

## Urban Furniture in a New Setting of Public Spaces within the Kurdistan Region: Educational Targets and Course Design Process

**Authors :** Sinisa Prvanov

**Abstract :** This research is an attempt to analyze the existing urban form of outdoor public space of Duhok city and to give proposals for their improvements in terms of urban seating. The aim of this research is to identify the main urban furniture elements and behaviour of users of three central parks of Duhok city, recognizing their functionality and the most common errors. Citizens needs, directly related to the physical characteristics of the environment, are categorized in terms of contact with nature. Parks as significant urban environments express their aesthetic preferences, as well as the need for recreation and play. Citizens around the world desire to contact with nature and places where they can socialize, play and practice different activities, but also participate in building their community and feeling the identity of their cities. The aim of this research is also to reintegrate these spaces in the wider urban context of the city of Duhok, to develop new functions by designing new seating patterns, more improved urban furniture, and necessary supporting facilities and equipment. Urban furniture is a product that uses an enormous number of people in public space. It has a high level of wear and damage due to intense use, exposure to sunlight and weather conditions. Iraq has a hot and dry climate characterized by long, warm, dry summers and short, cold winters. The climate is determined by the Iraq location at the crossroads of Arab desert areas and the subtropical humid climate of the Persian Gulf. The second part of this analysis will describe the possibilities of traditional and contemporary materials as well as their advantages in urban furniture production, providing users protection from extreme local climate conditions, but also taking into account solidities and unwelcome consequences, such as vandalism. In addition, this research represents a preliminary stage in the development of IND307 furniture design course for needs of the Department of Interior design, at the American University in Duhok. Based on results obtained in this research, the course would present a symbiosis between people and technology, promotion of new street furniture design that perceives pedestrian activities in an urban setting, and practical use of anthropometric measurements as a tool for technical innovations.

**Keywords :** Furniture design, Street furniture, Social interaction, Public space

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