

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON THE LEVEL OF FAMILY INCOME, THE COUNTRYSIDE OF AL-MUWAFQIAH SUB-DISTRICT AS A MODEL IN IRAQ

Ali Hussein Muhammed Al-Janabi and Mohammed Dhahir Latif

College of Agricultural Engineering Sciences, University of Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract - The rural development process is one of the important priorities of rural communities that seek development and progress, and the importance of this relationship lies in its effective role in reducing the continuing gap between them. Nature of these relations has an effect on the distribution of the population and the level of culture and production in proportion to the type of policies followed. The current study aims to investigate the effects of urbanization on the rural families size, educational and academic level, economic level, and the amount of monthly income, depending on a field study sample of (200) families of rural families residing in the villages of Al-Muwafaqiah district in Wasit city, Iraq Governorate. The current study concluded that the social and economic aspect of the population of the study area was affected by the development policy, relationship with the nearby urban areas. This was demonstrated by high rates of educational attainment for secondary and university education (10.5%) for each. It was also note that there is a diversity in the sources of monthly income. although, agriculture represents the largest percentage of income sources for the people (74.5%), but It was found that the sources of government jobs began to rise, to reach (22.5%) with registration of some other sources, and an increase in the level of monthly income of the residents of the study area.

Keyword: rural development, income level, agriculture, Muwafaqiah district.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the countryside and the city is interconnected and each one effects on the other, and the nature of this relationship between them may be change from one place to another, but some things are considered constants in all regions and do not change for both rural and urban, such as land uses, livelihoods and the prevailing professions.

The relationship between rural and urban has many effects and generated a kind of confusion in both region through the rapid growth of the city, exacerbation of migration from the countryside to the city for economic, social and cultural reasons, in order to obtain the services that provided by the city and improve the level of income and living style. This has led to an increase in demand and pressure on services and a decline within cities, mixing of cultures and social customs, emergence a group of non-urban social phenomena, and spread random housing and slums within cities. On the other hand, migration generated a large gap in rural development by emptying the countryside of workforce, deteriorating agriculture and disrupting the economic system, which in turn caused a clear shortage in the provision of food requirements and basic raw materials for both trade and industry.

RESEARCH PROBLEM:

The lack of interest in the countryside and the failure to advance the social and economic situation was the cause of a development gap that led to the deterioration of the countryside. A decline in the economic level, forcing most of the rural population to search for other sources of income to improve the economic level in line with their needs and requirements of development and modernity. All this factors caused negatively affected in the nature of rural areas and their way of living and production.

AIM OF THE STUDY:

Recognizing the importance of rural development in the Al-Muwafaqiah district and studying its effect on the level of income, nature of living, type of housing and the possession of agricultural land for the rural population in the study area.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS:

Adopting rural development to raise the standard of living of people in rural areas and improve the social and economic reality and income level of rural residents.

RESEARCH STRUCTURE:

To reach the objectives of the research and verify the hypothesis, the research included the following main topics:

- 1- Rural development, its important elements and how to measure it
- 2- Role of the rural community in achieving rural development
- 3- Effect of rural development on the income level
- 4- Income from non-agricultural activities

1- RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ITS IMPORTANT ELEMENTS AND HOW TO MEASURE IT:

Rural development is a set of social and economic efforts that aimed to encouraging growth and expansion in all areas that located outside the cities, in order to ensure an improvement in the quality of life for rural residents (Atkinson, 2017, P:3). Persistence many problems in rural areas, especially in developing countries which represented by poverty, difficulty in reaching to basic services and lack of political representation led to the neglect of vast agricultural areas and migration of large numbers of rural residents (Abreu, 2014, P:4). With these increasing problems in rural areas, the concept of rural development began with a set of measures to improve the quality of life, achieving economic well-being, maintaining population balance and agricultural activity in those areas. Considering on the traditional approach of rural development policies that focuses on agriculture and related activities as the main source of jobs and income (Caruso, et al., 2016, P:103). Successful rural development maintains the distinctive characteristics of each area and encourages them to stay in their areas and not move to neighboring cities through the improvement and diversification of income sources (Abrham J, et al., 2015, P455).

The main important elements of the rural development include the first element related to population in terms of density, prevalence, distribution and age of rural residents, which reflects the relationship between the total of population and workers proportion. The second element is the social, which is represented by the importance of the health and educational aspect in terms of academic achievement, number and type of educational and health services. The economic component represents the rate of employment and the level of income for the rural community, while the environmental component represents the set of environmental factors that affect the level of production and income (Michalek and Zarnekow, 2012, P:24). To measure rural development, it is necessary to develop tools capable of evaluating development in different regions. These tools are represented by measuring the amount of production, income, employment, investment, poverty level, quality of construction, tenure of agricultural lands that are considered as indicator of economic development. With other indicators that can be used to measure development, such as the human development index represented by the number of population, and the social development index, which represented by educational and health level, the use of the Internet and the nature of housing (Horsley, et al., 2015, P:370).

2- ROLE OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY IN ACHIEVING RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

There are increasing calls for the need for development policies that take into account the diversity of rural areas and enable local communities to identify their own needs and arrange priorities within development plans. Relying on the active members of the rural community as a main means to treat some problem that oppose rural communities, and in the end the active community will be responsible for reaching to the goals of the rural development plans (Ward and McNicholas, 1998, P:29). Integrated rural development policies have emerged which depend on binding the economic, social and environmental aspects as a continuous approach to comprehensive advancement of rural areas. Through it, rural communities will be arrangement and achieving the long-term sustainability and viability of these societies, Enhancing its capacity for economic growth opportunities through better mobilization of human resources and strengthening the role of the rural community in achieving the mechanisms and objectives of rural development (Bristow, 2000, P:20). The planning process for development rural areas must be start by the rural community and participation of farmers and residents of rural areas in expressing their opinion and developing plans. In the same time, focus on agriculture as one of the principle strategic components of rural development and starting the development project. The structure of rural community play the main role in maintaining positive attitudes, improving and maintaining the function of the created institutions, and creating better conditions in order to improve the quality of life and contribute to success of rural development. While a society that shows a negative attitude towards changes and refuse new opportunities presented to some of its members cannot provide a positive result (Cavaye, 2001,P:112). Improvement and development of rural areas based on the involvement all classes of rural society in the processes of initiating changes in rural areas. Encouraging them to participate locally in every aspect and decisions taken in relation to rural development, which affect the life and future of the community and the rural economy (Chifamba, 2013, P:3).

3- EFFECT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE INCOME LEVEL

Rural areas are important to the economy of all countries of the world, because of their importance that related to provision of food, crude materials, environmental and climate protection. However, they face major challenges represented by the lack of job opportunities and narrow scope of economic activities. This led to abandon of rural population their lands and increase migration to cities, which had a significant effect on population distribution, employment market and deterioration of economic activity in rural areas (Sohns and Diez, 2018, P:220). Rural development has a leading role in economic growth and well-being of the rural community, through its contributes to economic development of any country at the local and regional levels, attention to rural development consider as a source of benefit from agricultural and non-agricultural activities, which are represented by tourism and handicrafts. When agriculture grows in any rural area, there will be high productivity, a significant improvement in the way of life and an increase in the level of income, thus the standard of living of the residents of rural areas will improve. (Arif, 2019, P:167). The goal of rural development is poverty reduction, because most of the world's poor live in rural areas of the developing world. In addition, that a large proportion of the urban poor are immigrants from rural areas, and this makes rural development important to eradicate poverty in both rural and urban areas (Takhumova, 2019, P275-277). The economic dependence of rural areas on agricultural activities decreases when other non-agricultural income sources are founded. Therefore, those areas with diversified economies in providing financial returns are more flexible in obtaining sources of income, but they will be at risk and less stability in the event of any economic crisis (Sanchez-Zamora,etal., 2014, P:14).

4- INCOME FROM NON-AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Rural non-agricultural activities are an essential component to provide financial returns and improve livelihoods for rural families, most of the population turns to it in order to diversify jobs, face the seasonal situations of agriculture and low levels of income. These activities can produce good improvement, especially for families who do not have agricultural land, Families are turned into non-agricultural activities in order to strengthen the economic base of the rural population and when the income from non-agricultural activities are higher and less risky than agricultural (Madaki and Adefila, 2014,P:655). Moreover, the additional income generated from non-agricultural income can be used to invest in the agricultural sector. These activities include all jobs outside agricultural and animal production such as handicrafts, simple industries, small commercial activities, work in restaurants and cafes, transportation and work in government jobs. Rural areas have a competitive advantage in the production of some goods and provision services, due to availability of natural resources and cheap workforce, which distinguishes them with an economic advantage that enables them to protect against competition from foreign markets (Agbarevo and Nmeragini, 2019, P:17-20).

RESEARCH AREA:

The area of the research were spatially represented in Al-Muwafaqiah district, a part of Al-Hay city that located in Wasit governorate, in Iraq country. It is located in the southwestern part of the

Wasit governorate, adjacent to Al-Diwaniyah and Al-Nasiriyah governorate, as shown in Figure (1), which shows the location of the study area.

The area of the study area is (1085) km², which constitutes (6.32%) of Wasit Governorate area (17153) km², with a population number (35646) people in 1997, (29891) people in 2009 and (56436) people in 2021, represent the ratio (3.8%) of the population of Wasit Governorate (1489631) people.

The study area characterized by a rural character, because the rural population constitutes the largest percentage (65.8%) with number (37,141) people, while the urban residents represent a ratio (34.2%) and population number(19295) people as shown in Figure (2).

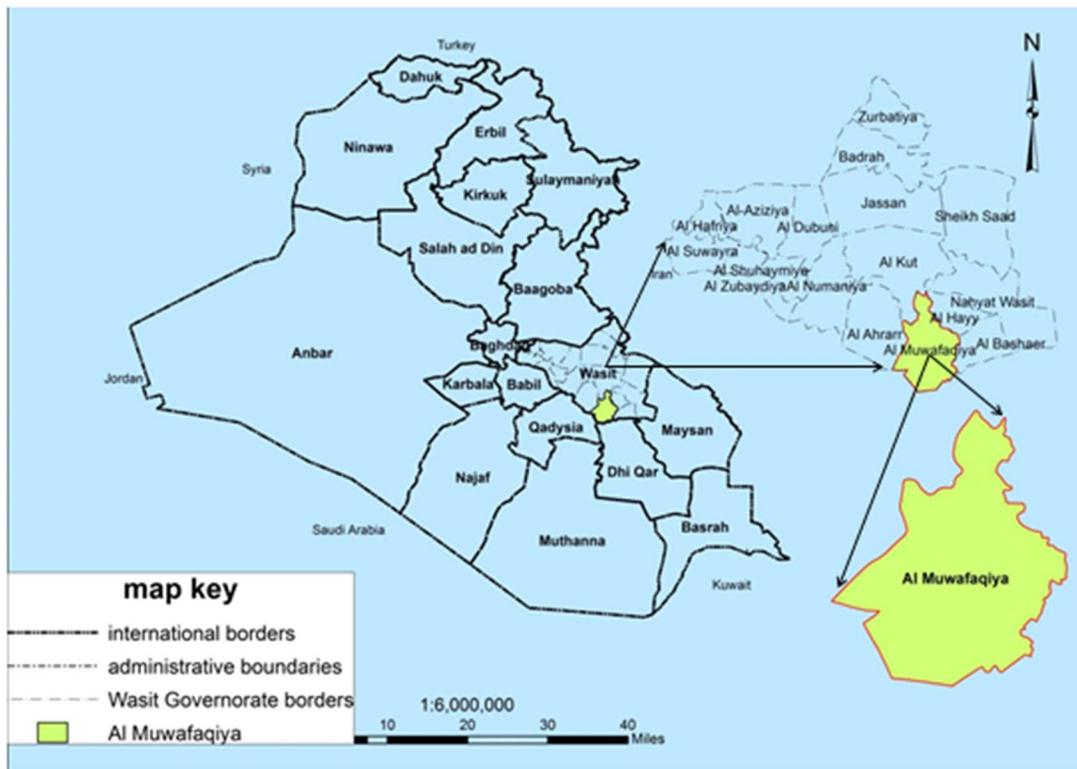


Figure (1): The location of Al-Muwafaqiya in Wasit Governorate and Iraq
 Source: Wasit Governorate Office, Geographic Information Systems Department, unpublished data, 2020.

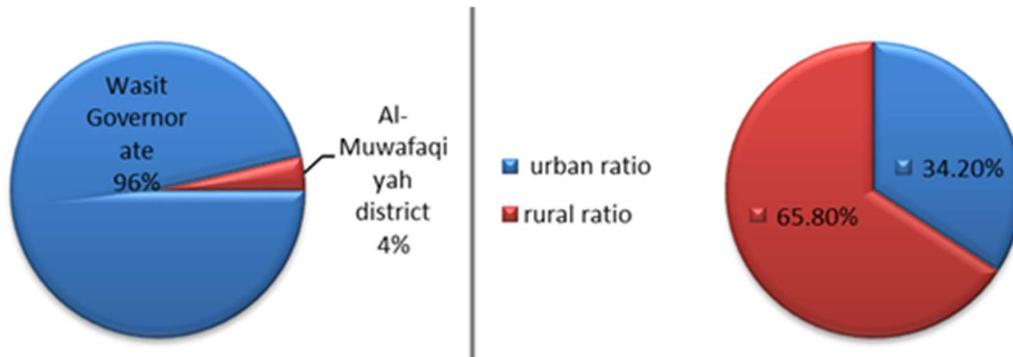


Figure (2) Percentage of the population of Al-Muwafaqiyah district in relation to the population of Wasit Governorate

Source: Wasit Governorate Office, Geographic Information Systems Department, unpublished data, 2020.

Al-Muwafaqiyah district consists of (54) villages with a total population of (49715) people, which is shown in Table (1), that shows the names of the villages and the number of their members. A sample was taken consisting of (200) families distributed within the villages of Al-Muwafaqiyah, information was collected through a questionnaire and forms filled out by the head of the family for achieving the objectives of the study.

Table (1): Villages of Al-Muwafaqiyah district and their population for the year 2021

No.	Village name	Population no.	No.	Village name	Population no.
1	AL-Road	815	28	Umm Rahwala 2	600
2	Haj kalaf	455	29	am alsufun	925
3	AL-Sadir	1100	30	alrisala	813
4	Karrada	844	31	Yarmouk	2600
5	Al-Batira	655	32	awlad zayd	1200
6	bashir tarif	3800	33	khizy	1550
7	dahia	655	34	Koutaiba	900
8	Al Mashraq	3800	35	alsaeidat	1000
9	alamam	1300	36	Hussein Al-Manea	625
10	alsalama	816	37	Zahra	786
11	Zweya	670	38	suez	813
12	Maysan	500	39	aznebier	508
13	altadamun	1200	40	alkhulud 1	745
14	Almajarwalkhamsin	825	41	Faiha	530
15	alamil	565	42	6 kann	900
16	Zweya2	721	43	Miqdad 1	1234
17	am alshaeir	1200	44	alkhulud 2	654
18	Syed Abdul Wahed	960	45	Aziz Atti	738
19	alrabie	1100	46	almithaq	809
20	alshayb alsharqiu	627	47	musayjid	695
21	hamid	725	48	Umm Al-Jarban	454
22	Kazem Obaid	382	49	Al-Salim	352
23	alianjazat	1900	50	attar	654
24	altahrir	2000	51	Miqdad 2	734
25	Arabi	757	52	alhuriya	1300
26	Al-Khorang	700	53	altaliea	600
27	alraayat	804	54	altadamun 2	700

Source: Wasit Governorate, Hay town Qaimqamiya, unpublished data, 2021

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY SAMPLE:

1. FAMILY SIZE:

The average family size of the families included in the research was (8.5) individuals, which shows the high average family size in the study area. Demonstrated high average family size in the study area, the size families in the study area classified into three groups according to the total number of family members. First small-size group with (2-5) individuals formed (18.5%) from the total samples, while the second medium-sized group which consist of (6 -10) individuals constituted the largest percentage, with a ratio (70.5%), the last third group (11-15) individuals had a percentage of (11%) as shown in Table (2). The size of family gives a clear picture to the size of the workforce that exists within the family that can contribute to increase income and participating in covering expenses

Table (2): family size and its percentage in the study area

Family size (person)	No.	%)percentage (
2-5	37	18.5
6-10	141	70.5
11-15	22	11
total	200	100

2- ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION:

The scientific qualification and educational level of the members of the study area shows that the largest percentage are from the primary certificate holders, which was represented by (53.5%), followed by (11%) for individuals who were unable to obtain education (illiteracy). While those with an intermediate educational level, middle, diploma and bachelor's degrees were (10.5, 9.5, 5, 10.5) respectively, which is illustrated in Table (3). The largest percentage of those who obtained primary education was due to compulsory education. The low percentages for the rest educational levels in the study samples due to far distance of middle schools, Institute, and university from their homes and because this education service concentrated in the center of Al-Muwafaqiyah district. In addition to the nature of work in agriculture field and providing sources of income for their families, which force some children to leave school. Moreover, other matters related to clan traditions that stand in the way of girls completing their studies, especially for advanced education, because most schools are in a mixed school system and there are no specific schools for girls, this concept rejected by the residents of the region.

Table (3) Academic qualifications of the respondents in the study area

Academic achievement	Number (Person)	Percentage (%)
illiteracy	22	11
Primary	107	53.5
medium	21	10.5
Secondary	19	9.5

Diploma	10	5
Bachelors	21	10.5
total	200	100

3-AGRICULTURAL LAND HOLDING:

The arable land is one of the most important sources of income for the residents of the study area that brings good income to the families.

Income increases directly with increasing size of holding land and family size, because the advantage of increasing production and reducing the cost of manpower which required to work in this field.

The average tenure size of the families was (41.4) dunams, which represents a good tenure size. The largest percentage of holders was (30%) for agricultural lands with an area of (31-40) dunams, while the holders of the areas (10-20, 21-30 , 41-60, and 61-100) dunams, their percentage was (6.5, 20.5, 12, 7.5%) respectively, as shown in Table (4).

While people who do not own agricultural land, their number (47), constitute (23.5%) had sources of income other than agriculture.

Table (4): Size of agricultural land holdings for individuals' survey

Holding size (dunum)	Number	Percentage (%)
Without holding	47	23.5
10-20	13	6.5
21-30	41	20.5
31-40	60	30
41-60	24	12
61-100	15	7.5
total	200	100

4- SOURCES AND AMOUNT OF MONTHLY INCOME:

Sources of income for the year 2010 were largely dependent on agriculture, it was constituted (70%) of total jobs, followed by government jobs at a ratio (19%), while the other jobs were represented by (11%). The amount of monthly income was concentrated within the categories (200- 400) thousand and (401-600) thousand Dinars, at a ratio (49%) and (41%), respectively, as shown in Table (5).

Table (5): Sources and amount of monthly income for the researched individuals in the study area for the year 2010

Family amount of monthly income			Income sources		
Monthly income) thousand dinars(Number	Percentage (%)	Type of jobs	Number	Percentage (%)

200-400	98	49	Agricultural job	140	70
401-600	82	41	government jobs	38	19
601-800	19	9.5	Other jobs	22	11
801-Milon	1	0.5			
total	200	100	total	200	100

While the type of jobs and amount of monthly income for the respondents for the year 2021, reflected the nature of the rural area and confirms the dependence most of its residents on agriculture activity as important source of income and providing their needs. The largest percentage, which represents (74.5%) of the business related to agriculture field and dependence on its revenues. The rest of secondary jobs, especially working in government jobs is the result to the urbanization effect that related to educational obtaining and tendency of some individuals to work in government jobs that proportion to their academic achievement. Some person orientated towards this type of business because of their lack of possession of agricultural land or the inadequacy of their land for agriculture for this reason seek for other non-agriculture sources of income, other businesses, which constituted the small percentage (3%) of those who depended on self-employment, trade, transport and construction, as shown in Table (6).

Table (6) sources and amount of monthly income for the researched individuals in the study area for the year 2021

Family amount of monthly income			Income sources		
Monthly income)thousand dinars(Number	Percentage (%)	Type of jobs	Number	Percentage (%)
200-400	80	40	Agricultural job	149	74.5
401-600	93	46.5	government jobs	45	22.5
601-800	24	12	Other jobs	6	3
801-Milon	3	1.5			
total	200	100	total	200	100

Moreover, the amount of monthly income and the level of financial return for the jobs was distributed into four groups according to the monthly income, from the lowest monthly income (200,000) dinars to the highest monthly income (one million) dinars; the average monthly income of the survey families was (600375) dinars. Amount of the surveyed families for the year 2021 ranging between (401000-600000) dinars was demonstrated largest percentage of monthly income (46.5%), as shown in Table (6). The amount of change in income and jobs between the two periods (2010) and (2021) for the individuals in question, for workers in the agricultural sector and

government jobs is (+9, +7), respectively, a clear decrease in other jobs which demonstrated (-16) and this decrease is due to the suspension of investment projects and stagnation of private projects.

Most of the individuals went to work in the agricultural sector due to government support for this sector during this period, and increase in the government jobs because of the stability of financial revenues. Noted there is an increase in the amount of income for all categories from (401 thousand - 1 million) dinars, with a clear decrease in the amount of income within the categories (200 - 400) thousand dinars, due to the improvement in monthly income in relation to agricultural marketing revenues and monthly salaries, as shown in Table (7).

Table (7): Change in the type of jobs and the amount of monthly income of the research individuals for the year 2010-2021

Family amount of monthly income				Jobs			
Monthly income (thousand dinars)	No. in 2010	No. in 2021	Change value	Type of jobs	No. in 2010	No. in 2021	Change value
200-400	98	80	-18	Agricultural job	140	149	+9
401-600	82	93	+11	government jobs	38	45	+7
601-800	19	24	+5	Other jobs	22	6	-16
801-Milon	1	3	+2				

5- EFFECT OF INCOME LEVEL ON THE HOUSING TYPE:

Change in the amount of monthly income led to an improvement in the nature of housing, materials used in construction, and services available inside homes. A significant increase in independent individual housing was observed for the individuals studied, reaching (88.5%) for the year 2021 after it was (77%) for the year 2010.

Materials used in construction, most of them were bricks and stone blocks, while the floors of the houses were made of ceramic or cement, with noting the complete lack of building with traditional materials (mud), where the percentages of houses built with bricks and stone increased to (73%, 27%) over respectively in 2021. It was also noted the obvious development effects through the provision of Internet service in homes and its use by most of the individuals studied, the percentage of using Internet (78%) in 2021 after it was (39%) in 2010, as shown in Table (8).

This increase in internet using due to the improvement in the economic levels and increase monthly income of families, in addition to use the Internet service for education and communication after government decision to transfer the education system for all levels of study from the attendance system to the electronic system during the period of the Corona pandemic.

Table (8) Nature and type of housing and availability of Internet service in the homes of the researched individuals for the year 2010-2021

The year Percentage (%)	Housing type		material used to build walls			Floors of houses		Internet service	
	Separated	Shared	bricks	cement blocks	Clay	cera mic	cemen t tiles	Don't have	Have
2010	154	46	140	54	6	13	187	122	78
Percentage (%)	77	23	70	27	3	6.5	93.5	61	39
2021	177	23	146	54	0	18	182	44	156
Percentage (%)	88.5	11.5	73	27	0	9	91	22	78

6- EFFECT OF INCOME LEVEL ON THE OWN MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

The number of owners to means of transport and agricultural machinery of all kinds increased by a clear percentage, especially for petrol cars. Increase was represented by the ratio (38%) for 2021 after it represented (20.5%) for 2010 as noted in Table (9). this increase in car ownership as a result of government support represented by financial loans provided by the Agricultural Bank to purchase vehicles for owners of agricultural contracts. While the agricultural machinery demonstrated limited number because this vehicle expensive and most of farmer depending on Leasing.

Table (9): Ownership of transport means and agricultural machinery for the individuals studied for the year 2010-2021

The year	Number Percentage (%)	Type of agricultural machinery		Type of vehicle				
		harve ster	tractor	Don't have	Bicycle	Motor cycle	diesel car	Benz car
2010	Number	0	1	145	6	3	5	41
	Percentage	0	0.5	72.5	3	1.5	2.5	20.5
2021	Number	1	2	109	1	3	11	76
	Percentage	0.5	1	54.5	0.5	1.5	5.5	38

CONCLUSIONS:

1- Agriculture is the most important source of income for rural families, with some trends towards other non-agricultural sources of income, such as government jobs, business, construction and transportation.

2- Rural development and the connection with the city has an effects on the level of education and attention to the cultural aspect, and this is noted through the high percentages of those who obtained middle school, diploma and bachelor's educational attainment.

- 3- Rural development has a great effect on the nature and type of housing; most individuals tend to move from the rural character to the urban character by changing the type of housing from the shared and social nature of the rural population to the single and independent housing.
- 4- Improvement in the level of income of the researched individuals had an effect on the type of materials that used in construction of house building and uses of Internet.
- 5- The improvement in the economic and income level can be observed through the possession of vehicles, means of transportation and agricultural machinery for the study sample.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1- Rethinking and reconsidering in the rural development programs and objectives and activating the role of rural people as a key factor in development.
- 2- Providing financial and banking facilities to advance the agricultural situation and improve the level of income and economic reality of the rural population, enable agriculture activity to become a competitive for the rest of the economic sectors.
- 3- Focusing on developing strategic plans that are concerned providing opportunities and services, improving living conditions, and raising the cultural and social level of the resident in the study area.
- 4- Encouraging work in non-agricultural activities, especially for people who do not possess or possess small agricultural land areas, to reduce poverty cases through its effects on facilitating income and improving food security for the rural population.
- 5- Supporting and encouraging the small landholders to increase agricultural and livestock productivity to make them more competitive.

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