

URBANIZATION AND ITS EFFECT ON JORDANIAN CITIES: A Case Study of Irbid, Jordan

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ABSTRACT

Cities are the product of the urbanization process, and urbanization is the social process that leads to the creation of cities. Thus, the relationship between cities and urbanization is a cause-and-effect relationship. The present study aimed to analyse the nature and characteristics of urbanization by providing useful insights into the social effects of increased size, density, and social heterogeneity of population on urban life. This was done through analysis of the Louis Wirth's theory of urbanism and applying it to the cities of the societies of developing countries, such as the city of Irbid in Jordan. To address the specific research aim, the author used the descriptive quantitative approach. The study was conducted using 383 households within the seven areas of the city of Irbid as the study population. The study outcomes indicated that the urbanization process in the city of Irbid had an impact on the indicators related to size, density, and population heterogeneity.

Keywords: urbanization, urban transformation, size, density, social heterogeneity, Irbid, Jordan

JEL classification: R29

1. Introduction

Many sociologists and urban geographers agree that urban transformation and contemporary urban settlements are the products of a long evolutionary process (Elbendak, 2008). Cities are formed through a variety of processes. As a result, all cities have different landscapes, economies, cultures, and

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societies (Hall, 2001). Hence, it is better for decision-makers, researchers, and those interested in urban studies to adopt a perspective that recognizes this variety and understand cities as having different roles, and that those cities are the agents of social, cultural, economic, technological, and political changes and advancement (Zhang, 2011).

The phenomenon of urbanization is quite complex (Van der Merwe and Bekker, 2003). Some researchers have viewed cities as moral entities, while others have viewed them as products of human history, ecological entities, and economic entities. Others have examined cities as distinguished modes of human existence, while others have regarded cities as centres of political domination (Elbendak, 2008). More specifically, if the interests of scholars concerning cities are examined, it will be found that they revolve around various topics, for example, the physical or social environment of the city, its formation, its history and problems, the characteristic urban lifestyle and the dimensions of origin, growth, and change of the city.

Cities are the product of the urbanization process (Fields, 1999; Aziz, Hassan and Saud, 2012). Urbanization, in other terms, is the social process that leads to the creation of cities. Thus, the relationship between cities and urbanization is a cause-and-effect relationship. As previously mentioned, urbanization has several dimensions that can be studied from numerous perspectives by different disciplines. Because of the complexities of this phenomenon, giving a precise definition of urbanization is challenging because it varies depending on the theoretical perspective adopted (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018a). So, many diverse and often contradictory definitions of urbanization exist.

The process of urbanization involves two non-linear geographic processes: one is the gradual increase in the ratio between the urban population and the total population (quantitative change); the other involves the change of a society of people living in urban areas from a rural to an urban way of life (qualitative change) (Chen, 2015). The first process refers to the movement of rural people to urban areas and the concentration of urban residents, while the other process is also known as urbanism, and is in fact the characteristic way of interaction between urban residents and the geographical environment (Knox and Marston, 2009).

Concerning the most important theories of urbanization, Louis Wirth, the foundational thinker in the field of urbanization, was one of the first to focus on the social aspects of urbanism (the social effects of urban living). Wirth, in his famous essay, "Urbanism as a way of life" or "Urban way of life" (1938) characterized human ecology as one of the significant perspectives of the city. His theory emphasizes the individual's place in the city, as well as urban behaviour and the phenomena of urbanization from a cultural standpoint. For Wirth, the three primary variables that characterize what is urban are size, density, and heterogeneity (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018b).

In the case of Jordan, its population became significantly urbanized during the sixties (Ababsa, 2013), reaching a rate over 91% in 2019. The two main reasons were rural depopulation and the influx of masses of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons after 1948, who mostly settled in the larger towns of Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, and Ruseifa, where the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) camps and services had been set up. Added to these are the recent waves of migration of Syrian, Iraqi, Yemeni and Sudanese refugees. In addition, there are other reasons related to natural increase within urban areas, and the reclassification of land from rural to urban.

The process of urbanization began in Irbid around the end of the nineteenth century (Tarawneh and Naamneh, 2011). As a result, radical changes occurred in both the social structure and the nature of social interactions in the city as it was transformed from a village to a city and later to the second largest city in Jordan. This urban development was also accompanied by a socio-economic change to transform Irbid from a society based on a simple peasant tribal economy into a more complex society based on salaries (Tarawneh and Naamneh, 2011).

However, Jordan, including the city of Irbid, lacks adequate planning and the technical capability to manage the challenges and problems associated with rapid urbanization and the influx of refugees over the decades. In other words, rapid urbanization and the influx of refugees have put a strain on Jordan's ability to effectively plan and manage the changes associated with urbanization. One of the reasons why Jordan may lack adequate planning in this regard is unplanned settlements, where the rapid influx of refugees, particularly from Syria, has led to the emergence of informal settlements and unplanned urban

growth. These settlements often lack proper infrastructure and basic services, posing challenges for urban management. In addition, Jordan is a resource-scarce country with limited land, water, and energy resources. It therefore faces difficulties in providing adequate infrastructure and services to support the growing urban population. These challenges and problems stem directly from the fact that cities involve large numbers of local citizens and immigrants living in a relatively small amount of space. As a basis for effective management of urbanization challenges, especially social challenges, demand has grown with passion for reliable information on the characteristics of urbanization. However, according to this researcher's knowledge, no studies have been conducted on the characteristics of urbanization in Irbid city or even in Jordan based on the field survey. Academically, the results from this study will be beneficial in enriching relevant literature, especially considering the fact that literature on urban studies is still limited in the Third World, and especially Jordan. Another important point is that, if the characteristics and impact of urbanization are known, effective policies can be identified to control the negative consequences of this phenomenon or benefit from its positive effect in the future.

It should be noted that in this study, the word "urban" means, according to Wirth's concept, large size, dense and heterogeneous (Wirth, 1938; Hannerz, 1980). The present study was conducted as a case study, Irbid city being one of the most densely populated cities in Jordan.

The objectives of this study were:

- (1) To explain the nature of urbanization in terms of size, density and heterogeneity of population in the city of Irbid.
- (2) To track migration as one of the urbanization factors that has affected the city of Irbid.

2. Literature Review

Cities are complex systems (Ortman, Lobo and Smith, 2020) and the complexity of city life has resulted in social transformation in areas such as income, education, social values, urbanization, social environment and occupational stresses. Currently, cities have become more inhabitable (Ballesteros and Blasco, 2016), particularly from a health point of view. It

follows therefore that a decline in urban growth or urban fertility decline suggests to a large extent that city life is not conducive to the traditional type of family life (George, Jose and Suzana, 2013). In other words, families have been deprived of the traditional roles of the man and the wife. For example, mothers are employed, marriages deferred, and a longer time is spent acquiring skills and specialization to boost the income of city dwellers. Eventually, all these factors contribute to a decline in the rate of growth of urban populations. The urban personality is usually hinged on the interconnectivity of different associated groups such as economic, social-cultural and political organizations. Studies have shown that the prevalence of social problems like crime and corruption are indices that can elucidate the inconsistencies associated with the quality of urban ways of life (Chiweshe and Mahiya, 2021; Kumar and Borbor, 2018; Malik, 2016). Attempts must however be made to redefine urbanism as a mode of social life. Sociologists cannot solve social problems on their own using the available arguments, however, their contributions would help in the appreciation of the problem, especially where a theoretical approach is adopted (Wirth, 1938).

Three key criteria determine the character of the urban way of life. According to Wirth (1938) these three criteria of urbanism are:

- Size
- Density
- Heterogeneity of the population

Wirth's opinion on these criteria can be summarized as follows:

Size

It has long been known that an increase in the population in a settlement that exceeds a certain limit will impact the interaction between people and their environment. As a result, it causes competition for limited resources and a quest for alternatives, as well as a decrease in intimacy and closeness of relationships while increasing the number of contacts and acquaintances.

Wirth asserts that large numbers of populations involve a greater range of individual variation, and that the greater the number of interacting individuals in a settlement, the greater the potential differentiation between them. The personal characteristics, cultural life, occupations, and beliefs and attitudes of

residents of urban society are likely to range between widely-different poles, resulting in spatial segregation of the residents based on ethnicity, economic and social status, tastes, and preferences. Under such circumstances, kinship links, good neighbourliness and the sentiments arising out of living together for generations under common experiences or common folk traditions will be absent. In this case, competition and formal control mechanisms become alternatives for unit links that are relied upon to hold a folk society together.

The city, according to Wirth, is characterized by secondary rather than primary relationships, and these human relationships are highly segmented or specialized. Many of these relationships remain face-to-face, but they are impersonal, fleeting and superficial. Wirth asserted that urban living gains individuals some elements of freedom from intimate group control, but at the same time they lose the reassurance that comes from living in a more emotionally-integrated society. The freedom achieved in cities is also accompanied by social emptiness and a sense of anomaly.

Density

Any increase in the size of the population over a limited area will increase its density. The increase in density leads to differentiation and specialization as important conditions of survival. While physical contact is close in denser places, social contact is distant. The process of urbanization is accompanied by increase in the size and density of the population.

According to Wirth, the most important thing that density produces is the stark contrasts between greatness and mediocrity, richness and poverty, intelligence and ignorance, order and chaos; the competition for space is great. The workplace tends to be separate from the place of residence. The juxtaposition of disparate personalities and lifestyles tends to produce a relative perspective and a sense of tolerance for difference. Living together, and the teamwork of people without emotional ties, fosters the spirit of exploitation. In addition, the density itself produces a kind of mass culture whose values are transient cooperation, collective feeling, some kind of commonality, and so on.

Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity is another variable associated with urbanization, as cities are magnets for people from many cultural, ethnic, and social origin. Wirth saw that communication and social interaction between different personalities and groups break the rigidity of social class and the complexity of class structure. When diverse groups from different cultural backgrounds mingle and communicate, a kind of common mass culture is created within an urban agglomeration. This explains the urbanite's sophistication and cosmopolitanism. The fast turnover of urban group membership is partly due to physical footlessness and social mobility. People in cities are a fluid mass; hence their collective behaviour is unpredictable. However, the city compensates for a levelling influence by accommodating diversity.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in the city of Irbid, which is affiliated with the Greater Irbid Municipality (see Figure 1). It lies in the northern part of Jordan, in the highland areas, with an average elevation of 620m, at longitude 35d 51m 0s and latitude 32d 33m 20s (Al Shawabkeh et al., 2019). The city is located 70 km north of the country's capital, Amman, and 20km south of the Syrian border. It is distinguished by the Mediterranean climate. It is divided into 7 zones and within these zones, there are 42 administrative neighbourhoods (Greater Irbid Municipality, 2020). It has a population of 502,714 inhabitants, according to the latest census (DOS, 2015). The population density of Irbid city is 14,291 persons per km².

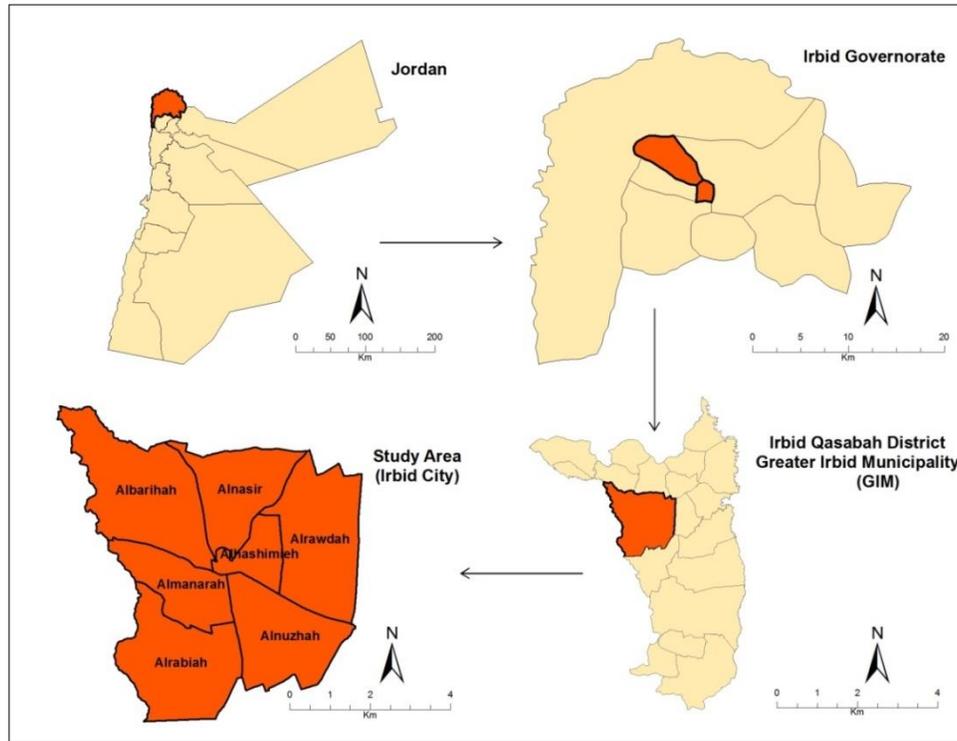


Figure 1. The study area.

3.2 Sample size and sampling technique

The study's statistical population comprised the households living in the Irbid city areas at the time of the study. Based on the latest census in 2019, the number of households in all the 7 areas in Irbid city was 114,591 (DOS, 2019). As for the study sample, it consisted of a stratified random sample of the seven areas of the city (Albariah, Alnasir, Alrawdah, Alhashimieh, Almuzhah, Alrabiah, and Almanarah).

At first, the sample size was specified by Equation 1:

$$n = Z^2P(1-P)/D^2 \quad (1)$$

where:

n = sample size

Z = 95% confident level (95% C.I. for $P=p \pm 1.96$ standard error)

P = estimated prevalence (0.50)

D = margin of error between sample size and population size (5% marginal error)

Based on the previous equation, a total of 383 households were enrolled in the study, and then a stratified sample was taken for all areas of the city based on the relative weight of the population of each area in the city from the total size of the city’s population. Table 1 shows the name of each area and the required sample size for the study.

Table 1. The population of the seven areas of Irbid city

Area	Population	Household	Relative weight of the area according to family size	Sample size of the area according to household size
Almanarah	78343	16377	16	62
Albariha	59315	12148	12	46
Alrawwdah	67692	13779	13	52
Alhashimieh	38323	8079	8	31
Arabiah	82446	16781	17	64
Alnuzhah	77136	13983	14	53
Alnasir	99459	19789	20	75
Total	502714	100931	100	383

Source: Department of Statistics, 2015.

3.4 Research Instrument

The analysis of urban transformation in this paper is based on a survey conducted over the period June 1– June 30, 2020. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with household heads using a structured questionnaire (which was prepared based on variables) to collect objective and reliable data needed. This questionnaire was adopted from previous research conducted elsewhere. Before the fieldwork, the data collectors received adequate training concerning the objective of the study, methods, and data-collection procedures. The questions were designed in four sections to include the variables of size, density, heterogeneity, and migration. In carrying out the

study, the standard ethical considerations were observed, which included obtaining consent: where household heads gave oral consent to participate in the study after they had heard a brief explanation of the study's aim, in addition to ensuring confidentiality. Before the final data collection, a pre-test was conducted on 20 participants. The aim was to test the degree to which these participants understood the questions and its clarity (validity of the questionnaire).

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Size and Density of Population

Urbanization is a complex, dynamic process that depends on the growth of the urban population and the migration of the rural population (Chen, 2015). It is a process that leads to the growth of cities due to the processes of industrialization and economic development, which in turn lead to urban-specific changes in specialization, division of labour, and human behaviour (Aziz et al., 2012). In other words, urbanization involves a change in the economic, social and cultural aspects of society. In that way, urbanization is power and inevitable demographic movement (Aziz et al., 2012), and urban society is a form of ecological community with a unique demographic structure (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2016). Size and density are the two most widely-utilized demographic variables to characterize the urban ecological community (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018b). Population size is defined as the number of individuals present in a particular geographic range while density is commonly stated as the number of individuals per unit area (Tarsi and Tuff, 2012). There are two variants regarding measures of density: residential density (as defined above) and household density (number of people per room).

4.1.1 Household Size

Analysing the prevailing family size gives insight into the transformation that has occurred in the structure of the family as the primary social institution. The process of urbanization stands as an important factor in the change from the extended to the nuclear family (Siddiqui et al., 2012). As a result of urbanization, according to urban sociologists, the trend towards nuclear

family proliferation requires reducing the family size in urban areas (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018b).

Table 2 shows the division of the sample according to household size. Out of 383 respondents, the majority, i.e. 315 respondents (82.3%), had 5-10 members in the household. This data reveals that the majority of the respondents belong to the large household size group. This refutes the claim that the decline in family size coincides with the development of urban society. It reveals that the rural and religious cultures continue to influence the majority of the sample; in other words, the ethos of rural household size still prevails. This finding is consistent with that of Elbendak (2008) which demonstrated that urbanization had only a limited impact on family size in Tripoli.

Table 2. Household size

Household size	Frequency	Percentage (%)
One member	00	00.00
2-4 members	68	17.7
5-10 members	315	82.3
>10 members	00	00.00
Total	383	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.1.2 Home ownership

Housing is one of the primary issues that affect quality of life (Shakur, Mohamed and Hadi, 2021; Bakar et al., 2016). Several indicators, such as the housing cost burdens indicator, can be used to assess housing indicators (Streimikiene, 2015). Therefore, the information on home ownership in urban areas is an important component of the general population's socioeconomic status. Urban living does not encourage home ownership. In actuality, the stresses of city living, such as the high cost of living, which includes rising cost of products and services, transportation, and other necessities, certainly lead to an increase in urban poverty (Shakur, Mohamed and Hadi, 2018). This situation inevitably affects the middle and low-income groups; those who cannot afford to buy a home in urban areas. This is consistent with the opinion of Musa et al. (2013) that house prices are mostly out of reach if

compared with the total income of the population and the increase in the prices of basic necessities. The results in Figure 2 show that home ownership distribution in the sample was 225 (58.8%) owned and 158 (41.2%) rented. This finding clearly supports the previous idea that urban living does not encourage home ownership. These results contradict the findings of a study executed by Baba (2015), which showed that 97.20% of the population in Srinagar city had their own home, while only 2.8% lived in rented homes.

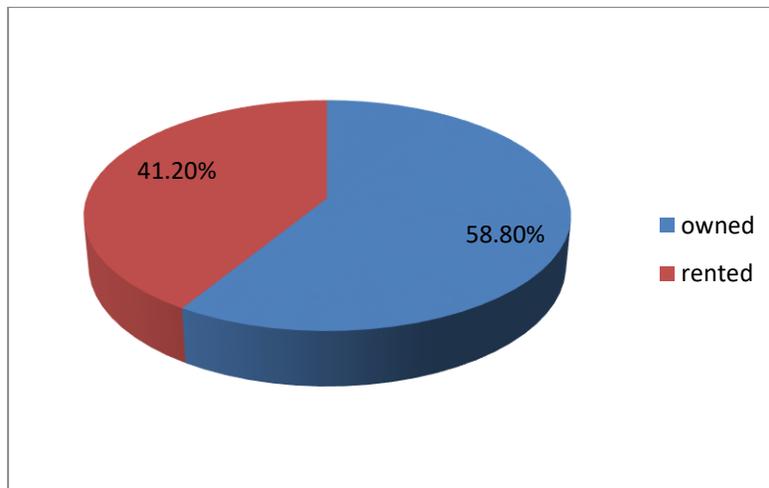


Figure 2. Home ownership.

4.1.3 Type and Condition of House

The type of house and condition of housing are significant physical indicators of the quality of life in the urban area (Nikoofam and Mobaraki, 2020; Matel, 2020). The type of house implies the quality of housing and the general population's socioeconomic status. When the facades of houses are made of natural stone, this means that the socioeconomic level of their owners is high, while it means that it is medium or low if it is made of cement or brick or other materials.

With regard to the type of the house that the respondents have in Irbid city, the results in Table 3 indicate that more than half, that is, 240 respondents (62.7%) live in flats/apartments, while 143 respondents (37.3%) report that they live in detached houses. These results show that

flats/apartments are the prevalent housing type in the city. This means that the high cost of living in Irbid city and the economic well-being of the Irbid city population certainly has a bearing on the house ownership status and type.

With regard to the facades of the houses of the respondents in Irbid city, the findings in Table 3 highlight that the minority, that is, 83 respondents (21.7%), had houses with facades made of natural stone, while a significant majority, that is, 300 respondents (78.3%), had facades made of cement or brick or other materials. As mentioned above, the materials used in constructing the facades of houses have to do with the availability of building materials, their cost, and the economic situation of the homeowner. If the external facade of the house is made of natural stone, it indicates the good economic situation of the owner of the house, due to its high price. The facades of houses built of natural stone are also considered one of the indicators of urbanization. This result also means that the high cost of living in Irbid city and the economic well-being of the Irbid city population had a bearing on the materials used in constructing the facades of their houses.

The condition of the houses as one of the diversified housing characteristics reveals the physical structure of the city. Dilapidated structures reflect the slums in contrast to the good housing condition which is indicative of a modern physical structure (Omole, 2010). Table 3 shows that most of the respondents (89.7%) reported that their houses needed minor repairs, while 5% said that their houses were physically sound, and almost the same percentage (4.8%) said that their houses needed major repairs. Only 2 respondents (0.5%) reported that their houses were in a dilapidated condition. Thus, it can be said that the majority of the houses in Irbid were structurally in good condition. One of the observations that can be submitted here is that all the houses (within the sample) that needed major repairs or were dilapidated were located in Al-Nasr district, which is noted for its low economic status.

Table 3. Type and condition of houses

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Type of house		
Flats/apartments	240	62.7
Detached houses	143	37.3

Facades of house		
Natural stone	83	21.7
Cement or brick or other materials	300	78.3
Condition of house		
Physically sound	19	5
Need minor repairs	344	89.7
Need major repairs	18	4.8
Dilapidated and old	2	.5
Total	383	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.2 Household Density of the Population

4.2.1 Household Density of the Population

The space that urbanites inhabit is another important indicator of the citizens' quality of life (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018a; 2018b). The density of a particular dwelling, which is defined as the "in-home density" or "household density (number of people per room)" provides a measure of overcrowding (Usavagovitwong et al., 2013). According to the overcrowded indicator, a household is considered overcrowded if it does not have at its disposal a minimum number of rooms (Eurostat, 2021). In this study, the majority of respondents (52.2%) had 5-6 rooms while only 6 respondents (1.5%) had 1-2 rooms (see Table 4).

The number of persons per room is also an indicator of household density. The more the number of rooms available to the respondents, the less the number of persons per room, thus indicating low internal density (Econometrica, 2007). High internal density is related to various psychological and social problems and available privacy for house members (Cohen et al., 1986). To measure the household density, the standard of persons-per-room (PPR) was applied, not persons-per-bedroom standard (PPB).

In this context, the results in Table 4 show that the majority of respondents (61.4%) indicated that they had one person per room density; while almost a third of the respondents (30.2%) had two people per room density; only 1.2% of the respondents reported having more than three people

per room density. These results reveal that the largest proportion of the respondents had low internal household density.

Table 4. Household density of the population

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number of rooms		
1-2 rooms	6	1.5
3-4 rooms	162	42.3
5-6 rooms	200	52.2
>6 rooms	15	4
Accommodation per person		
One person/room	235	61.4
Two persons/room	116	30.2
Three persons/rooms	27	7.2
More than three persons / rooms	5	1.2
Total	383	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.2.2 Nature of the Relationship between Household Members

The family is a dynamic system of interacting, and adapting relationships (Noronha, DaSilva and Dametto, 2019; Ross et al., 2005). Thus, analysing the nature of the relationship between the house members is important to determine the nature and quality of social interactions.

The results for this parameter are presented in Table 5 and show that most of the respondents either reported that they had very intimate (52.9%) or intimate (45.5%) relations with their house members. Further, 4 respondents (1.1%) reported that they have neutral relations with their household members. Only a very small percentage (0.5%) of respondents reported that they have conflicting relations with their household members. This ratio may be explained by two factors; the former is that the strength and cohesion of family relations in Jordanian society is linked to several factors, including the nature of the value system and social relations based on family and clan ties. The other relates to privacy issues, where disclosure of feelings and the nature and degree of relationship between family members are personal matters that are not discussed with strangers.

Table 5. Nature of relationship between household members

Relationship between household members	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very intimate	202	52.9
Intimate	172	45.5
Conflicting	2	0.5
Other	4	1.1
Total	383	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.2.3 Residential Space Availability

Residential space has an impact on residential environment quality (Azad, Morinaga and Kobaashi, 2018). Also, it is a significant indicator of residential satisfaction (Leboyer, 1993). Therefore, the study aimed to find out the perception and satisfaction of Irbid city respondents about the availability and unavailability of space.

The responses shown in Table 6 indicate that 203 respondents (52.9%) were not satisfied with the available inside and outside space. However, 180 respondents (47.1%) said that they were satisfied with the space available.

When respondents were asked about the reasons for their dissatisfaction, a significant majority, which is 139 participants (68.6%), answered that their houses do not have a garden, 47 respondents (23.2%) said that the space of their houses is insufficient for the basic daily needs of the members of the household; finally, 17 respondents (8.2%) said that they were not satisfied with the available space due to privacy issues (Table 6). The result that was obtained on the effect of space on privacy issues was discussed and confirmed in the study by Al-Homoud (2009), which was conducted in Fuhais, Jordan, where this study explored the relationship between privacy control and personal space by evaluating the presence of certain physical components in personal bedroom space that may influence privacy control. It was found that personal physical space components such as kitchenette, TV and audio in a bedroom, bedroom shape, bedroom floor area, and corridor before the bedroom were predictive of privacy control.

Table 6. Sufficient space inside and outside the house

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sufficient space inside and outside the house		
Satisfied	180	47.1
Not Satisfied	203	52.9
Total	383	100
Reasons for dissatisfaction		
No Garden	139	68.6
Insufficient space	47	23.2
Privacy issues	17	8.2
Total	203	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.3 Social Heterogeneity

4.3.1 Social Heterogeneity in the City

Cities are inherently heterogeneous entities (Ickett et al., 2017; Balakrishnan and Anand, 2015). In social terms, population size and social heterogeneity have been linked in the urban literature since Wirth's (1938) early work, in which he argued that the size of a city's population increases urban heterogeneity by distinguishing the urban population. More recently, the subcultural theory argued that the size of a community leads to heterogeneity in the values and attitudes that compose the collection of cultural elements of a subculture (Wilson, 1986). Through the process of dynamic density, population size increases competition and that competition is held in check by the emergence of the division of labour (Hussain and Imitiyaz, 2018a). In this way, the city's population is extraordinarily diverse. People in the city come from various backgrounds, social classes, value orientations, races, and religions. Such a diverse population structure implies the presence of a diverse environment in which interests, values and the lifestyles of the concerned population are bound to vary.

According to Table 7, a significant proportion, that is, 286 respondents (74.7%), said that their neighbourhood is socially heterogeneous. These respondents argued that their area was diversified in terms of the background,

income, occupational profile of the residents, class status, and lifestyles. Respondents emphasized that their neighbourhood consisted of different and diverse people as there are people in the neighbourhood of different positions and class professions. Respondents did not have the ability to anticipate homogeneity in their area as there was a population that varied markedly in their socioeconomic traits.

Table 7. Social heterogeneity between populations in Irbid city

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Social homogeneity in the respondents' neighbourhood		
Socially heterogeneous	286	74.7
Socially homogeneous	97	25.3
Total	383	100
Impacts of such heterogeneity		
Lack of face-to-face communication between neighbours	60	20.9
Lack of intimate relations between neighbours	65	22.7
Lack of direct cooperation between neighbours	60	20.9
All of the above	101	35.5
Total	286	100
Impacts of such homogeneity		
Good face-to-face communication between neighbours	30	31.4
Good intimate relations between neighbours	22	22.4
Good direct cooperation between neighbours	8	8.1
All of the above	37	38.1
Total	97	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021

When asked a related question on the impacts of the social heterogeneity, 60 respondents (20.9%) said that they lacked face-to-face communication with their neighbours; 65 respondents (22.7%) said that they lacked intimate relations with them, 60 respondents (20.9%) said that they lacked direct cooperation, while 101 respondents (35.5%) said that they lacked all of the

mentioned features. However, 97 respondents (25.3%) out of 383 respondents disagreed that their area is socially heterogeneous. On the contrary, they considered it a socially homogeneous area. These respondents did not think that the people around them were much diversified in terms of background, income, occupational profile of the residents, class status, and lifestyles. Regarding the impacts of such homogeneity, 30 respondents (31.4%) said that they witness face-to-face communication with their neighbours, 22 respondents (22.4%) agreed to sharing an intimate relationship with them, 8 respondents (8.1%) said that direct cooperation existed between them, while 37 respondents (38.1%) said that they retained all of the above features.

4.3.2 Division and Specialization of Labour in the City

The empirical hallmarks of the conception of urban settlements are systematic socio-economic effects resulting from the population size (scale) and population density for settlements in a particular system (Bettencourt and Lobo, 2016). One such hallmark is the increasing level of functional diversity, division and specialization of labour, such that larger settlements generally support a greater range of occupations (Hanson, Ortman and Lobo, 2017; Bettencourt, Samaniego and Youn, 2014). The concept of division of labour includes the degree of specialization of tasks or responsibilities in society (Ritzer, 1996). This means that individuals in an urban society work in more specialized positions and have a much narrower range of tasks and responsibilities. Also, if people specialize in producing what they do best, they will be more productive than if they were producing a bunch of things, some good and some not (Hébertand Link, 1987). As the number of the population increases, so does the demand on the resource base, resulting in increased competition. Under the strain of competition, a more complex division of labour may emerge (Hussain and Imityaz, 2018b). As each varied group comes to exploit certain portions of the resource base and exchange their goods with those of others, specialization of labour allows for increased social output (Clark, 1987).

The findings in Figure 3 indicate that the majority, which is 338 respondents (88.2%), confirmed the prevalence of a complex division and specialization of labour, where the respondents revealed that they have specialized jobs or different members of their family are employed in

different jobs and occupations, and the family members do not work together as one unit. However, findings indicate that only 45 respondents (11.8%) confirmed the prevalence of simple division and specialization of labour. This finding agrees with the idea that urban society prefers a complex division of labour. Hence, it can be said that the urban society in Irbid city prefers a complex division of labour. For example, it is in agreement with the Gibbs and Martin (1969) study, which was conducted among 45 countries. The study revealed that the division of labour had very high rank-order correlation coefficients with the degree of urbanization.

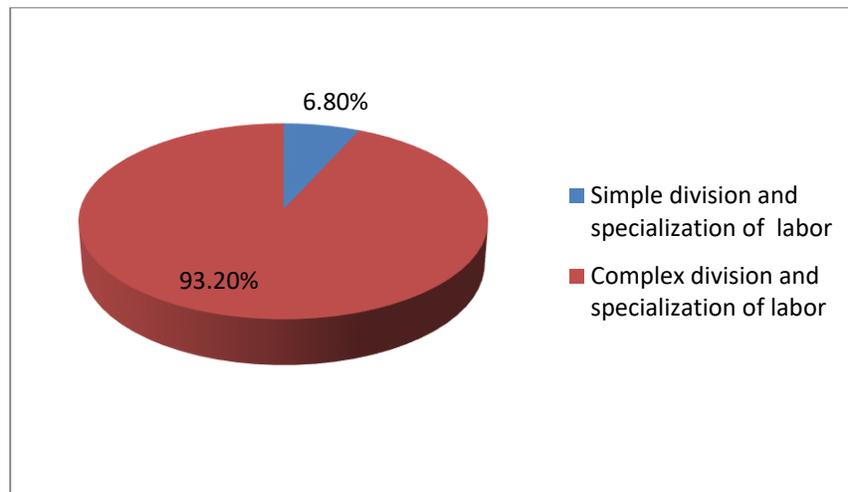


Figure 3. Form of division and specialization of labour existing in Irbid city.

4.3.3 Community Bonds in the City

Urban relations in the city are described in different ways; social relations in cities are described as segmented, short, and instrumental (Cornwell & Behler, 2015). Social relations are also described as superficial, elusive, and deterritorialized (Andreotti, 2019). The special features of the city – size, social and spatial density, heterogeneity – are the main reasons for the weakening of social relations in urban areas (Andreotti, 2019).

The findings in Table 8 indicate that the majority of the respondents (84%) revealed that they do not feel the existence of community bonds in the city in general. When respondents were asked about reasons for their feeling,

a significant majority (61.8%) answered that it is because of the constant engagement with one’s life. According to the respondents, this constant engagement with life and clock bound schedules makes it impossible to keep track of other people. In other words, a person becomes busier with his life and less inclined to know the people around him. Another 72 respondents (22.5%) said that because of the loss of neighbourhood, the community feelings did not exist. According to the respondents, the movement of the indigenous population and the invasion of new households led to the loss of neighbourhood. Finally, 51 respondents (15.7%) said that because of the rise of materialistic ethos community bonds did not exist. However, 61 respondents (16%) said that they feel the existence of community bonds in the city in general.

Table 8. Existence of community bonds in the city

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Existence of community bonds		
Existing	61	16
Not existing	322	84
Total	383	100
Reasons for disexistence of the community bonds		
Constant engagement with life	199	61.8
Loss of neighbourhood	72	22.5
Rise of materialistic ethos	51	15.7
Total	322	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021.

4.4 Migration

Migration is one among the three components of the so-called ‘Rapid Urban Growth Triad’ (Jiang& O’Neill, 2018); Demographically, overall urban growth at the national level is determined by a combination of natural increase (births minus deaths) within urban areas, migration between rural and urban areas or to/from other countries, and the reclassification of land (and population living on it) from rural to urban (Farrell, 2018).

Rural-urban migration is seen as an economic factor resulting from the push from the rural areas and the dynamics of urban attraction where the individual or family decision to migrate is a rational choice that weighs expected benefits against costs (Selod and Shilpi, 2021). In other words, it is a response to factors that affect the desirability of urban life over rural life (such as improved income, education quality or health services available in the city or negative income shocks in the rural areas).

According to Table 9, a fairly large percentage of respondents (58.8%) in the study sample had migrated to Irbid city, while the rest of the respondents were urban in origin, that is, they were born in Irbid city. Of the respondents who had migrated to the city, the majority (78.5%) said that they migrated from rural areas, while the rest (21.5%) said that they migrated from urban areas.

When respondents were asked about the reasons for their migration, 43.6% reported that they migrated for economic reasons (the city is the source of livelihood), while 28.2% each reported that they migrated for social reasons and lifestyle reasons respectively. This result can be understood in light of the fact that Irbid city is the hub of the province's economic, social and administrative activities and has gained centrality in all respects over time.

Table 9. Migration

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Status of the respondents		
Urban in origin	225	58.8
Migrator	158	41.2
Total	383	100
Place of immigration from		
Rural area	124	78.5
Urban area	34	21.5
Total	158	100
Reasons for migration		
Economic reason	68	43.6
Social reason	45	28.2
Lifestyle reasons	45	28.2
Total	158	100

Source: Based on field survey, 2021

5. Conclusion

Irbid city has emerged as one of the largest cities in the Jordan northern regions and in Jordan as a whole in the recent past. The city has gained centrality over other urban centres in Jordan due to the large influx of migrants from rural to urban areas, and the migration of refugees from neighbouring countries which led to the rapid urbanization of Irbid city. Surely, this rapid urbanization process has social implications in various aspects.

It is well known that relatively large and permanently stable population agglomerations make a difference in the way of life. The researchers considered in their arguments and discussions the effects of the urbanization process as being products or outputs of the urban environment.

In the light of the above and regarding the indicators linked with the size variable, it was found that the urbanization process did not stand as an important factor in the decline in the size of the household in the city of Irbid. However, it is an influential factor in terms of discouraging homeownership in the city. Regarding the type and condition of the Irbid houses, it is clear that flats/apartments are the prevalent housing type in the city, and for a significant majority of the city's population, the facades of their houses were made of cement or brick or other materials and this is definitely linked with the economic situation of the homeowners.

With regard to the household density variable, it was found that the largest proportion of the city's population had a rather low internal density with strong and cohesive relationships at the family level in the Irbid society. The urbanization process was also an influential factor in terms of lack of space availability and dissatisfaction with it.

With regard to the social heterogeneity variable, it was found that Irbid society is socially heterogeneous. And the urbanization process in the city has increased the levels of functional diversity and division and specialization of labour.

Finally, regarding migration as one of the three components or factors of urbanization, it was found that a fairly large percentage of the city's population are immigrants rather than its original inhabitants. The vast

majority migrated from rural areas. They migrated for economic reasons in the first place, and for social reasons or lifestyle reasons in the second place.

This research adds a novel contribution to urban literature by analysing the nature and characteristics of urbanization and providing useful insights into the social effects of increased size, density, and social heterogeneity of population on urban life. In terms of directions for future research, further work could be conducted on the expansion of the indicators used to examine the impact of urbanization on the habits and characteristics of people living in the city.

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