

**Branding of Cities: Recognizing the antecedents of branding Al-dhahirah  
Region of Oman- A Qualitative Study**

**Dr. Bijja Vishwanath**

Lecturer, College of Economics and Business Administration, University of Technology  
and Applied Science, Sultanate of Oman

**Ms. Safiya Al-Hamdi**

Head of section (HR), College of Economics and Business Administration, University of  
Technology and Applied Science, Sultanate of Oman

**Dr. Abed Ali Mohammed**

Lecturer, College of Economics and Business Administration, University of Technology  
and Applied Science, Sultanate of Oman

**Dr. Zubaida Hashmi**

Lecturer, College of Economics and Business Administration, University of Technology  
and Applied Science, Sultanate of Oman

**Abstract:**

Oman is a country with diversity, competitiveness. It is the land of opportunities. Like any other national governments, the Sultanate of Oman takes pride in preparing the blueprint for its citizens. The government has emphasized on various key sectors such as agriculture, mining, urban planning, travel and tourism, rural development, clean energy, water resource management etc. The present study aims to analyze the role and contribution of AL-dahrah Governorate in achieving ‘Oman Vision 2040.’ Human capital, environment, socio-economic developments, regional balance, trade and commerce activities are central in this regard. The study is significant as it deals with the sustainable and all-inclusive development for the Sultanate of Oman.

**Keywords:** *Sustainable Growth, Resource Management, Sultanate of Oman, Oman Vision 2040, Infrastructure, Mining*

**1. Introduction**

Oman is a country with diversity, competitiveness. It is the land of opportunities. Like any other national governments, the Sultanate of Oman takes pride in preparing the blueprint for its citizens. The government has emphasized on various key sectors such as agriculture, mining, urban planning, travel and tourism, rural development, clean energy, water resource management etc. (Al-Shidhani, Al-Harthy & Al-Zadjali, 2022). The present study aims to analyze the role and contribution of AL-dahrah Governorate in achieving ‘Oman Vision 2040.’ Human capital, environment, socio-economic developments, regional balance, trade and commerce activities are central in this regard. The study is significant as it deals with the sustainable and all-inclusive development for the Sultanate of Oman. This vision encompasses a multi-faceted approach to development, targeting economic diversification, human capital enhancement, environmental sustainability, and governance. This comprehensive strategy responds to global economic trends, technological

advancements, and socio-political shifts, intending to position Oman as a pivotal player in the regional and global arena (Al-Mazrouei et al., 2023).

## **2. Background of Study**

Al-Dahrah Governorate, located in the north-western part of Oman, has emerged as a significant contributor to these national aspirations. Known for its agricultural productivity, unique geographical features, and rich cultural heritage, Al-Dahrah plays a pivotal role in Oman's socio-economic fabric (Al-Maashari & Al-Sulaimi, 2023). Its strategic location, bordering the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, adds to its significance as a hub for trade and commerce, further enhancing its potential in aligning with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 (Al-Hajri & Al-Saadi, 2021).

## **3. Importance of Study:**

The role of regional contributions in achieving national development goals cannot be overstated. Al-Dahrah's diverse economic base, encompassing agriculture, trade, tourism, and industry, provides a microcosmic view of the broader economic diversification envisaged in Oman Vision 2040 (Ministry of Economy, Sultanate of Oman, 2020). Studying Al-Dahrah offers insights into the interplay between local governance, resource management, and economic planning within the framework of national objectives. Al-Dahrah's agricultural practices and resource management strategies provide a case study in balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship. Al-Dahrah's rich cultural heritage and its integration into modern economic activities underscore the role of cultural identity in sustainable development, aligning with the vision's goals of preserving and promoting Omani culture (Al-Saleh & Al-Habsi, 2022).

## **4. Objectives of Study**

- a) To analyze the economic sectors in Al-Dahrah, identifying key drivers of growth and their alignment with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040
- b) To assess Al-Dahrah's practices in sustainable resource management and their contributions to the environmental goals of Oman Vision 2040
- c) To examine the role of Al-Dahrah's cultural and social initiatives in fostering a cohesive and inclusive society, as envisioned in Oman Vision 2040

## **5. Research Methodology**

This research aims to illuminate the pivotal role of Al-Dahrah Governorate in advancing Oman Vision 2040, offering a detailed analysis of its economic, environmental, and cultural contributions to the nation's ambitious developmental agenda (Al-Shidhani et al., 2022). The study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. It involves in-depth interviews with local government officials, industry leaders, and community stakeholders to gather insights into the region's strategic planning and contributions to Oman Vision 2040.

## **6. Discussion**

**AL-dahrah governorate strategic planning initiatives to achieve Oman vision 2040**

- **Economic Growth:** By 2040, Al Dhahirah Governorate is expected to witness significant economic growth, particularly in sectors such as logistics, engineering applications, food processing, and advanced agriculture.
- **Economic Diversification:** There will be a focus on accelerating economic diversification, integration, and harmony between different economic sectors and activities, benefiting from improved communication technologies and transportation infrastructure.
- **City Transformation:** Ibri will transform into a vibrant city, serving as a regional center with attractive residential environments, housing a substantial population and featuring production and logistical sectors supporting the oil and gas industry.
- **Education and Technology Development:** Emphasis will be placed on developing higher education areas, establishing technology complexes, and fostering innovation through business incubators.
- **Heritage Preservation and Tourism:** Efforts will be made to develop and highlight important heritage sites, while also activating the tourism sector in the governorate, all while preserving the natural beauty of mountainous areas (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahrouqi, 2021).
- **Support for Food Security:** Dhank will play a crucial role in supporting the national food security system through development in agricultural production, manufacturing, distribution, and trade of agricultural products.
- **Urban Planning and Environment:** Urban expansion will be controlled to prevent scattered urban sprawl, with a focus on enhancing the quality of the built environment, maintaining the natural landscape aesthetics, and providing shaded public spaces (Al-Rawahi & Al-Azri, 2021).
- **Water Resource Management:** Efforts will be made to efficiently manage water resources, reduce waste, and increase awareness about water rationalization and environmental preservation to support traditional farming and industrialization.
- **Sustainable Development Strategy:** The development plans align with Oman Vision 2040 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on sustainable growth, economic competitiveness, social well-being, and environmental protection.
- **Challenges and Solutions:** Challenges facing the governorate include excessive land consumption, urban sprawl, inadequate industrial and service sectors, limited educational and community services, weak tourism activity, and depletion of water resources. Solutions involve strategic urban planning, economic diversification, education and technology development, heritage preservation, and sustainable resource management.
- **Transportation Policy:** Developing public transportation, strengthening road networks, augmenting safety, and using contemporary technologies to ensure sustainability and efficiency.

- **Mineral and Mining Policy:** Preserving the environment and cultural heritage while balancing the extraction of minerals, with a particular emphasis on approved mining sites.
- **Promotion of Rural Development:** This includes fostering business ventures in rural regions, protecting local cultural traditions, and practicing sustainable resource management.
- **Heritage preservation:** Refers to measures taken to save cultural resources, advertise UNESCO sites, and maintain old buildings and landscapes.
- **Energy-related Policies:** Switching to renewable energy sources, such wind and solar, in order to improve energy security and lower carbon emissions.
- **Infrastructure development:** Refers to spending on solar farms, smart grids, and transportation networks in order to promote sustainability and economic growth.

#### A] Major Reforms

- **Regional Urban Strategy Objectives:** The regional urban strategy for Al Dhahirah Governorate aims to support the development of modern logistics activities, technical productive industries, and food manufacturing to contribute to national food security. It also seeks to support industrial and service activities related to the oil and gas sector.
- **Aspirations for Urban Development:**
  - Reducing undirected urban sprawl and concentrating growth in major urban centres.
  - Enhancing Ibri's role as a regional economic, educational, and social centre.
  - Supporting urban orientation through effective land use and increased urban densities.
  - Establishing necessary infrastructure networks to efficiently connect major urban areas and neighboring countries.
  - Designating Dhank as a service and food production centre and establishing a commercial agricultural area.
  - Enhancing Yanqul's position as a center for the mining industry and developing its service role for associated manufacturing industries.
  - Establishing a service center in Yanqul to serve rural communities and support tourism in sensitive environmental areas.
  - Managing urban growth to preserve local character and facilitate infrastructure development and public transportation.
- **Rural Community Development:** The strategy aims to support and develop rural communities while preserving their character and natural components, focusing on local management initiatives for tourism and highlighting natural and cultural landmarks.

- **Preservation of Environment and Heritage:** There is a focus on preserving the natural, historical, and heritage environment through urban planning and development standards.
- **Public Policy Framework:**
  - The regional urban strategy is supported by a public policy framework consisting of seven main axes, including sustainable development, achieving strategic urban development, growth and prosperity, environmental management, natural resources management, an efficient transportation system, and effective infrastructure.
- **Sustainable Development and Climate Change Policies:**
  - Policies related to sustainable development and climate change include preserving groundwater resources, promoting advanced agriculture, investing in renewable energy sources, avoiding urban development in flood-risk areas, adopting sustainable design and construction standards, and developing public facilities to mitigate the heat island effect.

#### **The governorate's regional urban strategy**

- **Urban Development Challenges:** The low density and sparseness of the population centres in Al Dhahirah Governorate result in a greater reliance on private automobiles because of the distance between residential neighbourhoods and essential services.
- **Unplanned Urban Expansion:** In cities like Dhank and Ibri, haphazard urban expansion has resulted in disconnected, dispersed structures. This calls for the building of costly and impractical infrastructure.
- **Need for Reconsideration of Residential property Allocation:** To achieve more sustainable development, it is necessary to increase density in urban settlement plans and reevaluate the procedures for assigning residential property.
- **Adopted Urban Development Policies:**
  - Population hierarchy
  - Containment of urban growth
  - Meeting future development requirements
  - Strengthening urban transformation processes
  - Developing smart cities
  - Providing community services and facilities
  - Strengthening rural communities
  - Encouraging social cohesion and preserving the Omani identity
  - Controlling development in unsuitable areas
  - Determining planning areas of a special nature

- Creating a more sustainable and greener urban environment
- Promoting urban development
- **Population Growth:** By 2040 AD, Ibri's population is projected to reach 130,000, and Yanqul and Dhank are also likely to see notable increases in population.
- **Population Centre Hierarchy:** The governorate's population centres are arranged as follows: Ibri is the regional centre, Dhank and Yanqul are service centres, and then there are main and minor rural centres as well as additional rural villages.
- **Control of Urban expansion:** To ensure that future development requirements are satisfied and to prevent urban sprawl, boundaries have been established to control urban expansion within the major metropolitan districts. Urban expansion is regulated in inappropriate locations and planned progressively.

## **B] Promoting Rural Development**

### **1. Encouraging Rural Development:**

- a. Building stronger rural communities by bringing in relevant economic activities, such as eco-tourism and agriculture, to provide jobs locally.
- b. Encouraging rural and Bedouin populations to participate in local planning processes in order to maintain the Omani identity and improve social cohesion.

### **2. Hajar Mountains Special Planning Area:**

- a. The Hajar Mountains region has been designated as a planning area of special nature in order to strike a balance between economic development and the preservation and management of significant natural and historic environmental resources.

### **3. Strategies for Economic Growth:**

- Enacting laws to promote economic expansion, double the size of the labour force, lessen reliance on foreign labour, and boost productivity.
- Determining the specific boundaries of business and employment, assigning regions for economic activity, boosting competitiveness, and fortifying funding sources.
- **Development of Rural Ecotourism:**
  - Developing local tourism activities in the Hajar Mountains to create new job opportunities, increase income, and reduce rural migration towards major urban centers.
- **Protection of Natural Resources:**

- Adopting policies to protect the terrestrial environment, including establishing an integrated network to protect biological, geological, and landscape diversity.
- Preserving high-value natural resources such as the Hajar Mountains through proper management and sustainable development activities.

#### **4. Reduction of Environmental Pollution:**

- Putting policies into place to lessen pollution in the environment by keeping an eye out for possible pollution hotspots, identifying them, and taking the appropriate corrective action.

#### **5. Desired Objectives:**

- Objectives include setting aside area for industrial parks, commercial districts, and technical gardens; they also involve establishing new natural reserves with plans for environmental management.

In order to achieve balanced and prosperous growth by 2040, the Al Dhahirah Governorate's regional urban strategy primarily focuses on sustainable development, economic growth,

#### **Mechanism to protect cultural heritage of the region**

- Policies for Protecting Cultural assets:
- Designating regions for the preservation of cultural assets and promoting UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- preservation of historic structures, a variety of natural and cultural landscapes, and Omani social and cultural customs.
- **The objective of the urban development strategy** is to safeguard cultural heritage assets by designating certain locations for preservation. There are eighteen such areas spread over the Al Dhahirah Governorate. These areas are classified as historical monuments.

- **Encouraging the Cultural and Archaeological Legacy:**

Initiatives to promote UNESCO World Heritage sites, like the Bat, Al-Khutm, and Al-Ain archaeological sites, which include the creation of parks and visitor centres to draw attention to their historical significance and boost tourism.

- Creation of dedicated tourism routes that link historical sites in several governorates.
- **Adoption of policies for the management of natural resources**, such as pollution control, flood risk management, and groundwater depletion monitoring, in order to safeguard water supplies.
- To assist the agricultural, industrial, and mineral extraction sectors, place a strong emphasis on managing water resources sustainably and utilising more renewable and unconventional water sources.

Al Dhahirah Governorate's regional urban strategy, taken as a whole, places a strong emphasis on sustainable resource management, cultural heritage promotion and preservation, and sustainable economic growth.

### **C] Food Security Policy**

The majority of the tiny farms in the Al Dhahirah Governorate are dependent on flood irrigation and have an area of little more than five acres. The majority of their output is meant for consumption by nearby families. Just 35% of all agricultural areas are used for crop cultivation. Given that Al Dhahirah Governorate has a great deal of potential to serve as the Sultanate's internal food supply and a significant contribution to national food security. Given the governorate's substantial groundwater reserve (the Al Masarat Basin) and the availability of large tracts of arable land, the National Urban Development Strategy has designated it as one of the areas with the capacity to support food security for the Sultanate.

#### **Objectives of food security policy**

- **Food security policy:**
- Securing arable land and designating priority regions for the establishment of commercial farms are two aspects of food security policies.
- Enhancing current small farms to raise output and efficiency.
- Reforming the agriculture industry to address issues brought on by small farms, such as providing assistance to agricultural associations.
- Creating grazing techniques to protect grassland ecosystems and the livestock industry.
- **Priority Areas for Agricultural Investments:** Wadi Dhank, Wadi Sumhan, and Wadi Al Ain have been designated as the areas where agricultural growth investments should be directed first.
- Wadi Sumhan has been set aside expressly for the purpose of developing sophisticated agriculture connected to Dhank's food and beverage production industry.
- **Desired Goals of Food Security Policies by 2040:**
- Protecting 380 km<sup>2</sup> of pastures.
- Achieving a 50% usage of modern agricultural irrigation techniques.

Overall, the focus is on ensuring food security through strategic allocation of arable land, development of farming practices, and targeted investments in priority agricultural areas.

### **D] Mineral and Mining Policy**

**Minerals and Mining Policy:** The Hajar Mountains, which are rich in biological and geological diversity as well as historical values, contain the majority of Al Dhahirah Governorate's mineral resources.



- The regional urban strategy seeks to strike a balance between the extraction of mineral reserves and the preservation of the natural and cultural environment.
- The two primary mining operations in the industry are three small, licenced copper mines and small-scale silica extraction.

### **Policy Highlights:**

- locating potential mining and quarrying sites close to Yanqul, a region well-known for its rich supply of marble, chromium, and copper minerals.
- making certain that mining operations outside of approved zones abide by environmental laws in order to safeguard cultural heritage and natural resources.

### **Objectives for Mining and Minerals Policies by 2040:**

- Safeguarding 166 km<sup>2</sup> of land set aside for mining operations.

### **E] Transportation Policy**

The transportation policies outlined in the governorate's regional urban strategy are intended to facilitate economic diversification and growth both nationally and locally. They do this by establishing flexible, durable transportation networks with ample capacity that offer a variety of efficient, safe, and sustainable modes of transportation, all at the appropriate level. Considering the anticipated rise in the governorate's need for transport services.

#### **New plans for urban and rural road works**

**1. Urban and Rural Road Network:** To ease traffic congestion and enhance safety, three bypass routes were established around Ibri.

- A focus on evaluating the social, economic, and environmental effects of any planned highways that cross protected areas.
- To improve the efficiency of truck traffic, modern technologies will be used, one of which will be the security of the railway route that passes through the governorate.

**2. Promotion of Public Transportation:** Providing on-demand transportation services, establishing new regional bus routes, and raising bus frequency are some of the steps being taken to decrease the usage of private vehicles.

- Put an emphasis on using technology to improve user experience through smartphone applications, public transit operations, and network monitoring and management.
- **Safety and Sustainability:**
  - Promoting active transportation by making public areas better for bicyclists and pedestrians.
  - Seek to lower the death rate by 65% by implementing more stringent traffic safety regulations.

**3. Infrastructure Development:** Energy policies seek to encourage the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, with the objective of achieving 53% renewable energy production by 2040.

- The construction of solar farms and energy storage facilities in allocated regions to support the generation of renewable energy.
- Converting the electrical grid to a smart network in order to increase dependability and efficiency.

In order to support population and economic growth in the Al Dhahirah Governorate, the strategy's main objectives are to transition to renewable energy sources, improve road safety, promote sustainable mobility, and improve transportation infrastructure.

## 7. Findings of Study

Mineral development of Oman: Key Takeaways from the Meeting:

- **Copper Mining Activities:** There is a significant ongoing copper mining activities in Yunqul, which is the highest in Oman, with production reaching 22.9 metric tons.
- **Abundance of Minerals:** Chromite is abundantly available in the Al-Dahrah region, indicating potential for mineral resource exploitation.
- **Potential Sectors for Development:** There is a potential of the Al-Dahrah region in various sectors including food security, oil and natural gas, copper/chromite mining, and tourism, owing to its close connectivity to Saudi Arabia.
- **Utilization of Sohar Port:** Despite the region's lack of coastal access, Sohar Port's proximity offers an opportunity for trade and economic growth.
- **Infrastructure Development:** While road connectivity is satisfactory, there's a need for additional infrastructure such as motels, shopping malls, and parks to attract local and international tourists.
- **Call for Long-term Master Plan:** There is a necessity for a long-term master plan to ensure comprehensive and sustainable growth in the region, as current development efforts are fragmented.
- **Enhancing Perception and Connectivity:** Efforts should be made to change the perception of the region being remote and solely close to the Saudi border. Utilizing its proximity to Saudi Arabia, Dubai, and UAE for regional development is crucial.
- **Focus on International Connectivity:** There is a need to focus on enhancing international connectivity and exploring new trade routes along the coastal border of Oman, particularly through Sohar and Salalah, which could greatly benefit the development of Al-Dahrah region.
- **Creating Unique Selling Proposition (USP):** Emphasis on creating a unique identity for Al-Dahrah through initiatives like preserving local heritage, organizing festivals, and hosting specialized activities to attract tourists and create a strong community bond.

- **Diversification of Activities:** Planned activities in the region should be diverse and unique, focusing on food, cultural festivals, sports events, art exhibitions, and other crowd-gathering activities to establish a distinct USP.
- **Potential for Employment and Growth:** The meeting concluded with recognition of Al-Dahrah's potential for employment generation, agricultural growth, tourism, and food security, highlighting its importance for Oman's overall development.

- **Halli burton**

**Key Takeaways from the Halliburton Meeting:**

- **Oil and Gas Production:** Al-Dahrah region primarily focuses on drilling and production of oil and natural gas, contributing significantly to overall production with 35% output from the region.
- **Government Cooperation:** Strong cooperative relationship with government departments and officials, ensuring prompt response to requirements.
- **Infrastructure:** While infrastructure facilities like hospitals and road connectivity are good, there is room for improvement to meet the increasing needs of the industry.
- **Industrial Shift:** Due to the operational Madayn Industrial City, some industries have relocated from Fahud to Ibri.
- **Human Resources and Education:** Satisfied with the quality and quantity of human resources, as well as the curriculum of academic institutions, which covers practical knowledge and keeps up with advancements in technologies like AI, big data, and machine learning.
- **Cooperation with Saudi Arabia:** Emphasis on further cooperation with Saudi Arabia through joint ventures and other collaborative efforts.
- **Improvement in Ancillary Units:** Ancillary units such as rubber and vehicle garages in Al-Dahrah region need further improvement compared to Nizwa and Sohar.
- **Community Engagement:** Advocacy for more community engagement initiatives to raise awareness and local participation in fulfilling HR requirements.
- **Marketing and Regional Development:** There's a need for enhanced marketing efforts to showcase regional development and available opportunities.
- **Hub for Specific Industries:** Suggestion to focus on making Ibri region a hub for pharmaceuticals, electronics, and solar equipment.
- **Additional Infrastructure:** Recognizing the need for more infrastructure such as shopping malls, entertainment facilities, and hotels/motels to attract both internal and external tourists.
- **Madayn**

**Key Takeaways from the Meeting:**

- **Ibri Industrial City Overview:** Madayn presented Ibri Industrial City as a strategically located hub for various commercial, industrial, and service activities, providing promising investment opportunities. The city offers an integrated lifestyle and stable environment for families, along with social cohesion.
- **Strategic Location:** Ibri Industrial City's central location in Oman connects it with various cities regionally, making it accessible and facilitating investment.
- **Integration with Leading Sectors:** Madayn works with local talents and resources to keep pace with modern developments, enhancing workflow and contributing to industrial leadership with integrated societies.
- **Abundance of Minerals and Rocks:** Al-Dhahirah region is rich in minerals and rocks, offering ample opportunities for development. However, there's a lack of facilities to process raw materials into finished products locally, leading to their export to other regions for processing.
- **Completion Status of Ibri Industrial City:** As of January 18, 2024, 97% of the work on Ibri Industrial City has been completed. It offers various facilities such as workshops, warehouses, and offices with incentives for new entrepreneurs and startups provided by the government through Madayn.
- **Facilities and Incentives:** Ibri Industrial City offers a range of facilities including low-rent complexes, staff accommodation, sports facilities, and petrol stations. Government privileges include fewer formalities, tax benefits, and export/import facilities for new businesses.
- **Solar Panel Implementation:** Solar panels are installed to reduce electricity expenses, contributing to sustainable energy practices.
- **Connectivity and Transportation:** Ibri Industrial City benefits from its proximity to six nearby oil fields and improved transportation infrastructure, reducing travel time between Saudi Arabia and Oman.
- **Potential Development in Al-Dhahirah:** Madayn expressed concerns about the lack of entertainment facilities in Al-Dhahirah, emphasizing the need to attract people for regional development, which could spur opportunities in employment, entertainment, healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

### UTAS-IBRI

Key Takeaways from the Meeting:

- **Perception of Oman and Al-Dhahirah:**
  - Oman is associated with oil, marbles, agriculture, chromium, and rich cultural heritage.
  - Ibri lacks some of these resources found in other parts of Oman but is known for oil, gas, and natural resources.
  - Suggestions were made to seek opinions from nationals of other countries to gather diverse perspectives.

- **Experience in Other GCC Regions:**
  - Visitors appreciate the infrastructure and modern amenities but dislike the lack of cultural or religious identity in development.
  - Ibbi lacks proper hotels and malls, leading people to travel to other cities for entertainment and shopping.
  - Suggestions include improving modern lifestyle amenities, infrastructure, malls, roads, and parks, aligning with the strategic plan of the governor.
- **Unique Features of Al-Dhahirah:**
  - Unique features include mountains, deserts, mining activities, and a low cost of living.
  - Different lifestyles exist in cities, mountains, and deserts within the region.
  - Suggestions were made to develop transportation links with Saudi Arabia, build ports, warehouses, and cold storage facilities, and improve logistics for better supply chain management.
  - There's potential to promote festivals, snow-capped mountains, and scenic views but lacking transportation and housing facilities.
- **Action Points:**
  - Preparation of a topic presentation to be presented to the Governor, Chamber of Commerce, and Ministry of Tourism for input and support.
  - Collaborative efforts are suggested for development planning, with involvement from various stakeholders.

## **8. Conclusion**

All of the above discussion shows that Al-dahrah Governorate plays a significant role in shaping the future of Oman and has a great deal of contribution in the forms of socio-economic development, infrastructure, agriculture, mining, cultural diversity, urban planning, tourism. This research aims to illuminate the pivotal role of Al-Dahrah Governorate in advancing Oman Vision 2040, offering a detailed analysis of its economic, environmental, and cultural contributions to the nation's ambitious developmental agenda.

## **References:**

- Al-Mazrouei, A., Al-Balushi, S., & Al-Kindi, M. (2023). Economic diversification in Oman: Strategies and outcomes in the Al-Dahrah Governorate. *Journal of Middle Eastern Economics*, 15(2), 124-139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-2545-1>
- Al-Shidhani, S., Al-Harthy, S., & Al-Zadjali, H. (2022). Sustainable agriculture in Oman: Practices and policies in the Al-Dahrah Governorate. *Sustainability*, 14(10), 6038. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14106038>

Al-Rawahi, H., & Al-Azri, F. (2021). Tourism development in Al-Dahrah: Challenges and opportunities under Oman Vision 2040. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 23(8), 1089-1101. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2468>

Al-Saleh, K., & Al-Habsi, Y. (2022). Cultural heritage and economic development: The case of Al-Dahrah Governorate. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 12(1), 81-96. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-08-2021-0118>

Ministry of Economy, Sultanate of Oman. (2020). Oman Vision 2040: Strategic framework and implementation roadmap. <https://www.moe.gov.om/vision2040>

Al-Hajri, M., & Al-Saadi, A. (2021). Environmental sustainability and resource management in Al-Dahrah Governorate: Aligning with Oman Vision 2040. *Environmental Development*, 40, 100647. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envdev.2021.100647>

Al-Kharusi, N., & Al-Habsi, M. (2022). Economic impact of trade policies in Al-Dahrah: Implications for Oman Vision 2040. *Journal of Economic Policy Reform*, 25(1), 83-99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17487870.2020.1836886>

Al-Maashari, A., & Al-Sulaimi, H. (2023). Role of local governance in regional development: A case study of Al-Dahrah Governorate. *Public Administration and Development*, 43(3), 193-207. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2004>

Al-Harathi, S., & Al-Mahrouqi, I. (2021). Sustainable tourism practices in Al-Dahrah: Enhancing regional contribution to Oman Vision 2040. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(5), 776-792. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1844296>

Al-Busaidi, S., & Al-Kindi, H. (2022). Human capital development in Al-Dahrah Governorate: Contributions to the objectives of Oman Vision 2040. *Education and Training*, 64(7), 915-931. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-03-2021-0095>