prices.
7	Water	Pumping pure drinking water continuously in day and night.
8	Maintenance	The maintenance will be by specialized teams and in symbolic monthly prices.
9	Ownership	The ownership document will be handed over to the citizen when he disclaims his residential unit at the time of receiving the new unit.
10	Waste	Waste is lifted on a daily basis in a nominal monthly wages.
11	Communication	Each unit is equipped with a special optical cable, residential phone, internet and satellite.

Note: In case the housing unit is within a vertical building the same services special to each department are provided to each unit as an independent one.

References

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