

## Historic school buildings integrating with local community

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**Abstract:** Rehabilitation for historic buildings and sites is an important of the cultural heritage of nations and countries, humans hold a nostalgia, respect, even a need for things ancient and when the place combines historic old and being developed to contain activities which is meet the needs of the current area then it could be considered a place which affect and affected by the local community and this is what we will discuss in this context by choosing Salt high school complex and its impact on the local community.

The project of preserving the Salt secondary school began in 1990 and it seen by local citizen as providing a sense of direction for the protection of such vulnerable environments. The aim of the project is not just to retain Salt School for its cultural value but also to keep it alive and in use by its local community in Salt city. This paper considers conservation in this context as being process oriented and not product defined.

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### 1. Introduction

Humans hold a nostalgia, respect, even a need for things ancient. As Urbani remarked: “at a time when man begins to feel the ominous historical novelty of the destruction of his own environment, certain values, like ancient art, demonstrate how the potential of human activity can integrate rather than destroy the beauty of the world.”(Urbani, 1996). and when one place contains both of ancient value and current needs by its rehabilitation then it will be irreplaceable land mark which has a multiple values like : Historical value, Aesthetic value ,Social value , Memorial value, Educational value.

Rehabilitation is the process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions, while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. Of course this process has impact on the local community and that what we will discuss in this context.

#### 1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this research are to examine how people interact with their historical buildings – areas and how this area can gain first-hand information from people and how it impact on them in such community. This research will highlight the fact that rehabilitation of cultural building and surrounding have the ability to help local community and can offer a spaces where they can use in their daily life. This context will try to analyze the impact of Salt secondary school rehabilitation on the local community in Salt city.

### 1.2 Methodology

Descriptive Qualitative and analytical method, A-Desk research this included the collection of all documents, articles, and statistical material from all possible sources. The following organizations were contacted and actual information obtained from them.

- Royal Scientific Society.
- Greater Salt Municipality.
- Eamar Salt Foundation.
- Salt secondary school office.

Others were contacted but were either uncooperative or did not have any recent or relevant information to share.

B- Questionnaires: City residents Form, Building user Form.

C-Interviewed: Community, student and teachers.

### 2. Literature review

The research is dwelling in the interacting between historic building and local community it will discuss the importance of historic school building in local community, as it will identify factors and benefits for make rehabilitation for these sites in a way which can serve the local community needs. This section will review literature related to historic building and its values and what this type of building means to society.

#### 2.1 Historic environment

“The historic environment is something...which can bring communities together in a shared sense of belonging” (DCMS, 2001), historical environment could be an area, city, neighborhood or a building; The Historic

Environment is all the physical evidence for past human activity, as well as its associations that we can see, understand and feel today. This includes archaeology (sites and monuments), built heritage (historic buildings and settlements) and historic landscapes. the historic environment is a vital part of making places where we want to be. It can be a focus for civic pride and local identity and, “A loss of memory means a loss of identity. History, personally and collectively, tells us where we came from, and who we are”. (David Gibson, 1975)



Fig (1), Historic place features (Atiyat, 2014)

To be considered "historic," a place must have three essential attributes: sufficient age, a relatively high degree of physical integrity, and historical significance, according to Georgia department of natural resources they considered that any place or property which is old enough (must be at least 50 years old) to concenter as a historic place.

## 2.2 The assessment by significant values (Burra charter)

Every place is valuable in certain way, but some have clearly valuable than others according to the Burra Charter's four principal values (social, historical, scientific and aesthetic) and NSW Heritage's Office's publication Assessing Heritage Significance, four assessment criteria can be used to assess the Aboriginal heritage values of the study area. The four criteria are:

- Social value: an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- Historic value: an item is important in the course, or patterning, of cultural or natural history of the local area.
- Scientific value: an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an

understanding or the cultural or natural history of the local area.

- Aesthetic value: an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in the local area. (NSW heritage office, 2001).

Council of Educational Facility Planners International USA had made a study on 2004 concern with community development and the exits of historic school in area; they came out of many results like: 1.Public school buildings are a signature part of public education. They are part of a community's permanent infrastructure—usually lasting for many generations. 2. Community development is both reflected in and affected by the quality of the schools in a community. 3. Community involvement in school facility assessment, planning, design, and construction provides the community an opportunity to improve local schools, increase their suitability for community use, and build and strengthen connections among community members. (USA educational council, 2004).

Schools in communities play many roles. In addition to providing for basic education, they serve as social and cultural centers. They are places for sports, theater, music, and other civic activities. Over 20 years ago. A previous study showed how vital a school is 10 the survival of communities. He noted that schools serve as symbols of community autonomy, community vitality. Community integration. Personal control, personal and community tradition, and personal and community identity. (Alan Peshkin ,1982).

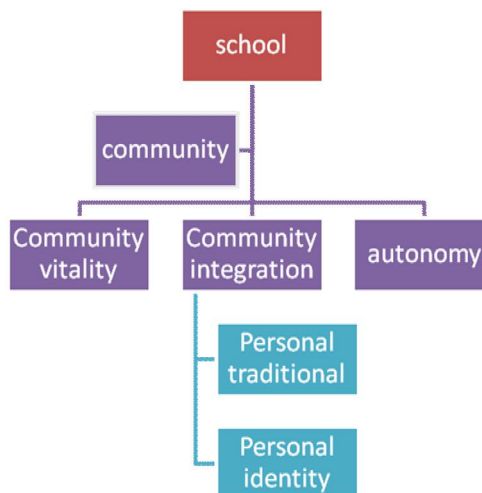


Fig (2), School roles in community, (Atiyat, 2014)

### 2.3 historic school buildings effectiveness

When the school is an integral part of the community, it becomes an icon of the community as well as a gathering place for residents of all ages. Residents and students are likely to use a community school for many activities before, during, and after school hours throughout the calendar year. Community schools create a venue for neighbors to build relationships, encouraging them to invest time, money, and effort in building a cohesive neighborhood. In rural communities and small towns, the community school may be the only civic gathering place, and its loss can be devastating; a survey of small towns in North Dakota that had lost schools showed that residents participated

“Revitalizing a neighborhood school may stimulate local businesses and residents to make improvements to their properties. This new investment can raise property tax assessments, broaden the tax base, and ultimately enhance tax revenues.”

Schools are a prominent feature in the landscape, civic life, and history of most communities. They may provide the setting for community events, town meetings, voting, and even emergency shelter. Often school grounds double as public playgrounds, recreation areas, and ball fields. For people who leave the community in which they were raised, as well as those who stay, the school may be a place to connect to one’s past.

Many older schools have design features and architectural details that are rare in newer buildings. Rather than tearing down these historic landmarks or allowing them to deteriorate, communities can preserve, restore, and upgrade these facilities to meet the requirements of a modern school.

#### 2.3.1 Community vitality with historic school

Public school buildings are a signature part of public education. They are part of a community’s permanent infrastructure usually lasting for many generations. Educating children is a primary public function. It is everyone’s business to be informed about, to participate in, and to pay for the provision of adequate public education.

Community involvement in school facility assessment, planning, design, and construction provides the community an opportunity to improve local schools, increase their suitability for community use, and build and strengthen connections among community members.

Community development is both reflected in and affected by the quality of the schools in a community. Large schools can overpower a residential neighborhood and serve to depress residential housing values. Schools in poor

condition—with graffiti, yellowed windows, peeling paint, falling fences, and unkempt grounds—signal a neighborhood in decline. Conversely, a revitalized school can help turn a neighborhood in decline into a neighborhood in transition. Good neighborhood schools can be beacons that attract families and raise property values.

#### 2.3.2 Social integration with historic school

The historic core is a centrifugal space, due to its social and physical decay. The challenge is to re-establish the core as a centripetal place of attraction, connection, link and communication amongst the different territories of the city. In other words, the right of access to the city is to be returned to the inhabitant, namely to the young people and to disadvantaged groups. This will happen, if the program succeeds in reinforcing the urban integration in a federating space, a space of urban and economic centrality. The historic core. Restored as public space of social encounter and communication, will create the conditions for a mutual knowledge and acknowledgement amongst the different communities and amongst the different ages and genders.

Older school buildings are significant community assets that should not be discarded without careful evaluation. The educational, health, and community benefits of older schools may be compelling. Older schools located in established city offer easy accessibility for students to walk or bike to school, rather than having them be driven by their parents or bused to a school far away. A school’s presence often stabilizes and sustains established neighborhoods by facilitating community involvement and providing a center for community activity.

#### 2.3.3 Community meetings with historic school

The heart of the envisioning step is a series of well-publicized, open community meetings where a vision for the future of the schools will be explored and agreed upon. The number of meetings depends on how ready community members are to communicate, how much trust there is among the disparate groups participating in the meetings, and how knowledgeable they are concerning the school building and community needs.

These meetings must be facilitated by someone who is committed to an expansive and inclusive process, not someone who is associated with a predisposition for a particular outcome. You may want to use a professionally trained facilitator who is skilled at leading community meetings. Nearby universities or your state school board association may be able to provide or recommend an experienced facilitator.

### 3. Salt city – Jordan

#### 3.1 Setting of salt

Salt lies 20 km to the east of Jordan valley at an altitude of 800 m. it has traditionally been a trading and market center serving Gilead on the east bank, with links to Nablus, Jerusalem and the Mediterranean to the west and Damascus to the north. It is now the administrative centre for the Balqa region, only 30 km north-west of Amman with which it has a close interrelationship.

The present population of salt is approaching 50,000 of whom some 15,000 live in the older central districts: “Old Salt”.

Old salt developed around the spring in the Akrad Vally, on three hills-Al-Qal’a, Al-Jada’a and As-Salalem- separated by the flood plains of Wadi-Akrad and Wadi-Es-Salt. (Salt a plan for action, 1990)

#### 3.2 Local architectural character

Salt includes more than 750 heritage buildings belongs to a different periods of time (Ruba Saesah, 2010) ,the oldest one belongs to the beginnings of the nineteenth century, these heritage buildings give historical importance for Jordan in general and for Salt in particular.

In pre-modern times, people had no choice but to live in harmony with nature.

always been able to effectively respond to its natural environment

The architectural style and construction of buildings changed during the 100 years from traditional peasant houses built of local materials to ones influenced by the international “modern” style using new materials. Architectural character also had affected with Religious and cultural facilities which are numerous and considerable variety, with the two religions represented as well as youth groups and local community associations.

#### 3.3 Community of salt city

“Salt is the nucleus of Jordan, it is not a Secondary city!” was the first reaction of the participants in any focus group session or consultation held by our work team. (Ministry of tourism, 2004.) This sentence reflects people reverence for their city: the community stands united in its sense of belonging to a city that has always been the centre of education, knowledge and culture in Jordan. Nowhere in Jordan there is a feeling of proud belonging to a family coming from a certain city as strong as it is for Salt. Neither would one find cooperation, ties, and support as solid as they are among Salti people whether they are living in Salt or outside it. In brief, the cooperative and cultural history of Salt is very

evident in its people, their habits, culture and tradition. Although they differ for religion and cultural roots, residents families are strongly tied together beyond any religious or economic segregation for having been part of the development, building and rebuilding of Salt and thus having been instrumental in the coming to being and development of the Jordanian nation.

The community of Salt is a very traditional one and respect for such traditions and cultural habits is hardly required from the residents themselves as well as from the visitors, whatever their nationality may be. Any disrespect is not tolerated and will not be taken lightly. This strong sense of traditions also contribute to confining the youth, and male protectiveness only adds to the confinement of women, inhibiting their full participation in city development whether acting as entrepreneurs or professionals.

#### 3.3.1 Salt community issues

Salt has to face a number of key issues affecting its social and economic development. These key issues include:



Fig (3), Salt city issues (Atiyat, 2014).

- Fragmentation of socio-urban fabric. Salt is made of separated residential compounds highly characterized for tribal belonging. The core does not succeed in playing the role of federating place and pole of economic, social and urban centrality.
- Exclusion of the city from the economic benefits of tourism. While people from Salt have been strong actors in the Country’s modern history, yet the city is excluded from tourist flows. The cultural heritage as an economic asset remains totally underdeveloped. The potential assets in



terms of human resources, skills and culture, remain largely under-utilized.

- Lack of socialization spaces namely for the youth that form the majority of the population and that are lacking in cultural, educational and leisure activities.
- Decay and crisis of public spaces. The main factors that affect the urban environment of Salt contribute to decrease the quality of the urban space and of the experience of the city for residents, visitors and tourists.
- In addition to above-mentioned issues, there are many other problems that affect the daily standard of living in Salt, the most important of them being the insufficient internal transportation service. Another issue is the continuous traffic jams on the main streets. Both problems get worse during Ramadan and the Eid holidays affecting the daily activities of many. Low standards of cleanliness in the city and at the bus terminal in particular, unorganized streets, lack of parking, improperly paved side streets and absence of taxi service stops are other related issues.

### 3.4 Salt Schools and training centers

There are around 36 schools in Salt: 24 are primary schools and 12 are secondary academic; they cater for around 16,577 students. In addition there are 20 nurseries operated by the Ministry of Social Development. Currently the Balqa Applied University and the Amman Private University are the two nearest universities to Salt as well as the Salt Intermediate College. (Ministry of tourism. 2006).

### 4 Salt secondary school

After the Great Arab Revolution, in 1921 Salt served as the capital of the new Trans-Jordan government until the capital was moved to Amman in 1922. At that time the most prosperous families moved to the newly established Capital and Salt began to lose its influential position in Jordan. However, the city retained its prosperity for a while, and in 1923 the prestigious Salt Secondary School was built as on the main knowledge centre in Jordan; the school boasts students who became and still are among the leaders of Jordan.

#### 4.1 A historical overview

Construction was initiated in 1921 for the ground floor, the construction was completed in 1923, and it was opened by His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Al Hussein I, fig (4). The school was made up of one floor and were limited in teaching elementary grades, in 1956 when Royal Highness King Hussein visited the school he ordered to

establish a second floor to become also modeled in the secondary stage, The curriculum has been borrowed from neighboring countries, the original buildings on the site was the main building, library, and science lab which was the first of its kind in the area on that time and student accommodation, In 1992, His Majesty the late King Hussein visited the school, and met with The faculty, and the guidance of His Majesty the King to start the development of this school which has the respect and love of the Hashemite leadership and what came out of the Jordan's top men.

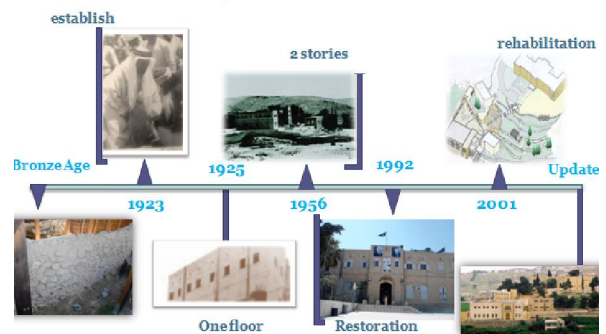


Fig (4), Salt secondary school site timeline, (Atiyat, 2014).

#### 4.2 Salt secondary school values

What Does Salt School Mean to the local community? Salt secondary school has many values like Historical value, Aesthetic value, Social value, Memorial value, Educational value. It was build with the local volunteers citizen on a large land with 30.000 m2 was donation by one of the population , it was and still one of the important public school building in the area, it was an attractive structure for allot of student in Jordan , many of leaders, ministers, scientists had graduated from it , it deserved the loyal majesties attention from its beginning until know all that make it significant landmark which local community feeling pride of it , and have a strong relationship with it .

#### 4.3 building description

Salt high school located on the top of al-jada'a, hell like any other important public building in the city the main entrance of the building was directed to the north for acclimate reasons plus it was directed to the same direction of the main entrance for the salt city so it can open her arms for the visitors and for the student from other cities.

location	Aljada'a
Site number	77-Albalad
Built area \ Site area	4700 m <sup>2</sup> \ 30600 m <sup>2</sup>
Building type	school
Building height	10 m
Number of floors	2 floors
Dates of additions	1992, 1996, 2001
Types of additions	Restoration, building, landscape, playground.

Fig (5), Salt school building description, greater salt municipality, 2004).



Fig (6), Salt school building description, greater salt municipality, 2004).

Access to the school is by the main road, off the entrance of the city which is lead to the community college, Mansheya district and Gador district, this paved street has a width of four meters.

School area consists of a main building and a number of outbuildings like; building school activities, building of industrial department, laboratory building in addition to the small mosque and a external students toilet, these buildings permeate by old wooded areas which it has cultivated in 30s by the students and the teachers.

The main building of the school consists of two floors, which was built of yellow limestone. The ground floor contains of 16 rooms on the thickness of walls almost one meter, while the first floor consists of 11 rooms total thickness of walls about 35 cm and the height reaches of each of the floors of the building to five meters. The roof of the building is of reinforced concrete built on steel bridges, and the tiled floor of the building is old and ornate tiles, and building facades characterized by simplicity and contain the pace of openings on the ground floor and rectangular openings are covered by metal shutters on the first floor. Fig (7)

The stone elevations has few details, concentrated at the main entrance of the school, which is surrounded by columns and ornate stone bases and there is a prominent stone ledge between floors and stone flagpole. There are a number of stone bases at the entrance to the building erected on what seems to be used as a columns supporting the first floor balcony above the main entrance, this balcony didn't built for anonymous reason . Fig (8)

Before restoration, there was no connection with the facilities in the school area spatially builds on the top of hill and others bellow , playground was in bad condition so the other facilities, which was influence in a negative way on this remarkable land mark .



Fig (7), the main entrance, (Atiyat.2014).

#### 4.4 Salt secondary school rehabilitation

Condition of the building and the location (before maintenance work and additions)

The main building:

When visiting the main building before the start of the project and conduct maintenance work, the team observed the follows:

- The earlier wooden windows on the ground floor were replaced with another metal, and replaced a number of doors and iron protection and the external blends somehow with differ details from the original ones.
- Additions works to the building were built earlier and which affect in a negative way on the school building and surrounding, that additions include metal umbrellas, drinking water fountain and wc units.
- Patterned tiles on the ground floor, tiles for windows were in a bad condition, Also that some

of the tiles had been removed earlier and replaced with other homogeneous tiles.

- All electrical connections were external and sprawled disorganized, where the walls on the ground floor was built from the regular courses of stone from the inside and abroad.
- The ceiling in the first floor and the ground floor was in very bad condition.
- The exterior walls of the building were suffering from moisture, mold and need to clean up.
- Wooden exterior doors were broken in some areas and the surface is scratched and painted inappropriate.
- Stone ankle was in poor condition, which was causing water leaks and moisture to some classroom.

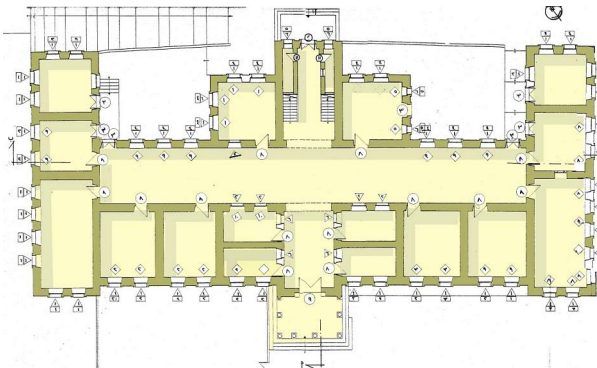


Fig (8), ground floor plan of the Existing main Building, (Royal Scientific Society, 2014)

The Royal Scientific Society took all that into account and they remove all wrong restoration and re-Additions of the main building in the first phase in 1992, while the second phase initiated by the RSS in 1996 include the rehabilitation of the school and surrounding. It has been Repair the old buildings and make a connecting between the old and the addition of new buildings and the establishment of a new stadium theater library development establish a new multiuse building for student activates. Fig (9) These events do not serve only students, but also can be used by the people in the local area.



Fig (9), Elevations of the Existing main Building, (Royal Scientific Society, 2014).

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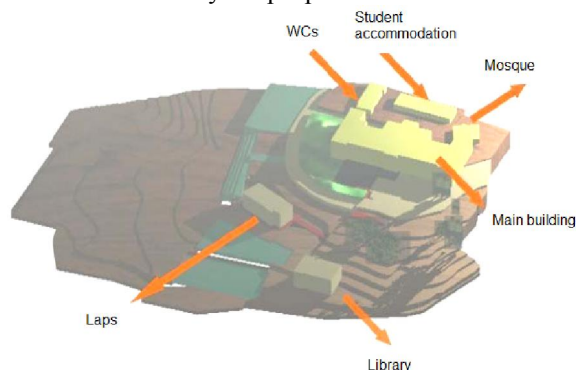


Fig (10) ,site condition before rehabilitation. (Royal Scientific Society, 2014)

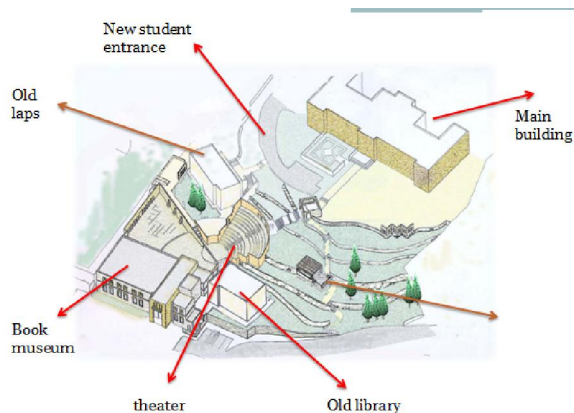


Fig (11),site condition after rehabilitation. (Royal Scientific Society, 2014)

The rehabilitation process is still ongoing by the Royal Scientific Society, which aims to develop the school district is to serve students, school attendance and the community, and now has reached almost the final stages, Fig(12) , including services, and multi-purpose hall, which was built and include: Ground floor consists of entrance hall, reception hall and theater and services of total area (730 m), all that will done in a provisional architectural way which is befits this prestigious school.

## 5. Amylases & Results

For the purposes of the study survey; a sample of the indigenous people and the residents of Salt and has interviewed; nearly 21 families and 32 student have been selected randomly during the period 15 \ 04 \ 2014-17 \ 04 \ 2014, the category ages was between 18-49 years, they were asked to do a small questionnaire to note the extent of their association with their identity architecture associated and population passion to their historic School.

The questionnaire and interviews were designed keeping in mind previous studies like Alan Pushkin (1982), the questionnaire was directed to local families near the school and school students (the user of the building), these students and local families were picked to answer the questionnaire and interview are familiar with this area, and could identify their needs and perspectives more specifically. they were asked about their relationship with the spiritual school and how to treat it and what it means to them and whether they are using the new facilities that have been added the final stage and whether they allow their children after school to go and play the playground and whether they would like to be added to certain facilities that can use them, and can be of benefit to the local community; the student were asked about wt is the most beautiful thing they love in their school and they mostly mentioned that the new playground is very useful and safety where they can freely play football away from traffic they were asked two if they feel uncomfortable when local people use the library facilities and various buildings of the School and the response was most likely they will be happy when their school become a more vital place.

### 5.1 Study finds

Characteristics of study participants; both of building users (the students) and local inhabitance (the visitors) were picked to answer the questionnaire, 21 families were picked and in collaboration with the Department of Salt School questionnaire was distributed to 32 students. (table(1)).

Table 1 shows the characterized of the selected sample for interviews & questionnaire. (Atiyat.2014)

And the following questions were directed to them:

- Do you see the need to take advantage of old buildings? Yes No.
- Do you see the need for the maintenance of old buildings, to maintain the urban identity of the shed? Yes No.



- Do you have a desire to volunteer to participate in the process of maintenance of historic buildings? Yes No.

-At the end of a project to rehabilitate of the school you will use the library and the playground and the new facilities? Yes No.

Table 1. The characterized of the selected sample for interviews & questionnaire.

characteristic	age rang	number
Students (building user)	15-18	32
Adults (local community)	18-49	43
Total	15-49	75

Table (2) shows that 33 people from the local community believe in the advantages of historic building while 35 people see the need for the maintenance of old buildings and renovated to preserve the architectural identity of the Salt, and 28 people support voluntary participation programs in the process of maintenance of historic buildings, and 39 people agreed to use the facilities after the rehabilitate of the school project.

Table 2: Results of the study sample related to the questionnaire.(Atiyat.2014)

CHARACTARSTIC	EXPOLITE & ADVANTIGE		RESTORATION OF OLD BUILDINGS		VOLUNTEER AND PARTICIPATE		USE THE NEW FACILITES IN THE PROJECT	
	number		number		Number		number	
15-18 years	yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
		7	25	22	10	21	11	30
18-49 years	33	10	35	8	28	15	39	4

While the group age between 15-18 (users of the main building of the school), it was found that 25 people see that there is no need to demolish the historic building , 22 student believed for the need to maintenance of the historic buildings to maintain the urban identity of Salt, and the number of people from Category who wish to participate in the process of volunteer maintenance of heritage buildings were 21 student, 30 of the total 32 student also agree to use the new facilities in the rehabilitation school project.

From the above we conclude that both students and locals encourage the process of restoration of old buildings, they do not agree for the demolishing for such as this type of building and this is due to their emotional attachment to this type of building such as Salt school. emotional conjunction for Salti community for their historic buildings was noticed .also it was conclude that the percentage of those who want to subscribe in volunteering operations by students was the largest of which by the locals while both locals and students expressed their desire and enthusiasm in the use of the new facilities of the Salt secondary School rehabilitation.

## 5.2 conclusions

1. The condition of school buildings and grounds affect the quality of education and the vitality of the school and its community.
2. Broad community involvement in decisions affecting public schools results in better education, better facilities and stronger communities.
3. To meet the community's needs, the school might share space with other public services, such as health clinics, libraries, senior citizen centers, early childhood centers, day care, and employment services.
4. Development should represent the values and the unique history, culture, economy, and geography of a community. Smart growth development creates a sense of define neighborhoods, towns, and regions. It encourages construction and preservation of buildings that prove to be assets to a community over time because of the services they provide and the unique contribution they make to the look and feel of a city.
5. The school development offers an unprecedented opportunity to improve the quality of schools and communities together.
6. The emotional cohesion with the cultural environment is based on loyalty and association to

the place, and that what we found during the study with Salti people loyalty to their historic school.

7. Our society is reflected by the buildings we protect they say something about who we are, and cultural buildings often reflect the lifestyle of the past and say something about the people who occupied them.

8. Rehabilitation of old school site has many benefits on the local community: on the educational level it will engage students in learning, connect member of school and the community. on the economic level it will save the community money by using a single structure to achieve several goals, increase job opportunities for the locals.

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