Absurdity in Human Architecture between Healing and Illness

العبثيـــــة فـــي عمـــــارة الانســـــان مـــــا بيـــــن الشفـــــاء والمـــرض

Tuqa Mahmood Hameed [a] *, Ibrahim Jawad Kadhim Al-Yousif [b]

[(a, b)] Department of Architectural Engineering, University of Technology- Iraq, Baghdad, Iraq.

KEYWORDS

ABSTRACT

Despite the evolution of architecture throughout the ages, it still exhibits a clear contrast between order and chaos, where ideas and forms intertwine to produce a diversity of outcomes between creativity and failure, healing and illness. This contrast highlights the presence of absurdity in contemporary architectural projects, serving as a rhetorical tool that challenges architectural conventions and expands the boundaries of human reason by presenting innovative solutions. Accordingly, the research problem is represented by the lack of a comprehensive understanding of the role of absurdity in shaping human architecture. The aim of the research was to reveal the role of aesthetic, functional, and structural absurdity in shaping architectural outputs, particularly in Rifat Chadirji's projects. The research employed a descriptive-analytical approach, constructing a knowledge framework that was subsequently supplemented by a comprehensive theoretical framework. This framework was formulated into three main categories: "Orientations of Absurd Architecture," "Characteristics of Absurd Architectural Texts," and "Organization of Absurd Architecture." These were applied to selected projects to clarify the extent to which these indicators were achieved and to reach conclusions that demonstrated architects' inclination towards "irrational design, absurd forms, multidimensional contradiction, & massive scale" in pursuit of absurdity more than spatial separation to preserve the urban fabric.

الكلمات المفتاحية

الملخص

على الرغم من تطور العمارة عبر العصور، إلا أنها لا تزال تشهد تباينًا واضحًا بين النظام والفوضى، حيث تتداخل الأفكار والأشكال لتنتج تنوعًا بين الإبداع والفشل، والشفاء والمرض. هذا التباين يعكس حضور العبثية في المشاريع المعمارية المعاصرة، فهي أداة بليغة تشكك في الأعراف المعمارية، وتوسع حدود العقل البشري من خلال تقديم حلول مبتكرة. وعليه، تمثلت مشكلة البحث في قصور التصور المعرفي حول دور العبث في تشكيل العمارة الإنسانية، وهدف البحث للكشف عن دور العبث الجمالي والوظيفي والبنيوي في تشكيل مخرجات العمارة، وخاصة في مشاريع رفعت الجادرجي. وقد اعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي التحليلي من خلال بناء إطار معرفي، ثم إطار نظري شامل تم صياغته في ثلاث مفردات رئيسية، وهي: "توجهات العمارة العبثية، وخصائص النص المعماري العبثي، وتنظيم العمارة العبثية". وقد تم تطبيقها على المشاريع المنتخبة لتوضيح مدى تحقق هذه المؤشرات والوصول للاستنتاجات التي اوضحت ميل المعماريين نحو "التصميم اللاعقلاني، والأشكال العبثية، والتناقض المتعدد الأبعاد، والحجم الضخم"؛ لتحقيق العبث أكثر من الفصل المكاني للحفاظ على النسيج الحضري.

1. Introduction

Architectural absurdity playfully transgresses the rules of building formation by introducing solutions that would normally be dismissed due to their irrationality. These solutions offer nonlinear alternatives that challenge contemporary logic (Silvia, 2016, pp. 16-17). This perspective not only encourages innovative design approaches but also fosters a critical interrogation of architectural conventions. Absurdity in architecture can inspire creative reinterpretations of spatial boundaries and problem-solving strategies, reimagining the built environment in unprecedented ways (Johnson, 2018, pp.45-46). Despite previous studies addressing absurdity in architecture, they have not comprehensively explored its orientations, characteristics, and methods of organization. Consequently, the research problem is defined as follows: There is a lack of knowledge regarding the role of absurdity in shaping human architecture. The research aims to reveal the influence of aesthetic, functional, and structural absurdity in shaping architectural outputs, particularly through the analysis of Rifat Chadirji's projects as a case study. To address this aim, the study is divided into three main axes:

- Knowledge Framework: This axis establishes a foundational database for understanding absurdity in architecture by addressing its definition, levels, and applications, thus forming a robust basis for subsequent analysis.
- Theoretical Framework: This axis addresses the research problem by analyzing previous studies to identify measurable indicators and values, referencing works by (Chang, 2020), (Hasnain & Rana, 2020), (Fross et al., 2016), (Narayanan, 2014), and (Fedorov & Levikov, 2014).
- Applied Framework: This axis analyzes selected architectural projects, particularly those of Rifat Chadirji, to validate findings from the knowledge and theoretical frameworks, enabling conclusions and recommendations.

2. Knowledge Framework of the Research

The axis discusses absurd architecture through three main areas: its definition, levels, and applications.

2.1. Absurd Architecture

Absurdity is a philosophical concept introduced by the French philosopher Albert Camus in his book "The Myth of Sisyphus." This concept illustrates the inherent contradiction humans experience in their ongoing struggle between the deep desire to find meaning in life and the world's inability to provide that meaning. Camus argues that this contradiction generates a sense of absurdity. However, he calls on individuals to rebel against this reality by creating personal meaning for their lives instead of surrendering to it. The applications of absurdity extend across various fields, including literature, as exemplified in the plays of Samuel Beckett, and art, where absurdity is embodied in the works of the Surrealist and Dadaist movements that challenge traditional rules of logic (Camus, 1991, pp. 7–11; Ball, 2020).

The interpretation of absurd architecture presents two possibilities: First, absurdity serves as a rhetorical device aimed at questioning architectural conventions and expanding the boundaries of human reason by offering innovative solutions. Absurd architecture is not meaningless; rather, it exists in revolt against its meaning, resulting in a form of existence that opposes established interpretations. However, the first possibility remains insufficient, while the second represents a pathological condition, as seen in slums and refugee camps, which arise from a lack of basic human needs (Silvia, 2016, pp.16–22; Sun, 2021; Li, 2023). This research focuses on the first definition to explore the orientations, characteristics, and organizational methods of absurdist architecture.

2.2. levels of Absurd Architecture

- Absurd architecture has two main levels, namely:
- Absurdity in Urban planning: it includes the urban fabric, movement axes, and landscape.
- Absurdity in architectural design encompasses form, function, and structure. Formal Absurdity refers to the overall form of both mass and space, where each element possesses a unique shape. Absurdity arises from deviations from established norms, which in turn impact subsequent architectural outcomes. Functional Absurdity: Refers to the functional program, which involves the

addition, removal, or integration of multiple functions. These adjustments may serve marketing (economic) objectives or therapeutic (behavioural) purposes. Structural Absurdity focuses on innovative mechanisms for resisting vertical and lateral loads, employing methods that may initially appear unconventional or irrational (Miles, 2018, pp. 120–135; Simone & Wexler, 2017), as illustrated in Figure 1.
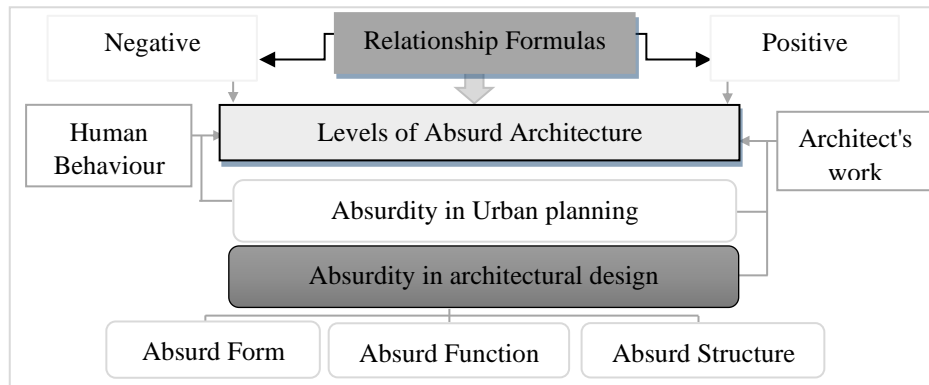

Figure 1. Levels of Absurd Architecture (Source: Authors).

2.3. Applications of Absurd Architecture

Absurd architectural structures feature overlapped and repetitive elements, reducing functionality to question the building's very purpose. These absurd projects require imagination while maintaining a realistic approach to execution. Absurd and impractical design is executed with recognizable materials, reflecting the architect's intention and bringing absurdity into the realm of the familiar (Stanciu, 2022; Farson, 1997). We present two practical examples of absurd architecture in Table 1 and Figure 2.

Table 1. Applications of absurd architecture,

Source: Authors, (based on: Awad, Bakr & Husain, 2014, pp.140-144; Coetzer, 2010, pp. 101–117; Jaimes, 2015).

	Jewish Museum in Berlin	**The Best Store in Houston**
Definition	The Jewish Museum is a building devoted to the social and political history of Jews in Germany. It comprises two buildings: a baroque ancient building and a modern, deconstructivist-style structure. Daniel Libeskind designed the latter. The building, spanning approximately 15,000 m², features an unusual zigzag form and is accessible only via an underground passage from the old building.	The BEST Products Showroom in Houston was designed by SITE (Sculpture in the Environment), which focused on the structural absurdity of the building. The intentionally crumbling brick at that Houston store, known as "Indeterminate Façade," was iconic, absurd, and, most importantly for BEST, it brought in customers.
Philosophy	Libeskind relied on distorting the archetype to create metaphysical forms related to the memory of the Jewish community, including the design of the Holocaust tower, the design of the Garden of Exile and Emigration, the design of cracked walls with absurdly sharp angles, and the design of the small spaces between the Baroque building and the museum addition by enabling the form to twist back and fold back on itself in plan create several absurd courtyards that reflect absence, as well as 10,000 faces punched out of steel and distributed on the ground of the Memory Void.	The project relied on three structural absurdity levels: Indeterminate Façade: it presents an intentionally distressed façade that implies neglect & absurdity. Notch Building: it challenges traditional notions of entrance, creating a fortress-like brick box when the store is closed. But when the store is open, a small segment of the façade slides away to reveal an entrance in the resulting "notch". Tilt Building: SITE developed a counterbalance system that enabled the Tilt façade's asymmetrical cantilever while maintaining the visual illusion of a floating brick wall.

| **Absurdity in the Jewish Museum.** | **Absurdity in The Best Store in Houston.** |

Figure 2. levels of Absurd Architecture, Source: (Awad, Bakr & Husain, 2014, pp.140-144; Jaimes, 2015; Kelly, 2021).

While previous literature provides a robust knowledge base and a suitable foundation for constructing a theoretical framework, absurd architecture remains unclear in terms of its orientations, characteristics, and methods of organization. Consequently, the necessity to explore this topic has emerged, which will be addressed in the second axis (Source: Authors).

3. Theoretical Framework of Research

This topic presents a set of previous studies aimed at extracting the vocabulary of the main and secondary theoretical frameworks and their possible values, as shown in Table 2 and Figure 3.

Table 2. Summary of Literature Review, Source: (Prepared by the authors based on: Chang, 2020; Hasnain & Rana, 2020; Fross et al., 2016; Narayanan,2014; Fedorov & Levikov, 2014).

The Cognitive subtraction of the study	
(Chang, 2020)	The study showed several levels of architectural absurdity, including: • Form: It refers to the design of shapes that defy the laws of Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometry. • Function program: This means that the building does not function correctly, as the horizontal plans include errors in the axes of movement, ventilation, or the design of spaces , which renders the functional program absurd. • Materials: The absurdity of materials involves the use of heterogeneous materials or those that emit gases harmful to humans and the environment. • Scale: It is intended to use a proportion that is not commensurate with the building's function or the city's general character. • Enclosure: It refers to a design that contradicts the urban fabric in terms of its nature, shape, size, or materials, making it an anomalous urban fabric.
(Hasnain & Rana, 2020)	The study discussed the orientations of absurd architecture: • Absurdity as a human need: The concept transformed with the involvement of Camus, as he defined absurdity as it "the confrontation between human need and the unreasonable silence of the world", and absurdity is the driving force of life in a simple society, where it results in slums that have two characteristics, namely: Place Unfinished, Place Unbecoming. • Absurdity as a design behaviour: Soren Kierkegaard explained absurdity as "something that goes against logical reasoning"; However, this separation does not mean the absence of a goal, in which the result is achieved but in an incomprehensible way. it can be found in the work of Architect Douglas Darden, who, in his work "Condemned Building", turns common notions of architecture on their head on a quest to rediscover architecture.
(Fross et al., 2016)	The study clarified two main approaches to design: • Absurd approach: an ignorant attitude to designing and making decisions based on subjective views, with a primary focus on the artistic side of architectural works, relying on superficial inspirations and self-ego in the design process. • Scientific Approach: Professional preparation of the pre-design phase, based on knowledge directly derived from assessments of the built environment and its users, encompassing the full scheme. Of course, the second approach does not preclude the creation of the architect's work and the designer's self-realization. Refer to Figure 3 for further details.

The Cognitive subtraction of the study

| (Narayanan, 2014) | The study classified the types of absurdity in architecture, which are:
• Functional absurdity: it refers to creating stunning structures without considering their function, harmony with the surrounding environment, local climate, or cost. For example, the design of the unprotected entrance to the Mogar Library was compromised by the cold weather in Boston, making this entrance unusable. Therefore, the entrance was permanently closed, and a new one was designed.
• Structural absurdity: It refers to designing buildings that waste structural resources by creating a structure that does not function effectively. For example, the Falling Water project had structural problems, which created issues for the client and necessitated costly repairs over several years.
• Aesthetic absurdity: it means creating buildings that look very different from traditional buildings, which may not serve their intended purpose. For example, the Stata Center was designed by Frank Gehry. Despite the building's beauty, construction failures led to cracks and sewage issues that necessitated costly repairs. Note Figure (3). |
| **(Fedorov & Levikov, 2014)** | The study focused on the characteristics of the absurd architectural production and identified them as follows:
• The formation of the elements in an absurd form.
• Difficulty in understanding and perceiving.
• Spatial separation (different neighbourhoods in style, topologically and temporally contrasted).
• Dissonance in form and content.
• Multi-dimensional contradiction: for example, colour (light, dark), texture (soft, rough), design (symmetric, asymmetric), height (low, tall).
• The irrationality of design, including its huge scale, lack of windows, and alienation from the urban context. The architecture of the absurd should be considered a loss of sense in a part of the urban architectural landscape. The study also shows that the absurd architecture includes three levels:
  - Aesthetic category: (distortion of the archetype).
  - Logical element: (denial of rationality, disappearance of meaning).
  - Metaphysical phenomenon: (transcendence of reason).
Finally, the study clarified the ways of organizing the absurd architecture, which is: "Functional efficiency, structural organization, compatibility between architectural components and landscapes: garden design (green roofs), integration with the spatial context (There are no large absurd architectural spaces, as the natural architectural environment dampens the perturbation of sense-sphere)". |

The stages of the design process to reduce absurdity in architecture, Source: (Fross et al., 2016).
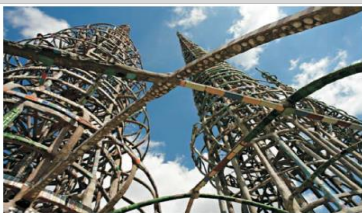
Structural absurdity	**Functional absurdity**	**Aesthetic absurdity**
Simon Rodia Watts Towers in Los Angeles, USA. Several of its windows detached from the building during 1972-1973. The failure of the glass was due to oscillations and repeated thermal stresses caused by the expansion and contraction of air between the inner and outer glass panels that formed each window. Therefore, all window panels will be replaced with heat-treated panels.	Entrance to the Pyramid of the Louvre Museum, Paris. it could not handle the huge number of visitors. Although the pyramid is aesthetically pleasing when viewed alone, it looks quite out of place in front of the Louvre Museum, with its classical architecture.	At the Guggenheim Museum in Spain, users suffered glare caused by sunlight reflected off the shimmering stainless-steel surfaces, which concentrated the light in a manner similar to a parabolic mirror. The resulting heat made some rooms unbearably warm, significantly increasing their air conditioning costs. It also created hot spots on adjacent sidewalks of up to 60 °C.

Types of absurdity in architecture, Source: (Narayanan, 2014).

Farmhouse in Austria (Use an optical illusion where stairs are oriented toward the void and masses are suspended without visual support, as well as utilize green roofs to reduce absurdity.		Upside-down house in Poland (Utilizing a structural system to mitigate the architectural absurdity of the concept).

Absurd architecture organizing ways, (Fedorov & Levikov, 2014).

Form	Function program	Material	Scale	Enclosure

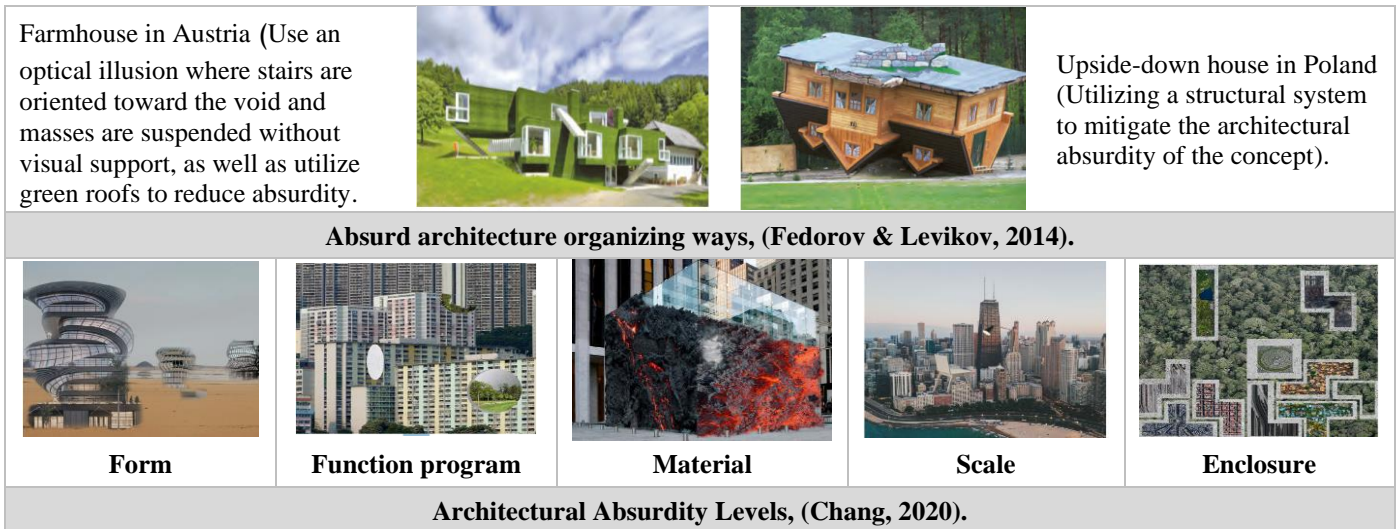**Architectural Absurdity Levels, (Chang, 2020).**

Figure 3. Indicators of absurd architecture.

The vocabulary of the main and secondary theoretical frameworks, as well as the possible values, can be crystallized as it was extracted from the knowledge framework and previous literature, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. A main and secondary vocabulary of the theoretical framework, Source: (Prepared by the authors based on: (Chang, 2020; Hasnain & Rana, 2020; Fross et al., 2016; Narayanan,2014; Fedorov & Levikov, 2014; Hjalmarsson, 2024; Samuels, 2020; Pearson, 2020).

Main Vocabulary			Secondary vocabulary and possible values		Symbol
Orientations of absurd architecture X.1	Absurdity as a design behavior X.1.1	Aesthetic absurdity	Distortion of the archetype		X.1.1.1
			A distortion of the laws of Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometry		X.1.1.2
			Metaphysical shapes		X.1.1.3
		Functional absurdity	Horizontal plane	Space location	X.1.1.4
				Space size	X.1.1.5
				Functional relationships	X.1.1.6
				Movement axes	X.1.1.7
				Ventilation	X.1.1.8
			Vertical plane	Floor levels	X.1.1.9
				Height building	X.1.1.10
		Structural absurdity	Cracks in the buildings		X.1.1.11
			Materials are heterogeneous or emit harmful gases		X.1.1.12
			Rapid burning structure		X.1.1.13
			Structures not resistant to side loads: wind, albumin.		X.1.1.14
	Absurdity as a human need X.1.2	Slums	Place Unfinished		X.1.2.1
			Place Unbecoming		X.1.2.2
		Refugee camps			X.1.2.3
characteristics of the absurd architectural production X.2	Absurd forms				X.2.1
	Difficulty in understanding and perceiving				X.2.2
	Spatial separation		Different neighbourhoods in style		X.2.3
			Topologically and temporally contrasted		X.2.4
	Dissonance in form and content				X.2.5
	Multi-dimensional contradiction		Design (symmetric, asymmetric)		X.2.6
			Texture (soft, rough)		X.2.7
			Colour (light, dark)		X.2.8
			Height (low, tall)		X.2.9
	The irrationality of design		Huge scale		X.2.10
			The lack of windows		X.2.11
			The alienation of the urban context		X.2.12
Absurd architecture organizing X.3	Functional efficiency				X.3.1
	Structural organization,				X.3.2
	Compatibility between architectural components and landscapes				X.3.3
	Integration with the spatial context				X.3.4

The adopted measurement will utilize a qualitative approach, wherein the vocabulary of absurd architecture will be evaluated in the selected projects using a checklist. This checklist will be completed by the authors, relying on data derived from previous literature. The variables will be assessed by determining whether each criterion is satisfied, with the symbol (1) representing verification and (0) representing non-verification, as presented in Table (4) and Figure (7).

4. Applications

4.1. Application To Samples

To verify the research hypothesis, it was formulated as follows: "Absurdity affects the designer." Either it is a design behaviour that increases the absurdity in human architecture, especially through its orientations and characteristics, or it is a human need, such as the existence of slums. Here, the absurd must be reduced by the ways of organizing architecture" the criteria for selecting projects included several aspects, the most important of which are:

- The selected projects belong to different spatial contexts and possess the necessary information and plans to describe and analyze them, thereby enhancing the desired research outcomes.
- The selected projects belong to an architect who believes in the absurdity of existence, "Rifat Chadirgi", so we will be able to measure the vocabulary of absurd architecture, including its orientations, characteristics, and methods of organization (Source: Authors).

4.1.1. The National Insurance Company in Mosul, 1966

Rafa'a Chadirji's obsession was how the building would have a "unique architectural language", with characteristics such as "brilliance", "regeneration", "modernity" & "change". Chadirji relied in his design on a set of design principles, namely:

- Metaphor: Chadirji relied on a metaphor from within the field of architecture, specifically from his project "The Union of Industries Building", where he separated the building's facades from its spaces, which caused a Westernization of the functional context, as well as borrowing the "semi-circular" arches from Al-Ukhaidir Palace to emphasize the spatial separation (Lee, 2017).
- Singularity and Rhythm: Chadirji employed unique architectural formations, including double walls, which allowed for design flexibility in window shape, dimensions, and placement. He also separated the building from its neighbours while using stone to ensure conformity (Al-Zubaie,2002). Although designed with absurdity as a positive design behaviour, granting it exclusivity, the building was bombed by ISIS and reduced to rubble. Thus, exploring organizational methods for rehabilitation is crucial, as structural absurdity—whether through self-collapse or external forces—embodies pathological negative absurdity (Daoud, 2018), as shown in Figure (4).

Positive absurdity "Metaphor, Singularity, Rhythm"

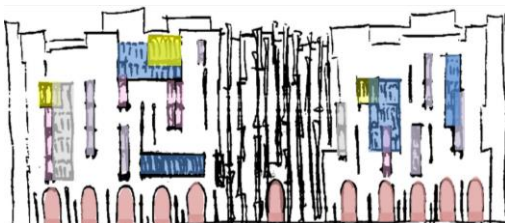**Negative absurdity "demolition, removal, destruction"**

Figure 4. The National Insurance Company, Source: (Daoud, 2018).

4.1.2. Tobacco Monopoly Headquarters in Baghdad, 1967

Chadirji believes the designs are transformations of regional forms through abstraction while emphasizing aesthetic values. Chadirji relied in his design on a set of design principles, namely:

- Simulation: Chadirji relied on Brutalist architecture, emphasizing the separation between the form and function of the building, and the use of heavy blocks, such as tower forms and curved surfaces, which made the building appear huge in scale (Košir, 2002, pp. 104-108).
- Metaphor: The building reinterprets elements and materials from the Ukhaidir Palace, incorporating them into its design. The careful arrangement of the building's Baghdadi brick walls, whitewashed concrete surfaces, and concrete balconies and windows serves multiple purposes: blocking direct sunlight, concealing the structure's scale, allowing for filtered light, and maintaining continuity with local architectural forms. While the building draws inspiration from local traditions, it simultaneously deviates from them, establishing its own distinct identity within the context of the surrounding environment (Youvan, 2024).
- Uniqueness: Chadirji relied on the sculptural design of the building, creating a contrast between the simplicity of the horizontal plan and the density of the vertical elements in the facades. The building was designed absurdly as a positive design behaviour that earned it uniqueness, including spatial separation, dissonance in form and content, huge scale, multi-dimensional contradiction through design (symmetric, asymmetric), texture (soft, rough), and Color (light, dark) (Al Asadi, 2020), as shown in Figure (5).
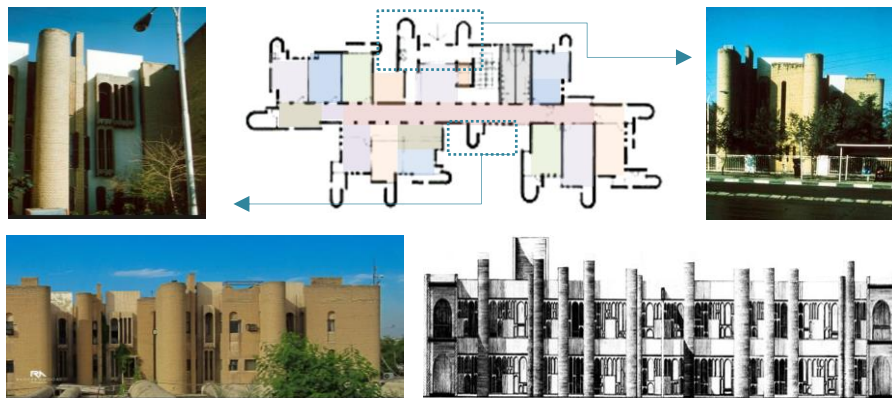

Figure 5. Tobacco Monopoly Headquarters, Source: (Al Asadi, 2020).

4.1.3. Federation of Industries in Baghdad, 1966

Chadirji's designs relied on abstracting the concepts and elements of traditional buildings and reconstructing them in contemporary forms. He also employed the architectural language of arches and monolithic piers that remind visitors of ancient Iraqi architectural history. Although his designs often incorporated vernacular elements, he frequently abstracted them and incorporated them into new, absurd forms. Chadirji relied in his design on a set of design principles, namely:

- Metaphor: Informed by the traditional Baghdadi house, the Federation of Industries building exemplifies Chadirji's approach to architectural form as a sculptural expression. During the design process, he concealed the building's scale and the monotony of its functional spaces by using a "flying wall." This wall functioned as a curtain, blocking direct sunlight and mitigating the overheating of interior spaces while also enhancing the building's aesthetic composition (Sharara, 2021; Blythe et al., 2016).
- Uniqueness: Two walls of the building are constructed as superimposed layers. The superimposed wall to the left is smaller and simpler, with one puncture at which a balcony is projected, paralleling another balcony on the same floor. The right wall is significantly larger and more animated, with various punctures from which the concrete balconies hang. The punctures & balconies arrangement is a reflection of the functional needs within the building. Notable is the use of yellow brick on the superimposed walls, differentiated from the white mosaic materiality of the wall beneath the building (Godlewski, 2016).

Although the building was designed according to absurdity as a positive design behaviour, which earned it exclusivity, the building was burned during the infamous (2003) lootings that took place around Iraq, which targeted public buildings, and the building is now in disuse (Al-Himdany,2020), as shown in Figure (6).
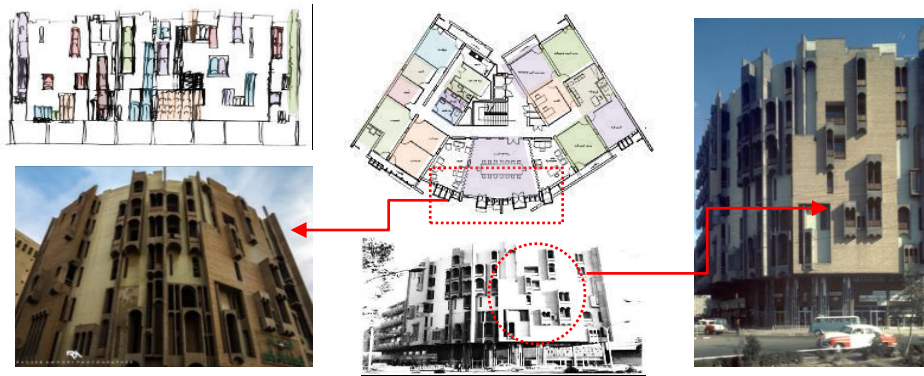

Figure 6. Federation of Industries, Source: (Al-Himdany, 2020).

4.2. Analyzing And Discussing the Results

The paragraph explains the most important indications of the results of the application on the selected samples:

- **Results of (Orientations of absurd architecture-X.1)**

Their percentage is (52%), the indicators (X.1.1.2- X.1.1.4- X.1.1.5- X.1.1.6- X.1.1.7) achieved (100%) in the projects, and the percentage of verification of indicator (X.1.1.14) decreased to (67%) in projects. In contrast, the existence of the indicators (X.1.1.1-X.1.1.3-X.1.1.8-X.1.1.9-X.1.1.10-X.1.1.11-X.1.1.12-X.1.1.13-X.1. 2.1-X.1.2.2-X.1.2.3) was not achieved.

- **Results of (Characteristics of the absurd architectural production-X.2)**

Its percentage (36%), the indicators (X.2.3-X.2.4-X.2.6-X.2.12) achieved (100%) in the projects, and the percentage of verification of the indicators (X.2.5- X.2.7-X.2.8-X.2.9-X.2.10) decreased to (67%,33%) respectively. While the indicators (X.2.1- X.2.2- X.2.11) did not achieve.

- **Results of (Absurd architecture organizing -X.3)**

Its ratio is (12%), and the indicators (X.3.1- X.3.2- X.3.3) achieved (100%) in the projects. While the indicator (X.3.4) did not achieve, as shown in Table 4 and Fig. 7.

Table 4. Analysis of projects: National Insurance Company (A), Tobacco Monopoly Headquarters (B), Federation of Industries(C), using a checklist (Source: Authors).

Symbol	X.1.1.1	X.1.1.2	X.1.1.3	X.1.1.4	X.1.1.5	X.1.1.6	X.1.1.7	X.1.1.8	X.1.1.9	X.1.1.10	X.1.1.11	X.1.1.12	X.1.1.13	X.1.1.14	X.1.2.1	X.1.2.2	X.1.2.3	X.2.1	X.2.2	X.2.3	X.2.4	X.2.5	X.2.6	X.2.7	X.2.8	X.2.9	X.2.10	X.2.11	X.2.12	X.3.1	X.3.2	X.3.3	X.3.4
A	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
B	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
C	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Total	0	3	0	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	0	3	3	3	3	0
Rate	0%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%	67%	100%	67%	67%	67%	33%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%
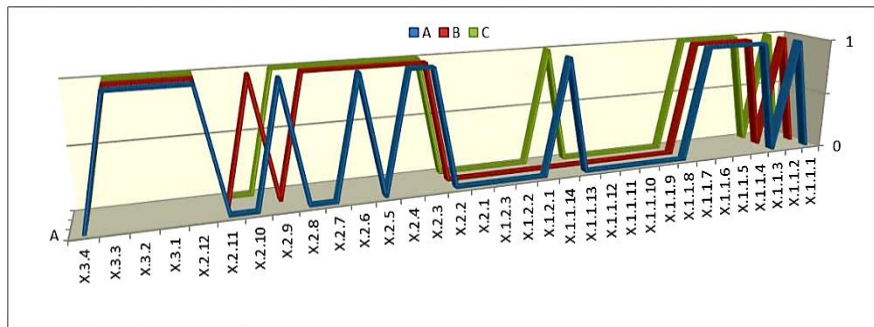
Qualitative Measurement:

Symbol (1) = verification
Symbol (0) = non-verification

Projects:
National Insurance Company= A.
Tobacco Monopoly Headquarters= B.
Federation of Industries= C.

Figure 7. Percentages of the theoretical framework vocabulary verification in the selected projects,

(Source: Authors, based on Excel software).

5. Conclusions

This paragraph deals with the most prominent conclusions that have been reached through the theoretical and practical sides, which are as follows:

- Absurdity in architecture emerges as a profound duality, intertwining the realms of creation and destruction. As a design behaviour, it transcends traditional models by reshaping them into metaphysical forms that resonate with the collective memory of society. These forms offer groundbreaking solutions across functional, aesthetic, and structural dimensions. They foster a sense of healing that extends beyond the physical structure, influencing both the user and the observer, creating spaces that nurture well-being and inspire reflection. In stark contrast, absurdity as a human behaviour manifest as a disruptive force, giving rise to slums. These environments, exemplified by refugee camps, become breeding grounds for social and spatial maladies, eroding the urban fabric and exacerbating a collective sense of illness.

- The practical analysis reveals a tendency among architects to prioritise. irrational designs, exaggerated forms, multidimensional contradictions, and large-scale concepts over spatial separation, often compromising the coherence of the urban fabric.

- In the context of Refaat Chadirji's projects, functional absurdity emerges as the dominant feature, characterised by innovative responses to utility that reimagine the relationship between form and function. Aesthetic absurdity, meanwhile, explores abstraction by distorting Euclidean and non-Euclidean geometries to provoke reflection. Structural absurdity, in turn, defies gravitational principles, serving not merely as an engineering achievement but as a philosophical exploration of architectural possibilities.

References

Al Asadi, A. A. (2020) 'Rifa'a Chadirji, in the forms of his buildings, tells the story of a text that places are accustomed to producing, but it comes transformed', Al-Faisal Magazine. Available at: https://www.alfaisalmag.com/?p=18700 (Accessed: 10 February 2025).

Al-Himdany, L. A. (2020). 'The Iraqi Federation of Industries: Al-Khullani Square Icon', Iraq's History, 5 December. Available at: https://iraqshistory.blogspot.com/2020/12/iraqi-federation-of-industries-and-its.html(Accessed:10 November 2022).

Al-Zubaie, L. M. (2002). The Architecture of Rifat Chadirji: Between Theory and Practice (Master's thesis). The University of Jordan, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Jordan.

Awad, A. M. M., Bakr, A. A., & Husain, A. (2014). The National Museums' Architecture between Designers' Vision and National Cultural Objectives: A Case Study of both the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the Grand Egyptian Museum. International Design Journal, 4(4). Available at: https://doi.org/10.21608/IDJ.2014.110727.

Ball, D. (2020). The use of tactical absurdity in (post-) conceptual art practice. PhD thesis, University of Southampton.

Blythe, M., Andersen, K., Clarke, R., and Wright, P. (2016) 'Anti-solutionist strategies: Seriously silly design fiction', Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, pp. 4968–4978.

Camus, A. (1955). The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays. (J. O'Brien, Trans.). Alfred A. Knopf.

Chang, Y. C. N. (2020). Paradoxical Architecture: An Argument for the Anti-logic and the Absurd. PhD Thesis, University of British Columbia, Canada. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0390673

Coetzer, N. (2010). 'Towards a dialogical design studio: Mediating absurdities in undergraduate architectural education in South Africa', South African Journal of Art History, 25(1), pp. 101–117.

Daoud, E. A. (2018) 'Insurance Building, Mosul Architectural Icon', Iraqi Economists Network. Available at: http://iraqieconomists.net/ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/1 (Accessed: 8 January 2022).

Farson, R. (1997). Management of the Absurd. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Fedorov, V. V., & Levikov, A. V. (2014). "Architecture of absurd (forms, positions, apposition)", Proceedings of Moscow State University of Civil Engineering / Vestnik MGSU, vol. 4, pp. 21–28.

Fross, K., Ujma-Wąsowicz, K., Wala, E., Winnicka-Jasłowska, D., Gumińska, A., Sitek, M., & Sempruch, A. (2016). "Architecture of absurd." In International Conference on Universal Access in Human-Computer Interaction,Springer,Cham,pp.251–261. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-402505_25.

Godlewski, J. (2016). 'The Absurd Alibi', The Plan Journal, 1(1), pp. 7–14. Available at: https://doi.org/10.15274/TPJ-2016-10002.

Hasnain, M., & Rana, J. A. (2020). "Becoming the unbecoming: An architectural manuscript of the Absurd." Experiential Design–Rethinking Relations between People, Objects, and Environments, pp. 225.

Hjalmarsson, P. V. (2024). This is a house; a linger in the wonder of absurd architecture (Master's thesis, Architecture and Planning Beyond Sustainability – MPDSD, Chalmers University of Technology). Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12380/308519.

Jaimes, D. D.(2015)."When art, architecture and commerce collided: The BEST Products Showrooms by SITE". ArchDaily. Available at: https://www.archdaily.com/777718/when-art-architecture-and-commerce-collided-the-best-products-showrooms-by-site (Accessed: 20 January 2025).

Kelly, S.S. (2021). Borderline Fictions: Spaces of Absurdity in the Korean Demilitarized Zone. PhD thesis, Carleton University.

Košir, F. (2002). 'The knot of absurdities', Urbani Izziv, 13(1), pp. 104–108. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/44180411 (Accessed: 25 February 2025).

Lee, J. (2017). Wash Dry: Exploration of design process inspired by Surrealism, Theatre of Absurd, and Creative Salvage. Master's thesis, School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of British Columbia.

Li, B. (2023). Experimenting with absurdity and uncanniness – all the unseen familiarities in the urban spaces. Master's thesis, Auckland University of Technology, School of Art & Design.

Miles, M. (2018). 'Written cities: Utopian fiction, spatial ordering, and absurdity', in The Routledge Companion on Architecture, Literature and The City. London: Routledge, pp. 120–135.

Narayanan, N. (2014) 'Can Architecture be Absurd?'. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/9766499/ Can_Architecture_be_Absurd (Accessed: 5 October 2021).

Pearson, L. C. (2020). 'A machine for playing in: Exploring the videogame as a medium for architectural design'. Design Studies, 66, pp. 114–143. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2019.11.005.

Samuels, B. (2020). 'Mind the Gap: Architecture and the Absurdity of Self-Imposed Limitation',

Architectural Design, 90(2), pp. 66–73. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.2548.

Sharara, B. (2021). Rifat Chadirji. Dar Al-Mada Publishing.

Silvia, C. (2016). The Absurd Enspaced. PhD Thesis, College of Architecture, University of Hawaii at Manoa, United States.

Simone, A., &Wexler, E. (Eds.). (2017). Absurd Thinking: Between Art and Design. Lars Müller Publishers.

Sun, H-A. (2021). Design Methods of Absurd Architecture: To Discuss the Relationship Between Rationality and Blind Test. Master's thesis, National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University.

Youvan, D.C. (2024). The Geometry of Absurdity: Mathematical Explorations of the Impossible. Self-published via ResearchGate. Available at: https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.11025.03680 (Accessed: 21 March 2025).