The University of Hull

Socio-economic Change in a Saudi Village:

A Social Anthropological Study of Assfan.

Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Hull

By

Henydi Atteah Al-Bishri

April 2004

DEDICATION

To All My Family Members; to My Father, My

Mother, My Brothers, My Sisters, My Wife and

My Children (Hashim, Hatim and Orjwan), who

supported me all the way through my study.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this research is to investigate and explore aspects of socio-economic life in a village, Assfan, in Saudi Arabia and to see whether there have been changes, after three decades of formal development planning in the country, and how these changes have affected the lives of the population. Three themes were explored from a structural functionalist perspective: the family system, with a special focus on marriage, as an aspect of social life; the economic system; and observance of religious duties.

The study was based on questionnaires, interviews and participant observation. Questionnaires were administered to 154 younger inhabitants (aged 18 to 38 years old) and 150 older inhabitants (39 years or older), as heads of households, selected from the records of villagers in the health centre at Assfan. Women's perspectives were obtained via in-depth interviews conducted by a female assistant. In addition, in-depth study of life before 1970 was undertaken through interviews with important and elderly people of the village. Further insights were obtained through participant observation of village life.

Descriptive data are presented regarding the background of the sample, followed by the respondents' answers to the three aspects of the study; marriage: labour market and religious performance. Chi square tests were used to investigate significant differences in responses between the older and younger sample groups which would constitute evidence of social change.

The findings revealed evidence of change in marriage customs and economic life. There was a trend towards later marriage, related to pursuit of education, and a trend away from polygamy and cross cousin marriage. Celebrations had become more ostentatious and commercialised. In the economic sphere, a move away from agriculture and pastoralism was evident in favour of teaching and government service, as well as entrepreneurial activity providing goods and services for other villages, and for travellers. Despite changes in prosperity, however, there was no fundamental change in the value system. Regard to observance and the related norms of mutuality and reciprocation were still strong.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, thanks and praise to Almighty Allah who gave me health, time, patience and guidance, without whose help and assistance this work would never have seen the light of a day.

I would like also to express my deep and sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr. Norman O'Neill, for his unstinting support and valuable comments throughout my period of study. I appreciate his able guidance, continuous moral support and very kind heart.

My thanks go as well to the staff of the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department in the University of Hull, the staff of the Graduate Research Institute, and the staff of the Library at Hull University, for all their help and assistance in my research.

Special thanks to King Abdulaziz University, for provision of a scholarship, and to every member of staff in the Sociology Department at the University for their help and support. Thanks also to the Saudi Cultural Attaché in London.

I am profoundly grateful to my parents, for their prayers for me to finish my study and go back to them, and to my brothers and sisters, especially my brother Aysh, for their prayers, constant support and encouragement, and to all my relatives and friends in Saudi Arabia, and to my friends in the Saudi Students' Club in Hull. Also many thanks to Mrs Kathryn Spry for proof-reading this work.

Last, but not least, I owe a special debt of gratitude for the patience and encouragement of my dear wife (Umm Hashim), who did so much for me all along the way and to my beloved children, Hashim, Hatim and Orjwan.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER ONE

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter One
Outline of the Study

1.1. Introduction

Saudi Arabia has a unique Islamic heritage and a long-standing traditional culture. Nevertheless, it has undergone and is actively pursing change, most of it introduced by the government through modern development plans and programmes that have influenced its way of life in general and affected the Saudi village in particular. However, the Saudi experience of and reaction to change differ from those of other countries, including other Muslim and Arab countries. It should be recognised that modern development was actively introduced by the Saudi government when the country was united in 1932, as part of the process of nation building to transform Saudi Arabia into a modern state and to improve the welfare of society. The process of development was speeded up when the income from oil production increased in the 1970s.

1.2. Background to the Study

The village in Saudi Arabia today is different from that of a generation (about 30 years) ago in the sense that some aspects of people's life in the village have changed. Development in the country has brought about changes in many sectors of Saudi society. The discovery of oil brought about a new era for Saudi Arabia, improving the economic situation of the country after it had lagged behind for many years. Before the discovery of oil, the country was isolated from other parts of the world because of its poverty and desert land (Hamdan, 1990), except for the western region, where the holy places are located. With the discovery of oil, however, the isolation of the country was ended, and the country began to develop rapidly.

With the discovery of oil, many changes came about within Saudi society. Economic conditions, education, health, labour market, family life, transportation and life styles in Saudi villages have been affected by the discovery of oil and the development plans formulated by the government.

The economic sphere has developed from dependence on agriculture and simple ways of trade to domination by industrialisation, modern methods of agriculture, and a wide range of international trade. Education has improved in quantity and quality as a consequence of the huge wealth gained from oil production. Schools and universities are available all around the country and new and modern buildings are furnished to serve students. Health services in the country have also improved as a result of the availability of money. Hospitals, health centres and clinics are now scattered throughout the country and are equipped with the medicines and equipment needed to provide effective services. The transportation and communication systems have changed also. Today, a system of modern highways exists in the country, connecting cities and villages to each other and the country to neighbouring countries. In addition, telex, mail services, and other forms of mass media have been introduced and become more available and effective than before.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The main aim of the study is to explore the nature of the social change in the socio-economic aspects of life among the people in Assfan village, in the Western region of Saudi Arabia, since the First Development Plan was conceived in 1970, compared with the time before 1970.

1.3.1. Objectives of the Study

In this study, an attempt is made to determine the changes which have appeared in Assfan village in the last three decades, in the following aspects:

First: To determine the changes, which have occurred in social life, specifically in

3

marriage customs, in relation to the following:

A.   The preferred age for marriage;

B.   The way weddings are celebrated;

C.   The custom of adorning the bride;

D.   The criterion for choosing a wife;

E.   The assistance which is given to the groom on his wedding by his relatives,

F.   friends and guests;

G.   The amount of the bride gift (*Mahr*) and how far it is acceptable to the people.

Second: To determine the changes that have occurred in the economy, through the following:

A.   The work opportunities which are available for the village's inhabitants;

B.   The fields of work in which Assfan's people are engaged;

C.   Whether women work in the village or outside;

D.   The presence of foreign workers in the village, their places of origin, the main

kinds of jobs which they perform, and their perceived level of skill;

E.   Businesses run by Assfan's people;

F.   The emigration of the villagers.

Third: To investigate changes in people's observance of religious duties and values,

through the following:

A.   The continuity of performance of religious duties, such as prayers in the village

mosques;

B.   How religious festivals are celebrated;

C.   What help is provided by Assfan's people to the needy in their society.

1.3.2. Questions of the Study

The current study seeks to answer the following questions:

First: What changes have occurred in marriage customs?

1. What is the preferred age for marriage in the Assfan community?

2. How are weddings celebrated?

3. How is the bride adorned?

4. What are the criteria for choosing a wife?

5. What assistance is given to the groom on his wedding?

6. How much is the bridal gift (*Mahr*) in the village and is it reasonable for the people?

Second: Have any changes occurred in the labour market?

1. What work opportunities are available for Assfan inhabitants?

2. What fields of work are available for Assfan villagers?

3. Do women work in the village of Assfan?

4. Are there foreign workers in Assfan? If so, what nationality are they, what kind

of work do they perform, and are they skilled?

5. What types of businesses are available in Assfan?

6. Do people emigrate from Assfan village?

Third: Have there been any changes in the performance of religious duties and values

in the village?

1. Do people still perform religious duties, such as prayers in the village mosques?

2. How are religious festivals celebrated?

3. Do Assfan's people help the needy in their society?

1.4. Limitations of the Study

This study tries to explore the nature of social change in the socio-economic aspects of life among the people in Assfan village, in the Western region of Saudi Arabia.

The researcher conducted the fieldwork in 1998. The survey is concerned predominantly with male householders who lived in Assfan at the time of the field-work. A comparatively small number of female residents was also included.

The village of Assfan was selected as suitable. Why Assfan in particular, when there are many other communities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia worthy of study?

1. The village of Assfan has not been involved in any type of sociological or anthropological studies before.

2. The researcher was educated in the village, has relatives and friends there, and is acquainted with some of the local people, particularly the Amir, Imam, headteacher, and a shopkeeper, which would facilitate access to the target population.

3. It was believed that a village of this small size would give the researcher an advantage in the task of getting into close contact with the inhabitants.

4. Moreover, some specialist staff in King Abdulaziz University have recommended that this village in particular should be studied.

5. Since the author's own village is situated in close proximity to this area, he has considerable personal knowledge of it. Familiarity is an important aspect in interpreting the findings of any research.

6. The proximity of the village to Makkah should, itself, give rise to some interesting research information.

1.5. Research Methods

A brief outline of the methodology used in conducting the study and achieving the objectives of this research is given here; more detailed accounts of the development of the research instruments are provided in Chapter Six.

Before the main fieldwork was undertaken, several exploratory interviews were carried out to obtain general background information about the way of life in Assfan, in order to identify themes and issues for farther investigation.

A multi-method design was used, based on the following:

- A questionnaire survey of the people of Assfan;

- In-depth interviews with women, conducted by a female assistant;

- In-depth study of life history through interviews with important and old people of the village;

- Participant Observation.

Since the main objective of the study was to investigate social change in the life and institutions of the people of Assfan in Saudi Arabia, random samples were selected from two target groups of the people: a young group and an older group, using the records in the health centre in Assfan as a sampling frame.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study derives its significance from its originality, contribution to knowledge and practical value as a source of information from which policy implications may be drawn.

This study sheds light on social change, showing how socio-economic aspects of the institutions in the Saudi village have been affected by changes in the country as a whole

and the village in particular. These changes were a result of the development which the country has witnessed in the last three decades, since the first development plan was introduced in 1970.

Assfan is situated in the main road between Makkah and Madinah, which gives it an important location, as travellers between those two cities, which are regarded as holy by Muslims all over the world, must pass along this route. Moreover, it is close to Makkah and Jeddah, two of the biggest cities in the country, and contact with them has brought modernisation and development to the village, which affects the social life in the village, and in the family, the labour market, religious observance, education, communication, and services.

1.7. Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in nine chapters, including this introductory chapter, as follows:

Chapter Two provides background information on the region and village in which the research was conducted, in the context of Saudi Arabia as a whole. The geographical and climatic features which influence lifestyles and means of livelihood are described, as are typical dwellings. A description is also given of each of the neighbourhoods of Assfan.

Chapter Three places the location of the study in its historical context. The background to the creation of Saudi Arabia is outlined and an account given of the two holy cities, Makkah and Madinah, between which Assfan is situated. Historical references to Assfan are noted and the impact of its strategic location is considered.

In **Chapter Four,** a review is presented of social functionalist theory and of previous research on social change in relation to the family system, the economic system and religion, which influenced the selection of themes and issues for investigation.

The themes of continuity and change emerging from previous studies are explored further in **Chapter Five,** in which key dimensions of change resulting from the Saudi

development process are considered. After an initial overview of the development process as driven by successive rulers, the dimensions of economy, education, and technology (including transport and communications) are examined; consideration is also given to a major stabilising factor, religion.

Chapter Six explains the methods used to collect data by which to assess socio-economic change in Assfan. Two approaches, quantitative (via a questionnaire) and qualitative (via interviews and participant observation) were used in a complementary fashion. The rationale for the choice of methods is explained, the development of the questionnaire is described, and the methods of selecting samples and conducting the research procedures are described, highlighting issues of validity and reliability.

The results from the questionnaire survey are reported in **Chapter Seven** and, in **Chapter Eight**, they are discussed in the light of the qualitative information obtained, and of previous research.

In **Chapter Nine**, a Conclusion is presented, together with suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO
THE POSITION AND MAIN FEATURES
OF THE VILLAGE

Chapter Two
The Position and Main Features
of the Village

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides background information on the region on which this study is focused, setting it in the context of Saudi Arabia as a whole. Such background information is necessary to an understanding of the situation in which Assfan's people live, and the geographical, climatic and other factors that have shaped their life-style. The chapter is divided into four sections. It begins by pinpointing the location and outlying the main geographical features of Saudi Arabia as a whole, moving on to indicate the position within the country of Makkah and Assfan. Section two is concerned with climate. Again, it looks first at the country as a whole, then focuses on Makkah and Assfan. The nature of the various types of dwelling found in Assfan is described in the third section of the chapter. Finally, a description is given of each of the five *Harahs* or neighbourhoods of Assfan.

2.1. Setting

2.1.1. Setting of Saudi Arabia

The country of Saudi Arabia extends between longitude 34° and 56° East latitude 33°and 34° North (Mutabbakani, 1993). It has a vital strategic location, lying as it does at the cross-roads of three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe. It covers two-thirds of the Arabian peninsula (see Figure 2.1), approximately 2.25 million km²(865,000 square miles).

FIGURE 2.1

MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
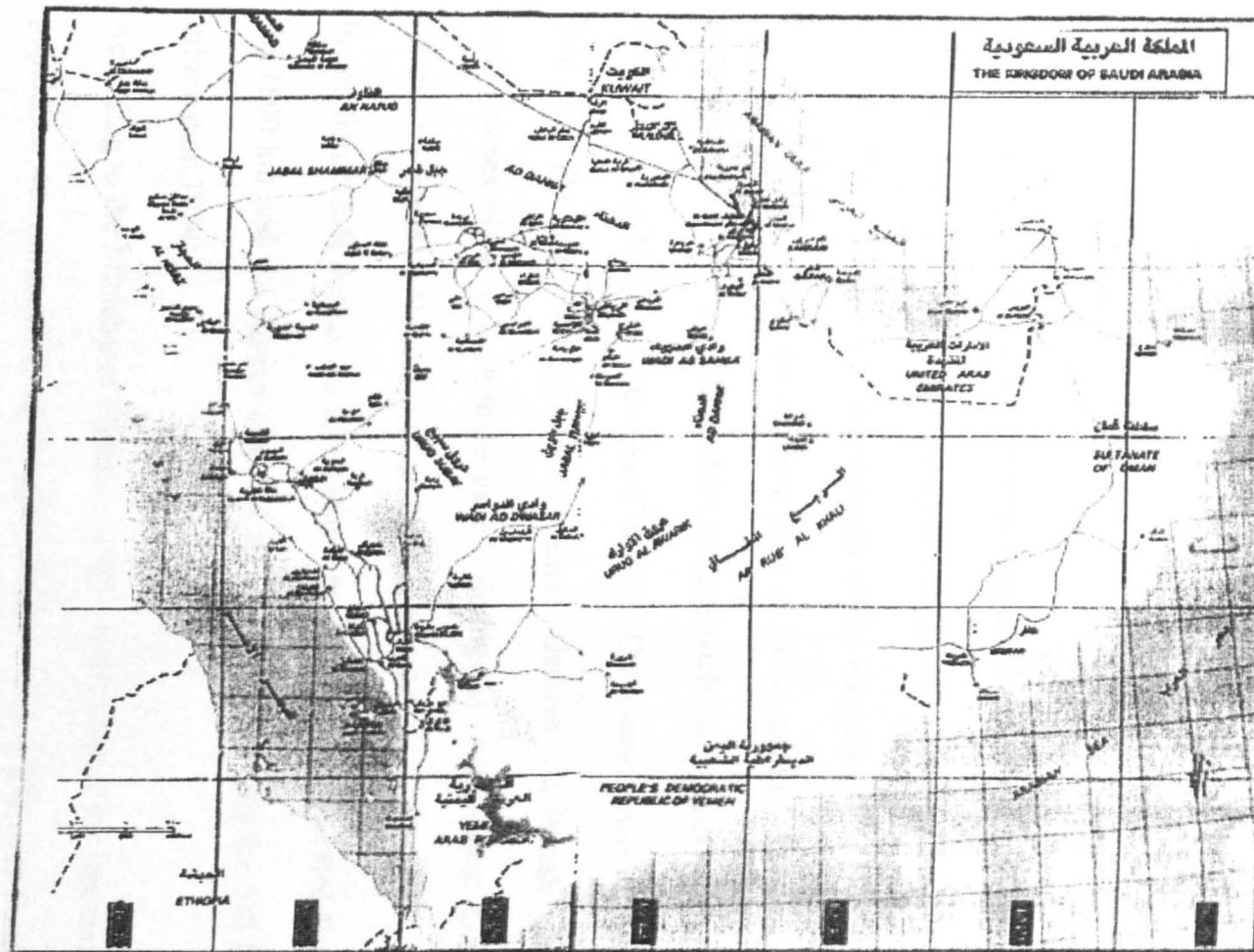
Source: Farsi, Z (1992), National Guide and Atlas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2nd edition, 2nd print, Pp111-112, Engineer Zaki M. A. Farsi, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

It is bordered to the west by the Red Sea, to the north by Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait, to the east by the Arabian Gulf, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman and to the south by Yemen (Ministry of Planning,1995).

Geographically, Saudi Arabia can be described as a narrow coastal plain behind which is a mountain range spanning the length of the western coastline. These mountains gradually rise in elevation from north to south. To the east is a massive plateau which slopes gently towards the Arabian Gulf. Part of this plateau is covered by the world's largest sand desert, Al Rub Al Khali, or the Empty Quarter (Ministry of Information,1994).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consists of several distinctive geographical areas: Al Rub Al Khali (The Empty Quarter), locally known as the "Ocean of Sand" covers an area of approximately 250,000 km² in the south of the Kingdom. The Nufud Desert (Basin), spreads over the central and northern parts of the Kingdom. Al Dahna is in the eastern part of the country. The Sarawat Mountains stretch from north to south along the Red Sea. The Twaig Mountains are found in Najd. The coastal plains of Tuhama border the Red Sea. The main valleys are Al Sarhan, Hanifah, Al Rimah and Fatima. Deep watercourses fill several of these valleys during the rainy season. Oases and mineral springs are found in Al Ehsa, Al Gatif and Al Kharj.

In addition, Saudi Arabia has 2,510 kilometres of coastline. The Red Sea coast stretches for 1800 km and the eastern coast on the Arabian Gulf runs for 610 km (Ministry of Information,1994).

According to the Ministry of Planning (1995), at the time of the last census in 1992, the population was estimated at 16,929,294, of whom 12,304,835 were Saudi nationals. The population density is seven persons per square kilometre. Saudi Arabia consists of thirteen administrative regions as follows: Riyadh, Makkah Al Mukarramah, Al

Madinah Al Munwarah, Qassim, Al Sharkiyah, Aseer, Hail, Tabouk, Al Baha, Al

Hodood Al Shamalia, Al Jouf, Jizan and Najran. Each administrative region is

composed of "*mohafazat*". There are 43 level A *mohafaza* and 61 level B *mohafaza*

(*Al- Madinah Daily*, 28 April 1994).

2.1.2. Setting of Makkah

The Makkah Planning Region does not correspond to any well defined physical

boundaries and the use of Sub-Emirate boundaries has been agreed upon as a basis for

planning and development studies and preparation of master directive plans for Makkah

and the other settlements in its hinterland. The Region covers an area of 8020 km². It

extends between latitude 21° and 25° North and between longitude 39° and 49° East

(Ministry of Information,1993) (see Figure 2.2).

A narrow projection in the south west of the Region extends to the Red Sea coast at

Ash-Shuaibah. The Region lies between the Jeddah metropolitan area in the west and

the Emirate of Taif on the east, and between the Emirates of Khulias and Madrakah in

the north and Al Laith in the south.

Makkah is situated about 75km inland of the Red Sea at the centre of the Region. The

Jeddah metropolitan area serves the Region as the entry and reception point for pilgrims

arriving from abroad by air and sea.

Madinah, the site of the second holy *Haram* (the Prophet's Mosque) lies 400 km to the

north. Taif, the summer capital of the Kingdom, is east of Makkah.

The Region is linked with the rest of the Kingdom and with neighbouring countries by a

first-class network of roads. With Jeddah and Taif, Makkah forms a corridor containing

the greatest concentration of urban population in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

(Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs,1985).

FIGURE 2.2

MAP OF THE LOCATION OF MAKKAH AND ASSFAN
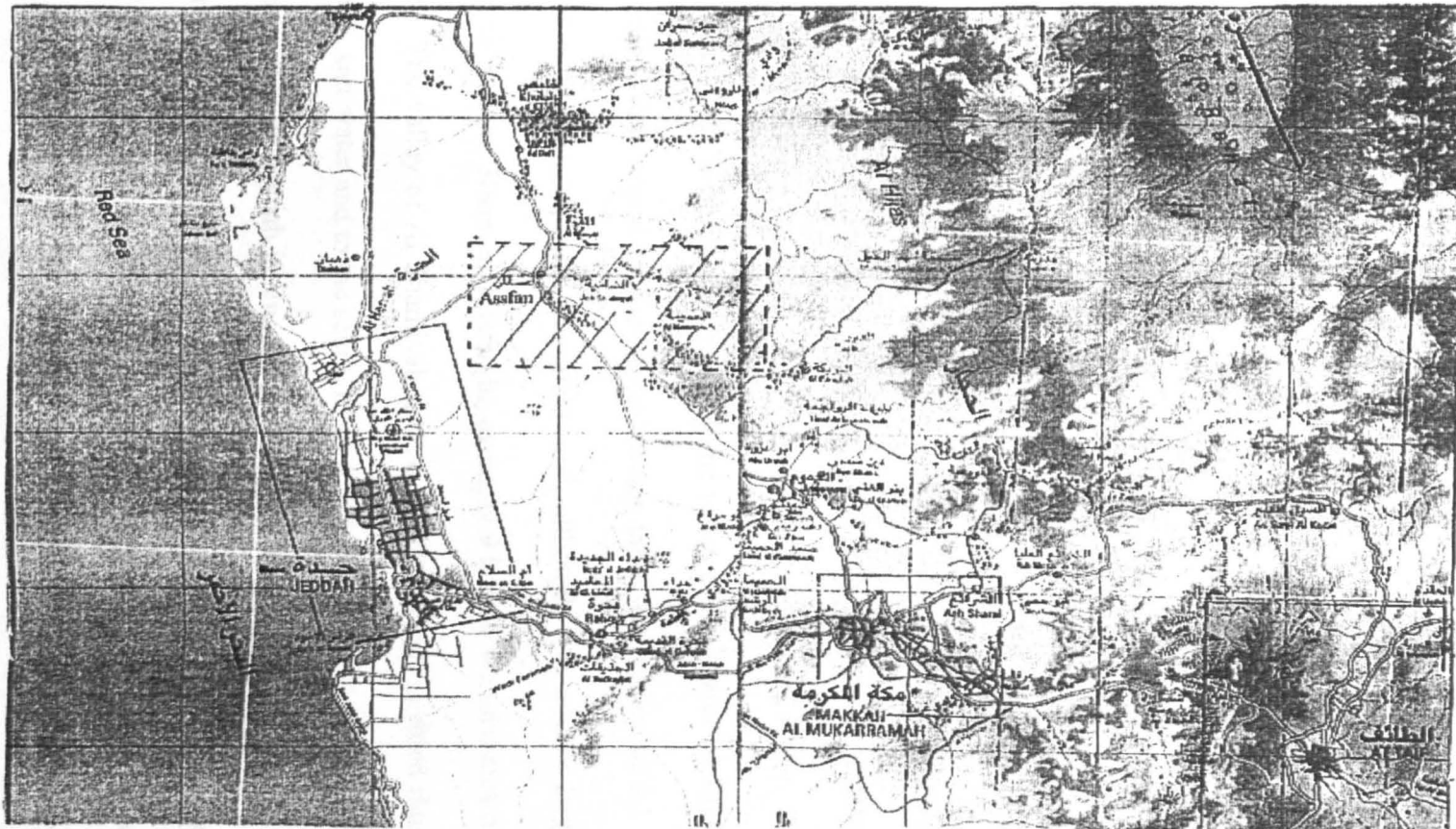
Source: Farsi, Z (1992), National Guide and Atlas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2nd edition, 2nd print, Pp129-130, Engineer Zaki M. A. Farsi, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

2.1.3. Setting and Geography of Assfan

According to the Ministry of Planning (1997), at the time of the last census in 1992 the population of Assfan village was estimated at 9,033. The Assfan basin is a large valley measuring some 2200 km². 450 km² of this area is divided into the following main valleys which meet in the basin: the valley of Al Sogoo and the valley of Al Shamiyah and Al Mukyta, located south and south-east of the valley, respectively; the valley of Faydah, located east of Assfan area; and the valley of Al Ghowla'a, located west of Assfan. Assfan's basin is located between latitude 21°. 45' 22° North and longitude 39°.10' and 39°.47' East, 60 km north of Jeddah, and 75 km north-west of Makkah Al Mukaramah. The basin slopes gradually from the City of Jeddah towards the village of Assfan; the closer to Assfan, the steeper the slope. The valley of Khulias (5350km²) borders the area northward. To the east are pre-cumbrian granite hills, traversed by small, narrow furrows, filled with silt and clay. In the east of Assfan are volcanic hills (igneous) covered by basalt rock (Geography Department, 1980). The valley slopes to the west and the north-west, meeting the valley of Al Sogoo 10 km from the village of Assfan. With regard to the ground water table, the valley of Al Shamiyah and Al Mukyta is regarded as an important one[1], although, it is not the largest in the area. Its length is about 30km, and its width averages 9 km, so the total area of this valley is 270 km². The valley of Al Shamiyah and Al Mukyta can be divided into two areas: to the north, salt water and to the south, fresh water.

The valley of Faydah is small and relatively narrow, being 7 km in length and only ½ km in width. Despite its small area (4km²), it stores the best water, accounting for 80% of the area's total water usage. 80% of this valley is excellent for agriculture, so it is

---

[1] The valley is the location of tens of farms, which export vegetables to the main cities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia i.e. Jeddah, Makkah, Taif, Riyadh and Madinah.

considered an important agricultural area. In this valley there about 200 wells. Consequently, the population density is greater than that of the other valleys.

The valley of Al Sogoo is a large and extensive one, sloping towards the north and the north-west. Its total length is 35 km, and its average width is about 20 km. Unfortunately the wells are unsuitable for both agriculture and drinking, because the water is salty.

The valley of Al Ghowla'a is regarded as the exit point for the other three valleys. Its length is 20 km and its width 3 km on average, so its total area is 60km². The ground water becomes progressively more salty towards the west, in the direction of the Red Sea (Geography Department,1980).

Assfan village is connected to Jeddah by two paved main roads. The first is Jeddah-Al Madinah which is located 35 km of the village of Assfan; the second is the Jeddah-Makkah road, which runs into Assfan itself.

The geo-morphological structure of the Assfan area is divided into two main areas:

1- the uplands (border) area, and 2-the fertile plain.

There are two types of hills in this area, the first consisting of a rock base and the second being formed by magma during the tertiary era (the third geological era), and covered by basalt. The general slope of the area is relatively steep. The highest point is about 177 m above sea level while at its lowest, it is only 20 m above the sea level.

The basin of Assfan has been subject to flooding by the sea. Indeed, the basin was created by the sea's extension, when the sea covered the basin area at the time of the formation of the regional landscape, which created a kind of topographical plain. On the other hand the sandy and clay deposits were laid down due to the erosion of torrential streams resulting in flooding.

The valley of Faydah is relatively narrow, but has a huge reservoir of ground water which is used in agriculture and for drinking purposes.

The valley of Al Sogoo is more like a plain, being very wide at its largest width, which is located near the area of Assfan. This valley is very poor in vegetation, except for the part which is near Assfan. The growth of vegetation there can be explained by the slope of the valley towards Assfan, which allows water to accumulate. Coarse sand forms most of the accumulation in the valley, to a depth of 20 m, with decomposing plants north of the paved road between Makkah and Assfan. It seems that there is less ground water in the south and this could be the reason why the vegetation is so sparse.

The valley of Al Sogoo is just a little higher than the valley of Faydah, which may be the reason why the valley of Faydah stores more ground water than Al Sogoo. South of the valley of Al Sogoo there is the area of Al Bayadah. This is so named , because the area is covered by white sand and limestone mixed with igneous rocks, formed by air and water erosion.

The land that is level extends and widens out gradually from the narrow to the wide. For instance the plain of the valley of Faydah is small, while the valley of Al Sogoo is a very wide valley containing a larger expanse of level area. This consists mainly of rough gravel type sand. In the central part, the sand is of a different consistency, being fine grained, with silt which forms the soil texture. Two types of hills are found in this area, which were formed in the tertiary and pre-cumbrian eras and are covered by basalt and black igneous rock.

The valley of Al Ghowla'a slopes through the pre-cumbrian hills, while the valley of Al Sogoo is surrounded by formations of the tertiary period, particularly in the easterly direction, whereas granite rocks form its western border.

The valleys of Al Shamiyah and Fatimah began in the middle of the sandy rocks of the third geological era (tertiary). As regards the valley of Al Sogoo, it is thought that it was formed by a fault line in the earth which runs parallel to the Red Sea (Geography Department-Umm Al- Qura' University, 1989).

The Assfan valley is now a stable valley, after the centuries of change which have shaped it as we see it today. The valley, now, with its steeply-cut slopes, has the power to carry fragmented materials, and also its flowing water has the power to carve out the water courses of the valley.

2.2. Climate

2.2.1. Climate of Saudi Arabia

The climate of Saudi Arabia is basically hot and dry. A humid climate prevails for most of the year in coastal areas and cities such as Jeddah and Jizan on the Red Sea coast, and Dammam and Dhran on the Arabian Gulf coast.

During the summer time, the temperature goes up to 50°C in the desert area, as well as the coastal regions, but in the mountains, in the southern and western regions, the maximum temperature is a moderate 18°C (Al- Farsy, 1986).

During winter time, the weather is cold over the whole country, particularly in the northern province, where snow sometimes falls.

2.2.2. Climate of Makkah

The region lies in the desert belt that stretches from India to the Sahara in Africa. In general, the area has hot dry summers and warm, relatively wet winters.

Summer temperatures in the region average 30.4°C rarely fall below 40°C at any point in the day. Winter temperatures are lower, rising to the upper twenties or low thirties during the day, occasionally dropping to as low as 10 -15°C at night (Ministry of Defence and Aviation,1996). Temperatures are generally lower at the eastern edge of the region, where elevations are considerably higher.

Rainfall in the region is sparse: the yearly average is just under 100 mm. The bulk of the annual rainfall is in the winter season and is associated with Mediterranean frontal systems.

Thunderstorms associated with monsoon-type fronts occur in many parts of the region during spring and autumn. The rainfall is usually in the form of storms of relatively short duration but high intensity, which often result in flash-flooding in many valleys. Relative humidity is higher in the west than in the east where generally higher relief has a moderating effect. Severe dust and sandstorms are common throughout the region. Wind speeds are generally high as a result of the funnelling effects of the valleys. The microclimate of Makkah is almost identical to that of the region as a whole. Rainfall averages 103 mm with extremes of 3 mm to 310 mm, with over 50 per cent falling in the winter season. In summer, temperatures rise to the upper forties and in winter to the upper twenties (Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, 1985).

2.2.3. Climate of Assfan

Generally, the climate of the Assfan area is similar to the climate of Makkah, because Assfan is located in the Makkah Region.

The climate of the Assfan area is dry with an average temperature over the year of 30-31°C (see Figure 2.3). However at night, the temperature falls below 30°C because Assfan is an open area and it does not have very high buildings, such as those in Makkah, which would block the flow of fresh air.

Seasonal variations (temperature, rain and dryness) have left their imprint on the features of the topography. Chemical erosion reaches its maximum in the rainy season of the summer months, while in the winter the cold weather and lower rainfall affect the rocks differently, with a more mechanical erosion, which is very active in the Assfan area, where the temperature plunges to freezing during the night and suddenly rises during the daytime. Despite the aridity of the area, the following factors help to create water troughs in the area:

1- the poverty of vegetation, especially on the mountainous uplands.

2- the degree of permeability of the rocks, and the types of basalt rocks.

3- topographical factors (in general, height dropping to a basin, and meandering features)(Geography Department,1980).

FIGURE 2.3

THE AVERAGE TEMPERATURES IN ASSFAN, 1987-1996
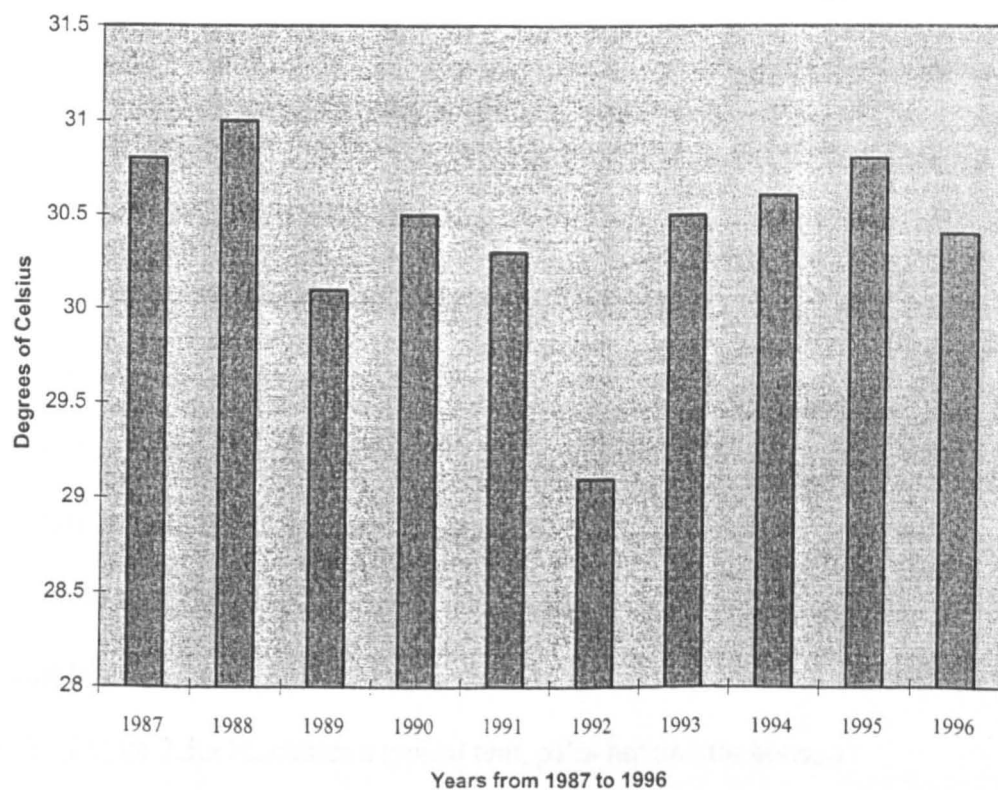
Source: Ministry of Defence and Aviation (1996), Meteorology and Environment Protection Administration, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

2.3. Housing in Assfan

Traditional houses in the settled communities of Saudi Arabia, both rural and urban, were mainly built of mud or clay, with other local materials (see Figure 2.4, which shows the difference between the old style and the modern). The houses were designed to cope with the harsh natural environment and in accordance with cultural values. However, with the rapid economic development of the country, changes have taken and are taking place in house design, in the materials used and in methods of construction. Some houses are built of cement, though retaining the design of the traditional house, while the modern house or villa is built with a variety of materials and may depart in some respects from the traditional design.

2.3.1. Types and Design of Houses in Assfan

The dwellings in Assfan, over the past thirty years, have developed from *bayt al-sha'ar* and *khaima* (tents woven of wool), to modern villas. Various types of dwelling exist, including *usha* (a hut constructed of palm leaves, twigs and straw), *sandiqa*(a tin house made from unfolded and flattened drums), *mrabba* or *bayt tyn* (a mud or clay house), a cement house, and the modern house made of concrete and bricks (Kutubkhanah et al. ,1992).(Figure 2.5.a illustrates a typical tent, palm hut and tin house.)

Though the outward form of the dwelling may vary, it should be noted that the interior design tends to remain constant in the tent and the clay and cement houses. (The palm hut and tin houses are more or less temporary quarters often used by agricultural workers who live in very cramped conditions.) There are always separate interior quarters for the men and women. The Bedouins also use the outside. Just as the nomadic Bedouin often sleeps outside his tent on the sand under the stars, so the settled Bedouin also often sleeps out under the sky in his sand garden, cut off the world only by a simple mud wall. Though a rest room or water closet may have been added to the sand garden of the permanent dwelling, the Bedouins give this facility a low priority in their houses.

Figure 2.5.b shows the floor plan of a nomadic Bedouin's tent. In the tent, which may measure 10 metres by 4 metres, the men's and women's quarters are separated by a hanging rug which generally acts as a dividing curtain. Another curtain hangs along the back of the tent, while the front side and ends are left open except during bad weather, such as a sand storm or torrential rain. Neither the nomadic nor the settled Bedouins ever add an additional room to their interior design. The rug dividing the two quarters is generally hung so that several inches of space are left at the top, bottom and sides; thus ventilation of air is possible and also a woman may reach her hand across if she should want to receive or give some coffee or other request. Both quarters contain long *masnad* (cushions for reclining), which lie on large rugs on the sand.

The women's area contains a coffee pot (*dallah*), an incense burner (*bukhur*), kitchen utensils which are usually simple, a long box for storing clothes (*sunduq*), a hand-loom, and a manual sewing machine. The women weave cloth for making tents and clothes, as well as rugs; some of these are sold commercially, so they consider a sewing machine an essential possession. Outside the tent but nearby are located the fold for the *ghanam*(herd of sheep and/or goats), made out of thorny *salam* branches (a thorny tree prevalent in valleys), and the twig shelter which encloses the area where the *qirba* (large leather bags used to hold the water supply) are kept, protecting them from domestic and wild animals. The cooking is done outside the tent, and meals are usually served on a round flat mat made of palm leaves.

The arrangement and contents of the interior quarters in the clay house are very similar to those of the tent, except that built-in shelves are often provided and ventilation is obtained through triangular holes (*taqa*) in the north wall of the quarters. Windows are not practical in this scorching climate, and the holes, placed about 15 to 20 centimetres from the sand level, allow a breeze to come in. In midsummer, the holes are blocked with rugs to stop the heated wind from entering the house.

The sand garden is circumscribed by a mud wall, generally 1.4 to 1.7 metres in height, with separate entrances for men and women. The garden provides a cloistered area where guests may be received in the evening. To entertain guests, a rug is generally laid down with *masnad* cushions in the centre of the garden. A *seder* (a tall tree prevalent on farms) or palm tree often gives a little shade during the day, while nearby lamps provide light in the evening.

<u>FIGURE 2.4</u>

<u>OLD AND MODERN STYLE OF HOUSES IN ASSFAN</u>
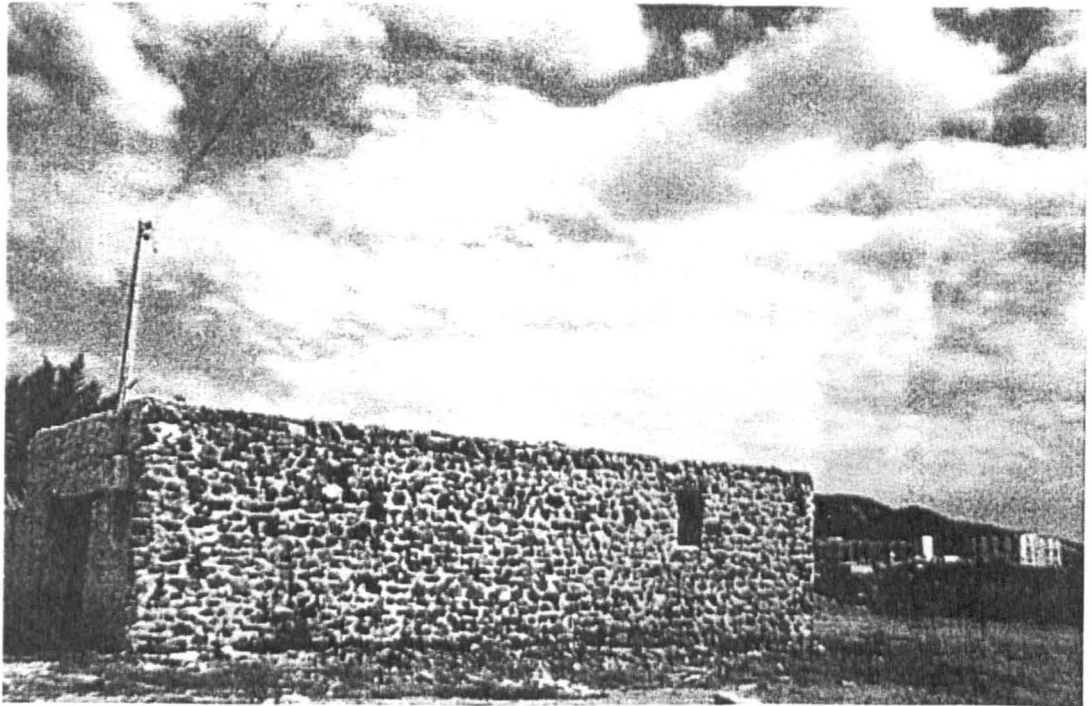
An Old Style House
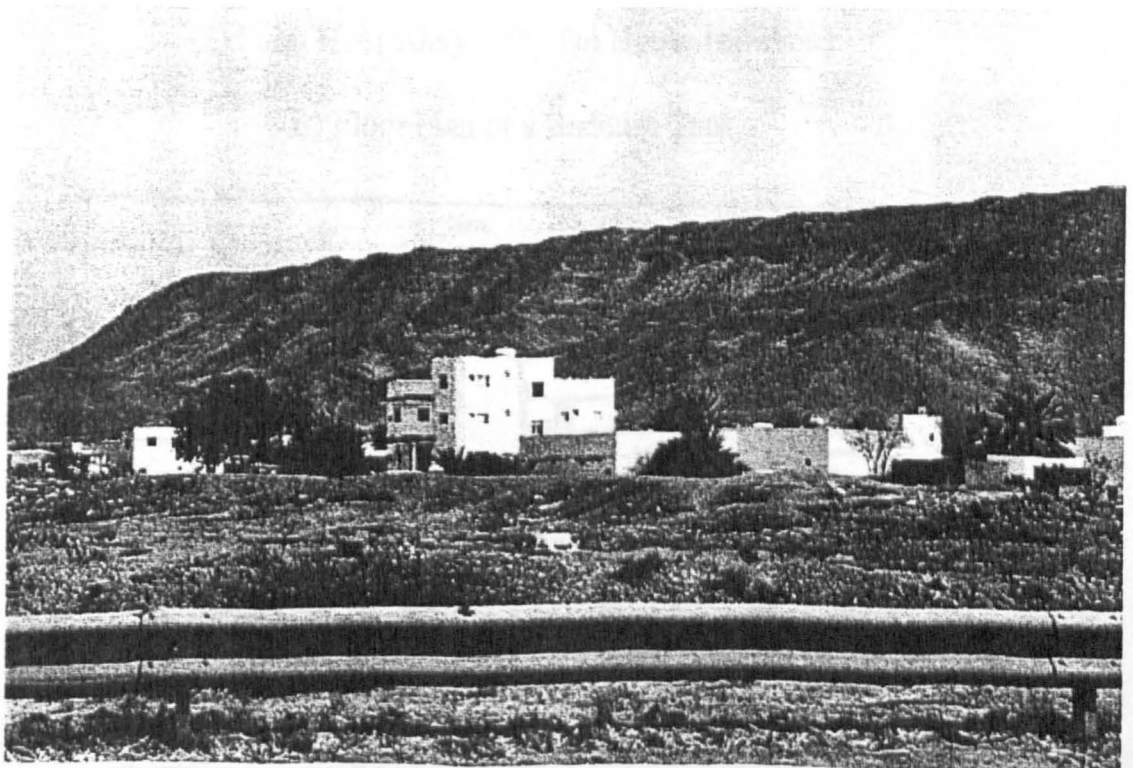
A Modern Style House

Source: Kushchosah, I and Al Mam... (c. 199), ...
Development Proj... Dar Al ar... ...

FIGURE 2.5

TYPES OF DWELLINGS

A)Bedouin Dwelling
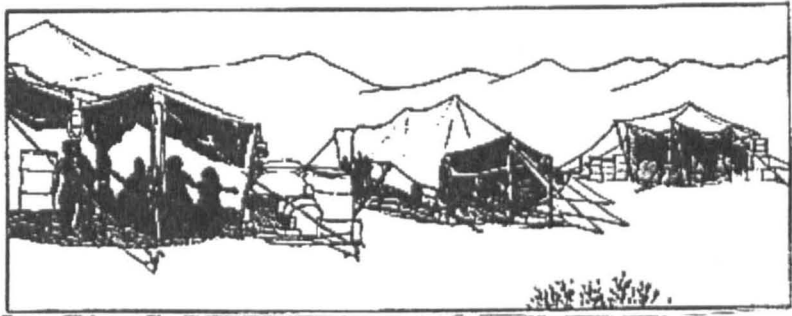
(1) Tent (bayt sha'ar or khaima)
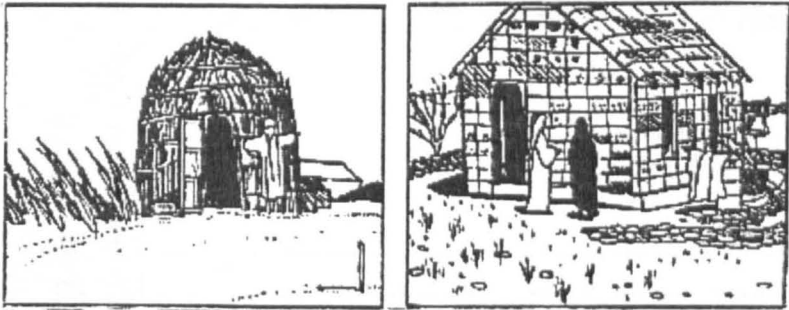
(2) Palm Hut (usha)   (3) Tin House (sandiqa)

B) Floor Plan of a Bedouin Tent
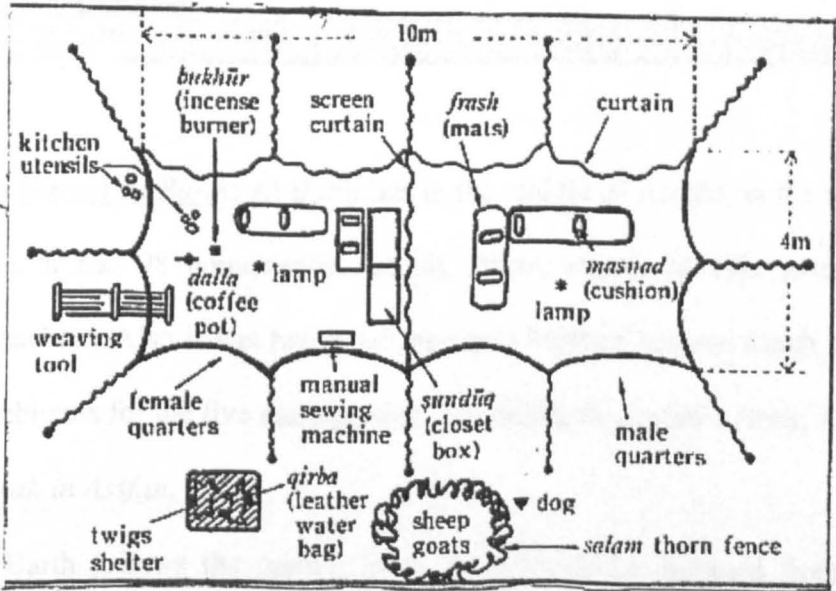
Source: Kutubkhanah, I. and Al-Kholi, H (1992), Change and Social
Development, Pp68-70, Dar Al-Bilad, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

2.4. Composition and Layout of Assfan

For at least forty years and probably much longer, Assfan has consisted of five fairly distinct neighbourhoods, referred to locally as *Harah*. These are briefly described below, and the main features of each *Harah* are summarised in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.6.

Table 2.1

The Main Features of the five Harahs of Assfan

NAME OF THE HARAH	NO. OF HOMES-TEADS	NO. OF FARMS	MOSQUES	SCHOOLS	OTHER CENTRES
Al Barth	98	4	2	Boys' & Girls' primary, intermediate and secondary	police station, private clinic
Al Moaleed	40	2	1	-	-
Sowek	134	5	2	-	-
Al Syed	51	-	1	-	-
Al Sooq	-	8	5	-	Emarat, Post Office, Public Clinic, Girls' Educational Office
All	323	19	11	3	5

(1)- *Haraht Al Barth*: Al Barth lies in the middle of Assfan on the east side of the main road. It has 98 homesteads and six farms, mainly of date palm trees, lemon and vegetables. Also it has two small mosques built of cement which are still used by the inhabitants for the five daily prayers. According to Assfan's Amir, *Al Barth is the oldest Harah in Assfan.*

Al Barth follows the narrow road which branches eastward from the main road of Assfan to the east. Along this road are located a number of institutions and centres, such

as the police station, a private clinic, boys' primary, intermediate and secondary

schools, and girls' primary, intermediate and secondary schools.

Some of the houses of this *harah* are built of cement and others of concrete. Many of

the houses are in the traditional style, though some are modern.

(2)- *Haraht Al Moaleed:* Al Moaleed is located north-west of Al Barth. It is on the

outskirts of Assfan, adjacent to the Makkah-Madinah motorway. This *harah* is the

smallest one in the village, in terms of number of the houses. It has 40 homesteads, most

of them in the traditional style, built of cement and baked bricks. Also, it has one

mosque which is built of the same material. In this *harah*, there are two farms. Most of

the inhabitants of Al Moaleed *harah* are relatively poor. Their lowly status and

economic standing are evident at a glance from the poor condition of the houses.

(3)- *Haraht Sowek:* Sowek is located in the north-east of Assfan. It is bordered to the

east by the valley of Faydah, to the north by mountains, and to the west by *haraht* Al

Syed. This *harah* is the biggest *harah* in Assfan, in terms of population and number of

houses. It has 134 homesteads, two mosques which are used by the inhabitants for the

five daily prayers, and five farms. This *harah* has no schools or services such as those

located in *haraht* Al Barth.

(4)- *Haraht Al Syed:* Al Syed is located to the east of Sowek. It is the second smallest

harah in Assfan as far as the number of houses is concerned. It has 51 homesteads

including that of the Amir, and one mosque where the prayer leader is the marriage

official's son, a teacher in the secondary school in Assfan. This *harah* has no schools or

other facilities of its own. Most the inhabitants in this *harah* come from the Al Syed

family, which means they do not belong to the main tribe in Assfan village (Al Bishri, a

sub-tribe of the Harb tribe).

(5)- *Al Sooq:* Al Sooq is an Arabic word, which means the market or the centre of the

village. Numerous shops, stores and centres are located in Al Sooq. The village Emirate

is located in the north part of Al Sooq on the main road, the post office is located in the opposite side to the Emirate, the clinic centre is located next to the post office, and the water tower which provides the village with piped water for domestic use is located in the middle of Assfan, between the north part and the south part. Three petrol stations are located in Al Sooq, one in the north and the others in the south. There are six stores for foodstuffs, shops and many restaurants and cafés located along the main road.

There are five mosques located on the main road of Assfan. The biggest one is in the north part of the village, where prayers are led by the marriage official. The Friday congregational prayers, which all the villagers are expected to attend, are performed in this mosque.

FIGURE 2.6

MAP OF ASSFAN

Assfan Sketch Map

- ⊡ Schools
- ⊻ Post Office
- ⊡ The Village Emarat
- ☽ Mosque
- ⊕ Modern House
- ⋆ Police Station
- Ⅱ Water Tower
- © Cement House
- ⋎ Farm
- ⊙ Clinic Centre

North

To Madinah

To Makkah

West

South

East

The Friday Mosque

Assfan Emarat

Harat
Al Syed

Harat
Al Moaleed

Public Clinic

Post Office

Water Tower

Harat
Sowek

Harat
Al Barth

Private Clinic

The Girl's Primary
School

Police Station
The Boy's Primary, Intermediate &
Secondary School

The Girl's Intermediate &
Secondary School

Assfan Main Road

2.5. Summary

This chapter has paved the way for the detailed exploration of life in Assfan which follows, by providing an overview of its geographical context, layout and main features. It has been seen that Assfan is an arid area the temperature of which is generally high, though with some daily and seasonal variation. Various types of housing exist, the layout of which is influenced by climate and by cultural considerations, particularly the segregation of the sexes. Assfan has some 306 homesteads and 19 farms distributed unevenly over its five neighbourhoods. Each neighbourhood has at least one mosque, but schools, shops, clinics and other facilities are concentrated on the main road running through just two of the neighbourhoods. After this brief geographical background, we turn to consider the history of the Assfan settlement, which forms the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF ASSFAN SETTLEMENT

Chapter Three
A Review of the History of Assfan Settlement

3.1. Introduction

This chapter places the location of the study in its historical context. It begins by outlining the background to the creation of Saudi Arabia. It then considers the two holy cities, Makkah and Madinah, close to which Assfan is situated. Historical references to Assfan are considered, and attention is drawn to the impact on present day Assfan of its strategic location along the Makkah - Madinah motorway.

3.2. Background of Saudi Arabia

According to Al-Farsy (1986), the history of Saudi Arabia can be traced back to 1744, when Amir Muhammad Bin Saud, the ruler of Dariyah and the central Najd region of the Arabia peninsula, and Sheikh Muhammad Bin Abdulwahab, a Muslim scholar and reformer, agreed to dedicate their lives to restoring the pure teachings of Islam to the Muslim community, and established the first Saudi State. Bin Saud and his successors won the support of the numerous tribes of the region, and by the early 19th century, the Saudi State covered most of the peninsula, including the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. In 1818, following a devastating attack on Dariyah by the armies of the Ottoman Empire, the Saudi ruler, Turki Bin Abdullah, transferred his capital to Riyadh and established the Second Saudi State. To this day, Riyadh remains the Saudi capital. Under Turki and his son, Faisal, the Saudi State enjoyed a period of peace and prosperity, with flourishing trade and agriculture, until the calm was shattered by a renewed Ottoman campaign. Ottoman armies captured parts of the Saudi State and supported rebellion by the Al-Rashids of Hail.

In 1881, after a 20-year struggle to resist foreign intrusion and restore peace and security to the Kingdom, the Saudi ruler, Abdulrahman Bin Faisal, was forced into exile in Kuwait, and the Al-Rashids established a garrison in Riyadh. It was the son of Abdulrahman Bin Faisal, Abdulaziz, who in 1902 retook Riyadh and restored the rule of the Al-Saud (Al-Rasheed, 2002).

In the 30 years that followed, he succeeded in uniting the warring tribes of Arabia. in September, 1932, the country officially acquired the name, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, by which it is known today. In the 45 years since the death of King Abdulaziz, his sons have worked to transform the Kingdom, socially and economically, through the careful development and optimal utilisation of the nation's human and natural resources. Significant advances have been made in education, health and infrastructure. Urban and industrial centres have been established throughout the Kingdom. While remaining rooted in its Islamic origins, the Kingdom is continuously adapting to meet the challenges and demands of the modern world. Al-Farsy (1986).

3.2.1. The Importance of Makkah

Makkah Al-Mukaramah, which is known by many other names such as Umm Al-Qura (the mother of villages), Al-Balad Al Amen (the Secure City) and Al-Balad Al-Haram (the Holy City), is the first holy city for Muslims. It was in Makkah that Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was born and received the Revelation of the Holy Quran, and from it that the spread of Islam was launched. In the centre of the city there is the Holy Mosque, inside which is the Holy Ka'bah, The *Maqam*[1] of Prophet Ibrahim, the Stone of his son Ismaiel, and the Zamzam spring from which water has been pouring for hundreds of years. Near Makkah are the other holy shrines of Mina, Muzdalifah, and

---

[1] The station of Ibrahim (peace be upon him), which stood in building the Sacred House. His footprint is still visible there.

Arafat, where Mount Arafat is located and where pilgrims spend the day of Arafah every year as the main ritual of *Hajj* (pilgrimage) (Kurdi, 1999).

Makkah is the location of Umm Al-Qura University, where most of the students from the surrounding areas go to continue their higher education. Among the courses offered are a four-year teacher preparation course. Most of the students who complete their secondary education in Assfan village go to this university, to train as teachers, because the teaching profession is well-regarded in the community, as it offers a good position, a good income and more than two months a year holiday.

3.2.2. The Importance of Madinah

Al-Madinah Al-Munwarah is the second holy city to Muslims after Makkah Al-Mukaramah. It, too is known by many other names, such as Tyibah, Yathrib, the Village, the City of the Messenger, and Dar Al-Higra (i.e. Home of Migration) (Al-Shafiei, 1552). It is the city whose people supported Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) when he migrated to it from Makkah. It contains the Mosque of the Prophet, his grave, the Islamic University, King Fahad Complex for the Printing of the Holy Quran and many Islamic archaeological features.

3.3. Historical Overview of Assfan Settlement

Assfan is a small village composed of about 306 houses. It is located in the western region of Saudi Arabia, about 75 km north of Makkah city, the holiest city in the Muslim World and about 60 km north-east of Jeddah, the first port and second largest city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Assfan was founded a long time ago. According to Al-Omari (1996), when the prophet Mohammed emigrated from Makkah he passed by Assfan in his way to Madinah by the coastal road. In addition to that, it is recorded that the prophet fought a tribe called Bni Lohyan in Assfan, five years and two months after his migration. Assfan is also mentioned in ancient Arabic poetry (Al-Hamowi, 1981).

Many writers have mentioned Assfan in their books and travel diaries describing pilgrimage journeys between Makkah and Madinah. For example Hogarth (1980), in his book *Arabia,* when he described Prophet Mohammed's route on his migration to Madinah, said he

> ...got down to the pools of Asfan on the
> Pilgrim Road. Hogarth (1980) P29.

Also, Hogarth mentioned Assfan in another part of the same book (p39):

> ...off the Pilgrim Road near Asfan,
> about fifty miles from Mecca.

Another writer, Burckhardt (1968), wrote about Assfan in describing his journey from Makkah to Madinah; he indicated that:

> the road begins to ascend slightly
> through a broad woody valley: here is
> situated Bir Asfan, a large, deep well
> lined with stone, with a spring of good
> water in the bottom. This is a station of
> the Hadj. Samhoudy, the historian of
> Medina, mentions a village at Asfan,
> with a spring called Owla. (p297)

According to Al-Biladi (1980), the village of Assfan is a historic village located to the north of Makkah on the way to Madinah, and it has many sweet water wells. Al-Biladi, also, said Assfan has an Emirate Centre which is subordinate to the Emirate Centre of Al-Jamoum, which is bigger than Assfan. Most of the residents in Assfan are from the Bishri tribe, which is a sub-division of the Harb, who are located throughout the western region of the Kingdom.

3.3.1. The Importance for Assfan of the Main Road Leading to Makkah and Madinah

During the course of the first four five-year Development Plans, 1970-89, special emphasis was placed on the overall improvement of the Kingdom's transportation infrastructure. Saudi Arabia now possesses one of the finest national transportation networks and most sophisticated communication systems in the world. The great distances between cities and the rugged terrain of much of the country make these achievements all the more remarkable. Transport and communication links have helped Saudi Arabia bring prosperity to its remotest regions.

By the end of the last year of the Fifth Development Plan (1994-1995) the total length of asphalted roads, was 42,249kms, compared with 8,000 kms only in 1970 (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in London, 1996.) The road building works involved had been carried out by the Ministry of Communications, which had ensured that excellent roads now extended to all parts of the Kingdom. The roads were of different grades, some of Expressway standard, others dual-carriage or single-carriage.

The Sixth Development Plan concentrates on improving the efficiency and quality of transportation services in the country. By implementing the objectives of the plan, Saudi Arabia will have national communication and transportation networks capable of meeting the nation's social and economic needs into the next century (Saudi Arabian Information Centre, 1996.)

In addition to these roads, a scheme for laying agricultural roads has been implemented and by 1995 there were no less than 95,941 kms of such roads, compared with 3,500 kms in 1970. The total cost of road building has amounted to more than SR 130 billion (Ministry of Information, 1997.)

The main road which leads between Makkah and Madinah is the Makkah-Madinah Motorway. This 420 km road passes many towns and villages. The road has six lanes, three lanes with a hard shoulder in each direction, with a central reservation.

Many junctions and bridges are needed to serve the large number of villages passed by the motorway, which serves more than 250,000 people. Most of the residents in these villages work in agriculture, in other jobs in their villages, because most of these villages are quite far from the urban centres such as Makkah, Madinah or Jeddah (Ministry of Information, 1993.)

However, Assfan's people are not like some of the populations of other villages, because the strategic location of Assfan makes it much easier to find a job, as it is very easy for Assfan's people to reach the urban centres in the western region of Saudi Arabia. Since the building of the motorway, which passes through Assfan from north to south, the people of Assfan have a ready means of contact with cities, towns, and other villages. Makkah is 75 km, and Jeddah less than that distance from Assfan and the surrounding villages.

There are important economic linkages between the region's rural area and both Makkah and Jeddah, associated with trade in agricultural produce, also in commercialised activities, particularly in poultry, eggs and market garden produce. There have, however, been rapid structural changes in the rural economy. The importance of traditional agricultural activities has rapidly diminished. They have suffered due to competing demands for water from the urban areas. In common with urban areas, the public sector has become a major source of employment and income (Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs,1985.)

In this context, the motorway gives the village unique advantages. Some of the village economy is based on this road, attracting people from other villages to do business in Assfan, and facilitating the export of the village's products to the nearby cities. Some of

the people find it easy to travel to and from work every day, because it is not too far from their places of residence.

3.4. Summary

As this chapter has indicated, the history of Saudi Arabia can be traced back to the alliance between Amir Muhammad Bin Saud and the religious reformer Sheikh Muhammad Bin Abdulwahab, in the eighteenth century, although the Kingdom in its present form dates from 1932.

The western region of the country is dominated by the cities of Makkah and Madinah, pilgrimage sites revered by all Muslims because of their associations with the prophet Muhammad.

Assfan, the focus of this study, is a historic settlement which was known as a halt on the pilgrimage route in ancient times. Today, its strategic location alongside the Makkah - Madinah motorway brings many advantages to the residents, facilitating trade with the towns and other villages of the area, and providing opportunities for the inhabitants to travel to the cities to study or work. Thus, the residents of Assfan have a wider range of opportunities available to them, than do the inhabitants of the more isolated settlements in this predominantly agricultural area.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Four
Literature Review

4.1. Introduction

Development and social change have long been of interest to sociologists and anthropologists, who have looked at the issues from several perspectives. In this chapter, the theoretical perspective which informed this research is explained. Thus, previous research in this area, with particular reference to village studies of the kind with which this research is concerned, will be discussed in order to set the present research in context. The focus in this respect will be on social change in relation to three key themes: the family system, the economic system, and religion.

4.2. Theoretical Approach

By way of background to the village studies presented in this chapter, it may be useful first to offer a general overview of some of the themes and perspectives of research on social change, with particular emphasis on the social functionalist perspective, on which the present work is grounded.

Theories of social change now seek for the interpretation of change in all human societies irrespective of the differences that exist amongst societies, and particularities that distinguish a society from another. There is a recognition that societies are composed of social institutions that interact and influence each other, so it is not possible to separate these institutions. Moreover, as Abu Zyed mentioned, social change is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes, and change itself can have more than

one form, for example, it might be manifested in the social behaviour observed by the individuals living in a specific society (Abu Zyed, 1965).

This study is concerned with socio-economic change in Saudi Arabia and its impact on social structure and relationships among the villagers of Assfan. The research approach is informed by the functionalist tradition.

Functionalism views society as a complex system whose various parts work together to produce stability and solidarity. Functionalists, such as Comte and Durkheim, have often used an organic analogy to compare the operation of society to that of a living organism. They argued that the parts of society work together, as a various parts of the human body do, for the sake of the whole society (Giddens, 2001). Within this perspective, social systems are described in terms of structure, function, and the mechanisms and processes that link them. By structure is meant the network of social relations, institutions, roles and status that compose society, for example, relationships amongst relatives, or economic relationships. Function is the way these contribute to the stable and harmonious functioning of the society, for example, by enabling people to meet the cost of living. To study the function of a social practice or institution is to analyse the contribution which that practice or institution makes to the continuation of society.

Whilst Durkheim defined the function of social institutions simply as the satisfaction of the needs of the social organism, Radcliffe-Brown (Martindale, 1998) believed that one must avoid teleological interpretations, and in his explanation, "the life of an organism is conceived as the functioning of its structure; through the continuity of the functioning, the continuity of structure is preserved" (Martindale,1998).

The basic units of the social structure are individuals who, in Parsons' (1977) conception, engage in mutual systemic relationships in order to achieve material and moral benefit. Within a small group, the structure of social relationships grows and develops in the course of direct and frequent interaction among its members.

As societies develop, they become increasingly more complex and interdependent. There may be no direct interaction among most members of a large community, so the structure of social relations must be governed some other mechanism: cultural norms and values that become institutionalised and perpetuated from one generation to the next and shape the course of social life (Blair, 1989). Thus, functionalism emphasises the importance of moral consensus, in maintaining order and stability in society. This can exist when most members of the society share the same values (Giddens, 2001).

Whilst the main thrust of social functionalism is to explain the factors that bind social units together, this very feature makes it a useful perspective, conversely, for exploring change, that is, how, whey and to what extent these factors break down.

A useful starting point for the exploration of social change is the influential work of Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936), whose conceptualisations of social relationships have influenced all modern societal typologies (Martindale, 1998).

In 1887 Tönnies wrote his major work, *Gemeinschaft unt Gesellschaft,* which translates to Community and Society. It was in this work that Tönnies put forth his major theory on types of social relations and interactions. As a part of this theory he believed that all facts of society and social relationships are products of human will and that the result of

acts of will is the development of a collective will (Tönnies, 2001). Tönnies said that human wills stand in relation to each other and each relationship is a mutual action.

The group formed through this positive type of relationship is called an association (Tönnies 2001). The relationship could take one of two forms, and it is this distinction that comprises the greater part of his theory. According to Tönnies, the relationship is either real and organic life (*Gemeinschaft*) or imaginary and mechanical structure (*Gesellschaft*). He further expanded this to say that the *Gemeinschaft* is "all intimate, private, and exclusive living together.," and that *Gesellschaft* is "public life, it is the world itself" . In his theory of *Gemeinschaft*, Tönnies explained a more natural state of affairs. According to Tönnies, in the natural state there is a perfect unity of human wills that will remain in spite of separation. The most intense forms of these wills include the relationships between mother and child, husband and wife, and brothers and sisters (Tönnies, 2001). The other less intimate relationships are linked to the previous ones. The next most perfect of the less intimate relationships is that between father and child. It is not as instinctive but it is still loving. In addition, the father represents authority, which is shown through education and instruction. The instruction encompasses a sharing of life experiences and there is the understanding that eventually the child will reciprocate by sharing his or her own life experiences (Tönnies, 2001). The reciprocation comes about because, whenever people live together, there is a division of enjoyment and labour, which produces a relationship what is reciprocal. According to Tönnies, these divisions are based on age, sex and mental capacity (Tönnies, 2001).

From this base, Tönnies drew out multiple lines of contrast between the two 'ideal-types', as shown in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 Tönnies Typology of Social Organisation

Social Characteristic	Societal Type	
	Gemeinschaft	*Gesellschaft*
Dominant Social Relationship	Fellowship Kinship Neighbourliness	Exchange Rational calculation
Central Institutions	Family law Extended kin group	State Capitalistic economy
The Individual in the Social Order	Self	Person
Characteristic Form of Wealth	Land	Money
Type of Law	Family Law	Law of contracts
Ordering of Institutions	Family life Rural village life Town life	City life Rational life Cosmopolitan life
Type of Social Control	Concord Folkways and mores Religion	Convention Legislation Public opinion

Source: Martindale, D. (1998) *The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory*, Routhedge, London.

Gemeinschaft and *Gesellschaft* often have been and still are equated with the rural-urban continuum and are employed to describe the "way of life" or the "moral basis" for rural/urban living. Tönnies argued that rural areas tended to be characterised by "*Gemeinschaft*" type arrangements. These are defined as small-scale, close-knit "community" types where "everyone knows everyone else" and people make it their business to know what is going-on in their community. In this type of community, the way of life arises out of natural kin relationships and common association to the land. Social norms (order, law and morality) and values are created by *Gemeinschaftliche* social will, including customs and religion. On the other hand, in the process of

development and urbanisation including the development of the market, the qualities of *Gemeinschaft* may be lost.

Tönnies suggested that such areas are characterised by *Gesellschaft* –type arrangements, defined as large-scale, loosely-knit "association" types, whereby people come into contact with large numbers of other people in their everyday lives on a relatively impersonal basis (Martindale, 1998). In such situations, the 'natural' social structure of rural areas gives way to a conscious social construction characterised by relationships of rational economic calculation, governed by norms of convention, legislation and public opinion. Tönnies' perspective offers a useful starting point from which to observe the patterns of social life in Assfan, a village which, over time has grown and become connected, economically and socially, with nearby towns as a result of the constriction of roads and the development of infrastructure, commerce, education and civil administration at national level.

Tönnies' social typology can be seen as the starting point of much of the later work on social change, which highlights the impacts of development on previously rural societies. It must be recognised, however, that his description of two contrasting archetypes does not imply a clear dichotomy between two types of society. Rather, as societies grow and become more complex, there is a gradual transition from predominantly *gemeinschaft* to more *gesellschaft* type arrangement, and communities may be located at various points on a continuum between them, with elements of both patterns co-existing.

This idea of the folk-urban continuum was explored by Redfield in his studies across the Yucatan region of Mexico. Redfield wanted to look at change, in the ways that varying degrees of contact with "civilisation" differentially affected "folk culture" throughout the Yucatan. He presented an amazing spatio-visual image of civilisation diffusing across the Yucatan, originating in Merida in the northeast corner of the peninsula and

spreading to the south and west and growing weaker the further away from Merida it (civilisation) spread. Robert Redfield described the relationship between village life and city life in terms of the folk-urban continuum. He found that when people lived in small communities, whether as foragers or food producers, communities were sufficiently small that "every adult could, and no doubt did, know everybody else". Communities were relatively isolated from one another. To a degree, they were also self-contained and self-supporting or self-sufficient. Communities shared a common tradition and group solidarity, in contrast to state-organized societies, which are heterogeneous and differences and divided loyalties are common.

In folk culture, Redfield argued, full-time occupational specialization is lacking. People of the same age and sex share much the same basic knowledge, despite the fact that some people are more skilled and knowledgeable than others. Part- time specialization does occur. Relationships are based on personal status not mere practical usefulness. Incentives to work are tied to status and role and to kinship. Mechanisms of social control are informal.

Redfield's study in the peasant village of Chan Kom (Redfield, 1962) was intended as the first stage of a project that would examine folk culture and then, for comparison, would go on to look at "communities where there culture is in disorganisation or conversion into something else". The project was to encompass four towns, on a continuum from folk to urban: Tusic, Chan Kom, Dzitas, and Merida (Redfield, 1962).

In Chan Kom, Redfield identified aspects of long-term change as a result of external factors such as the instructions of the state, which enabled the villagers to adopt many cultural forms such as schools, a post-office and a medical unit, which changed their lifestyle. Additionally, the building of roads and cultural centres helped to link the villagers with means of education entertainment. Redfield found that one of the main

reasons that Chan Kom was undergoing such a major physical modernisation (square streets, paved streets, a new school, road to Chichen) was because of heavy communal labour duties.

Although Redfield observed differences between rural dwellers and city people, he also found that links were maintained between them. When people left the village to live in the city, they still looked back to their life in the village (Martindale, 1998).

Similarly, when the people of Assfan leave to the urban centres, for better education or jobs, they come back to their own families and relatives to keep in contact with them.

An interesting feature of the work of Redfield, as with the earlier work of Tönnies, is the insight into the ways social cohesion is created and sustained. In this respect, it is worthwhile to consider Durkheim's distinction between two kinds of solidarity in society, which he termed mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity and said: "Social life comes from a double source, the likeness of consciences and the division of social labour." (Durkheim, 1997)

Mechanical solidarity is social cohesion based upon the likeness and similarities among individuals in a society. It is largely dependent on common rituals and routines. This kind of solidarity is common among prehistoric and pre-agricultural societies, and lessens in predominance as modernity increases.

Organic solidarity is social cohesion based upon the dependence individuals in more advanced societies have on each other. It is common among industrial societies as the division of labour increases. Though individuals perform different tasks and often have different values and interests, the order and very survival of society depends on their reliance on each other to perform their specific task (Giddens, 1973). The interaction between people in the performance of their roles can be seen as part of the mechanism of exchange, by which social relationships are maintained. Exchange may take the form,

not only of money and trade goods or services, but also gifts, favours etc. These not only serve an economic function, but bind the community together by creating ties of mutual obligation (Blair, 1989). The Arab tradition of providing material assistance to neighbours and relatives on occasions such as marriage or times of misfortune can be seen as an example.

Thus, from a social functionalist perspective, social structure is a network of relationships, roles and systems that create feelings of belonging and loyalty, provide a defence against external threat and bind the community.

It is interesting to note that Islam has always recognised the importance of maintaining the social structure and the role of social relationships in this regard. Thus, the application of functionalist theory does not necessarily conflict with Islamic perspective. There are some Islamic teachings, which are relevant to the theme of social construction and cohesion, and which were taken into account in the researcher's observation of the behaviour of the community members. For example, social solidarity is an important value in Islam.

The community's solidarity and strength in their ties can be inferred from the following *Hadith*.

On the authority of Abu Musa, The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other." While (saying that) the Prophet (peace be upon him) clasped his hands, by interlacing his fingers. Sahih Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1994).

Islamic brotherhood is a spirit of mercy and tenderness between the Muslims brothers. This goes further than a simple love for each other and each other feels the same toward the others, as the following *Hadith* of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) described.

In another example, on the authority of An-Nu`man bin Bashir (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: Allah's Apostle said, "You see the believers as regards their being merciful among themselves and showing love among themselves and being kind, resembling one body, so that, if any part of the body is not well then the whole body shares the sleeplessness and fever with it." Sahih Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1994).

Islam considers social exchange in the community as an obligation among all members of society, and beyond it to all members of the Muslim community. It is manifested in practices such as exchanging gifts and paying debt, which are considered as fulfilment of Allah's commands.

In the following *Hadith* is an example of the assistance between community members.

Abdullah al-Khurasani said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'Shake hands and rancour will disappear. Give presents to each other and love each other and enmity will disappear." Muwatta Imam Malik. (Rahimuddin, 1994)

Another behaviour which serves to strengthen mutual ties in the community is the custom of keeping close to each other on most occasions, by visiting each other, especially on major life occasions, such as in sickness, times of sadness, weddings, festivals, and so on.

Muawiya bin Suwaid said, 'I heard Al-Bara' bin `Azib saying', "The Prophet orders us to do seven things... " Then Al-Bara' mentioned the following: (1) To pay a visit to the sick (inquiring about his health), (2) to follow funeral processions, (3) to say to a

sneezer, "May Allah be merciful to you" (if he says, "Praise be to Allah!"), (4) to

return greetings, (5) to help the oppressed, (6) to accept invitations, (7) to help others to

fulfil their oaths. (Hadith No. 753, Vol. 7), Sahih Al-Bukhri. (Khan, 1994).

Another aspect of social change which has attracted much attention from sociologists

and social anthropologists is the growth of towns and, related to this, the nature of social

life in towns. In almost all developing countries, populations are becoming increasingly

concentrated in towns and cities. In 1920, 4.8 per cent of the population of Africa, 5.7

per cent of that of South East Asia, 7.2 per cent of that of East Asia and 14.4 per cent of

that of Latin America lived in places of 20.000 or more inhabitants; by 1975, the

respective percentages were 18.1, 17.4, 23.6 and 41.5 (Robert, 1982). The enormous

recent increase in the population of cities in developing countries is a "commonplace"

(Mair, 1984). This trend is associated with the phenomenon of labour migration.

Anthropologists record that migrants to a city tend to seek out or travel with a neighbour

or kinsman who looks after him until he has established himself. There may be a

concentration in the same quarter of people who come by the same route. Within the

field of urbanisation studies, a major preoccupation has been social order – the

integration and assimilation of migrants into the cities, and the social distinctions

reflected in the ways of life of different sub-cultures and social classes. Many detailed

and informative community studies came out of this school of research, for example

Pons (1969) and Mayer (1987), which showed how some labour migrants tried very

hard to maintain their traditions, while others emphasised their education and

modernity- different ways of giving meaning to life in a strange environment (Barnett,

1991).

Related to, though distinct from urbanisation is the issue of industrialisation, which has been analysed in two broadly different ways (Barnett, 1991). Marxists identify the origin of industry with the development of capitalism. In their view, technological progress allows for greater production and potentially improved social welfare which, however, are impeded by prevailing production relations. The other main approach, the Durkheimian, emphasises the growing independence arising from the division of labour in societies. From this perspective, rural to urban migration transforms the social structure from one of relatively autonomous regional, organisational and occupational groupings to one that is highly fragmented, where an individual's ties with local and regional structures are reduced, while those with more diffuse urban and industrial networks are strengthened (Black, 1967). Within this general theory, McClelland (1966) identifies the need for achievement as a motive force in social change in general and industrialisation in particular, while Moore (1974) identifies industrialisation with changes in values, institutions (e.g. in relation to property – holding), organisation (the introduction of hierarchically administration) and motivation (the desire for a better life).

Parallel with the interest in urbanisation and industrialisation is a focus on agrarian and rural change, specifically, the transition from subsistence production to production for the market and consequent involvement in a much large set of social and economic relationships. Barnett (1991) notes how, when households become involved in any kind of wage labour and production for sale, labour itself becomes a saleable item, with a market value, leading to the appearance of tensions between commitment to the moral, community of the family and the local community, and the possibility of individual income and wealth. This, in turn, may result in altered social relations within the household, for example, the refusal of the younger generation to work for their fathers in the fields or herding animals, in favour of earning money as employees.

In some places, many men spend their lives circulating between urban employment and rural life; in others, they may spend part of the year, or a few years, in town. In either case, migration is a complex process in which town and country are economically and culturally linked (Barnett, 1991).

According to Mair (1984), one of the most striking consequences of economic development, whether planned or otherwise, is the trend away from the family as the unit of population. Different family members can now find employment on their own initiative and may or may not contribute earnings to a common family pool. A young man working away from home will have some subsistence expenses, and may also spend part of his wages on fashionable consumer goods. Nevertheless, he may also send money or presents home, and contribute to building up the family farm. Thus independent employment does not necessarily mean the end of extended or joint family obligations, but such obligations may be met in different ways (Mair, 1984)

Anthropology also sheds light on the gender effects of social change, by exploring the patterns of division of labour between men and women, who has control of income, what impact wider socio-economic and cultural changes have had on the roles and statuses of women, and so on. (Mair, 1984).

A conceptual distinction is made between sex, which is to do with the physical features, and gender, which is to do with cultural constrictions associated with those features (Helliwell, 1993). The attributes assigned to the cultural categories, male and female, can vary considerably between different societies. Moreover, even within the same community, some women may experience increased opportunity and status, while others experience the reverse; even for the same women, social change may introduce new freedoms, but may also bring new constraints and pressures (Ong, 1987).

Of interest to anthropologists are aspects of social structure, norms and values that may engender either resistance or support for social change. One such is religion. Adherents of traditional religions, according to Mair (1984), tend to have a conservative outlook in common. Another way in which some religions such as Islam may affect response to social change, is by perpetuating the idea of an individual fate that cannot be escaped; such an idea may lead people to take little interest in development activities. On the other hand, as Mair points out, it is too simple to assume an association between religious values and acceptance or rejection of social change, and it is important to learn more about the real effects of such beliefs on day-to-day decisions.

Much religious activity is focused on the family. Important rituals, such as marriage, mark the passage of an individual through life, the transition from one social status to another. Although they are the direct concern of family and kin, they represent the conferring of the appropriate social status on the individuals concerned, by the whole community. Thus, the way such rituals are observed, and whether such observance is subject to change, are of interest as indicators of continuity and change, as well as religious norms and values.

What emerges from anthropological studies of social change is that, although certain trends, such as urbanisation, are widespread, even universal, there is no simple blueprint of the causes or effects of change. The strength of the anthropological approach to studying social change is its focus on the impact of such change on the lives of ordinary people. As a result of development policies, living environments change; people may have new demands imposed on them by a superior authority, and new opportunities become available. Citizens at grass-roots level are not passive beneficiaries or victims of social change, but active individuals who evaluate the new environment in the light of their cultural values and individual circumstances, and reject or attempt to exploit it accordingly (Mair, 1984).

As King (1999) notes, an important lesson that can be learned from anthropology, with its insights into the social and cultural matrix within which development occurs, and into the consequences – including the costs- of social change, is the existence in practice of considerable social diversity, variation and flexibility. There is no single homogenous perspective on social change shared by "the village" or "the community". Rather, communities are made up of individuals and social groups which compete and argue, as well as co-operate and agree.

The theoretical underpinning of this research, both in modern sociology and anthropology, and in Islamic values, gave rise to a focus on three dimensions of the social network: the familial system, the economic system, and the value system, represented in Assfan, as in Saudi Arabia generally, by the Islamic religion and the values of social solidarity it enjoins. The following sections consider the insights in these areas afforded by previous studies.

4.3. Social Change and Family System

As noted previously, the family system is viewed, within the social functionalist perspective, as one of the key elements in the organisation and perpetuation of a community. Through it, networks of relationship, support and obligation are formed, social roles are assigned and understood, and young people are socialised into the norms and values of their society.

The family system is also accorded great significance in Islam. In Saudi Arabia and indeed in Islam as a whole, marriage is considered an essential ingredient of religion. Marriage is an obligation on everyone, male and female, when reaching a certain age, for the religious life of the individual will not be complete unless he or she marries.

As it has been mentioned in the Holy Quran, Allah almighty said:

"And of His signs is this: He created mates for you from yourselves, that you may find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect." Holy Qur'an (30:21)

Marriage is considered as one of the most important points in the establishment of a new family, which can be built on understanding, love, mercy and consideration between the two couples and between their families, which keep ties between families and people in the community much stronger, and high solidarity in the society as a whole.

Islam's family system brings the rights of the husband, wife, children, and relatives into a fine equilibrium. It nourishes unselfish behaviour, generosity, and love in the framework of a well-organised family system. The peace and security offered by a stable family unit is greatly valued, and it is seen as essential for the spiritual growth of its members. A harmonious social order is created by the existence of extended families and by treasuring children.

Anthropologist and sociologist have paid particular attention to family systems when investigating the values and way of life of a community, and have identified within such systems indicators of social change- for example the transition from the extended to the nuclear family.

In this section, findings on family systems, with a particular focus on marriage, are reviewed. The studies represented include some from Spain, India, China, and Malaysia; other Arab countries such as Syria, Jordan, and Oman; and several from Saudi Arabia itself.

The section is divided into four subsections, corresponding to the four main themes or issues identified in the literature: choice of spouse (including whether arranged or self – choice, endogamous versus exogamous marriage and criteria of selection); age at marriage; family structure; and marriage customs. In a final sub-section, the main themes are briefly summarised and the implications for this study highlighted.

4.3.1. Choice of Spouse

An issue frequently highlighted in the literature on marriage and family is who chooses the spouse, and on what basis. Are marriages arranged by parents or others, or are marriage partners self-selected? Is there are preference to marry within or outside the kin group? And what criteria influence the selection of a spouse? These are the issues considered in this sub-section.

The choice of a marriage partner is one of the most important decisions a person will make in his or her lifetime. This choice may be made by groom or bride, their parents, or one of the parents, some other people in the family or the tribe; either close or far relatives.

In a study in Bihar, Southern India, Sachchidananda (1968) found that although the wishes of boys and girls were given weight in the choice, the most respected form of marriage was that arranged by parents, with the payment of full bride price. In a more recent Indian study, Audinarayana and Uma (1991) found that most marriages were arranged by parents and close relatives. The concerned bride and groom were given little chance to understand each other and may not even be allowed to express their wishes with regard to their future life-partners.

In Saudi Arabia, as elsewhere in the Arab world, traditionally marriages were arranged by parents or other relatives of the couple concerned; in studies by Bagader

and Bashtah (2000) and Al-Dajany (2000), which compared the opinions and experiences of older and younger population samples, older respondents tended to report that their marriages had been arranged in this way. However, there are signs that this practice is changing. Al-Johani (1996), in a study of social development in a village in Western Saudi Arabia, found that a substantial proportion, 40.6% of the sample, had chosen their wives by themselves. In their Jeddah study, Bagader and Bashtah (2000) found that among the younger of their two sample groups (the 'sons' sample), the trend was towards self-selection in marriage.

Making the choice of a bride not an easy matter. An important consideration is often the strengthening of relations between people in the village and one way to achieve this is to keep marriage within the tribe or the village members. Traditionally, endogamous marriage was preferred in the Arab world generally.

As Sweet (1960) found, "lineage endogamy and particularly the preference for marriage to a parallel patrilineal cousin are important features of the Muslim Arab marriages," and this was reflected in her findings in Syria.

The same point was highlighted by Antoun (1972), who said the preferred type of marriage in Kufr al-Ma, in Jordan, reflecting and maintaining the strong ties among inhabitants, was for a girl to be given in marriage to her father's closest patrilineal kinsman.

However, this practice was not universally favoured. For example, according to Barth (1983), mothers and fathers in Sohar, in Oman, had different views as to the desirability of an endogamous or exogamous spouse. Mothers preferred close-kin marriage, because such unions linked persons within the mother's pre-existing network, where their

participation and interests were directly involved. On the other hand, men preferred the policy of marrying strangers, as did marriageable girls. The preference within the Bedouin community in Sohar was for tribal endogamy. Agnate cousin marriage and close-kin marriage was found to be generally preferred in Sohari society

In one Saudi study, Abduljabar (1983) found that practice in this respect varied from one tribe to another. Some tribes did not allow exogamous marriage for girls, whereas others did allow them.

The tradition of endogamous marriage appears to have lingered in rural areas, at least.

In a study focusing on culture and relations within the family conducted in Godeyd village, in the Western region of Saudi Arabia, by Al-Homiyri (1991), the results revealed that 35.9% had married within the family and 48.6% had married within the tribe; which indicates that marriage cemented relations between the tribe's members. However, when Al-Saif (1990) conducted a study of social change in the family structure and relationship system, in Unayzah society, in the Central province of Saudi Arabia, he found that endogamous marriage was still preferred, but a new trend towards exogamous marriage was observable as a result of social change.

Similarly, Al-Eryani (1994), investigating the impact of development and change on the social structure of a rural community in Saudi Arabia, found that views towards marriage within the family had changed, and it was less popular than was once the case. Indeed, the study revealed that nearly half of the sample had married from outside their family.

Regarding criteria in spouse selection, several studies have asked men what qualities they looked for in a prospective bride. Al-Homyri (1991) and Al-Johani (1996) both found that religion and morals ranked highly among the requirements of their Saudi respondents. Al-Homyri also found lineage to be considered important, while Al-

Johani's respondents looked for beauty in a prospective bride. Bagader and Bashtah (2000) found that there was a preference for a young bride; also the preference was to marry someone from the same class.

4.3.2. Age at Marriage

Sstudies of social change frequently highlight a trend towards later marriage accompanying such change. This may be due to a number of factors, for example, greater availability of education, or economic pressures necessitating establishment of a career and a degree of financial security before taking on the responsibilities of a family. Similar trends have been noted in a variety of countries.

Audinarayana and Uma (1991) carried out their study about marriage patterns, in Pallapalayam village, in India. Due to increase in education, modernisation and due to the overall social change, they found some marriage patterns had been changing slowly. Marriage of boys and girls occurred at different ages due to different criteria. For example, in rural areas in India, the onset of puberty and specified age were the key criteria for the timing of marriage for girls and boys respectively. Regarding age at marriage for girls, child marriages and early marriages are common in rural India, but in recent times, they found, marriages of both boys and girls are performed at higher ages for boys around 21-25 years and for girls around 16-20 years. They attributed change to education and changes in marriage patterns. Becoming employed and economically independent was the main criterion for the timing of marriage for boys. In the case of girls, learning household work was the important criterion for marriage. Just under half (48%) of the study respondents thought the preferred minimum difference in age between bride and groom was 3-4 years, while one-third thought it was 2 years (Audinarayana and Uma, 1991).

Zhang (2000), in his study about the dynamics of marriage change in Chinese rural society, carried out a study of a northern Chinese village, to investigate the impacts of institutional reforms on marriage in rural China. The study focused on changes in age at marriage, village endogamy, dowry, and interaction between state and family in marital matters. According to the official population censuses of the village in 1982 and 1990 and the researcher's data collected in 1993, no women were single at the age of 28 years or over in 1982, and over 25 years in 1990 or over 23 years in 1993, but there was a small proportion of men over 30 years old who were single.

The young, including young women, had much more decision making power regarding their marriages. Changes in marriage were the consequences of both change in the socio-economic environment brought about by deliberate rural reforms, and strategic or tactical responses of rural Chinese to the rapidly changing context in which they lived and worked.

Jones (1994) in the book, *Marriage and Divorce in Islamic South-East Asia,* aimed to identify and explain the broad changes in patterns of marriage and marital dissolution among Malay-Muslim populations, and to examine some of their key aspects; in this book the author discussed marriage timing, age of marriage, marriage dissolution, stability of first marriage, polygyny and the effect of changing marriage patterns on fertility. However, Jones did not pay much attention to marriage ceremonies, and gave more attention to the female's age at marriage than that of the male.

The study draws together elusive data to provide a picture of time trends and of differentials in marriage and divorce within this region. In the Malay world, marriage had traditionally been universal, for both men and women.

Over the past thirty years, there has been a revolution in age at marriage throughout Islamic South-East Asia. These trends are distinctive: since the 1950s, age at marriage

for females has risen sharply, age differences between spouses have narrowed, and divorce rates have fallen markedly from very high levels to levels well below those in Western countries. The study sets these trends within the context of the pre-Islamic situation in the region, the effects of the coming of Islam, and more recent political, social, economic and legal changes which have influenced the family and marriage patterns. The writer found that the causes of rapid social and economic change included educational expansion, the communications revolution, changing labour markets, urbanisation, Westernisation, and Islamic reform movements.

Brien and Lillard (1994) studied cohort and ethnic differences in education, the timing of marriage, and the timing of first conception for women in Peninsular Malaysia. They investigated the roles of education and enrolment in delaying marriage and first conception and the role of marriage in delayed first conception and dropping out of school. Changes in education and enrolment were found to account for a substantial portion of the cohort trend toward later marriage in Malaysia.

Transition in Malaysia in the last several decades has led to a rapid rise in educational attainment and substantial increases in the average age at marriage and age at first birth. Leaving school, getting married, and starting a family represent important early life cycle transitions.

The timing of marriage may be influenced by not only the benefits of marriage and availability of suitable mates, but also by economic considerations, such as the costs of finding a suitable mate, and the opportunity costs of being married. Rapid economic development, such as that in Malaysia, has implied greater economic opportunities for women outside of marriage.

Brien and Lillard found that the age at first marriage for Malaysian women had increased from 16.6 in 1947 to 21.4 in 1974. Von Elm and Hirschman (1979) found a

strong trend toward delayed marriage in Malaysia; these changes are generally consistent with other Southeast Asian countries.

Parents who are themselves more educated, in professional occupations, or with higher incomes are likely to educate their children more. Marriage may be more costly, or the benefits lower, while actually enrolled in school. The study found that a substantial portion of the cohort trend toward later age at marriage is accounted for by the cohort trend in enrolment and completed education levels. Other factors found to significantly affect age at marriage include urban residence and the ratio of men to women in the region (Brien and Lillard , 1994).

Malhotra's (1997) study examined the determinants of marriage timing for both men and women in central Java, through examining the role of family status, education, and employment. Marriages in Java traditionally have been initiated by parents and take place at early ages for both genders, but more so for women. Sons could often express their choice of a partner and could married in their late teens or early 20s.

Since the 1960s, Javanese marriage patterns have changed more with respect to marriage arrangements and divorce patterns than with respect to the timing of marriages. Increasing self-selection of spouses has been associated with sharp declines in the divorce rate, whereas female age at marriage has risen modestly, from a median of 15.6 years 10 1976 to 17.7 years in 1991. Female age at marriage in Indonesia ranks among the lowest. However, mean age at marriage for men shows some increase, from 23.8 years in 1976 to 24.8 years in 1985.

The writer attributed these changes to the influence of urbanisation and Westernisation. He argued that under these influence, family concerns diminish, and exposure to education and employment increases, resulting in greater independence for the younger

generation, especially women. The more substantial gains made by young women are thought to be reflected in more egalitarian and conjugally oriented marriages.

Changes in the age of marriage have also been found in the Arab world. For example, Jennings (1995) found that the age of marriage in an Egyptian village, for girls in the days before female education, used to be between fourteen and eighteen. At the time of the study, however, the age of marriage for women was the late teens or early twenties, and men married much later.

In Saudi Arabia, too, a trend towards a later age of marriage has been noted. Abduljabar (1983) found a trend to delay marriage until the completion of university education, and the custom of not allowing a younger girl to marry before her older sister had changed, as a result of the spread of education and the desire of some girls to finish university before marrying. Encouragement and support by families to their daughters to get more education, either to get a job or to increased her family income, was found to have led to delay in the age of marriage in a study by Tayeb (1987).

One reason for the delay in age of marriage may be financial difficulties. Kriyems (1987), who studied the village of Kholais in the Western region of Saudi Arabia, found that, as a result of the increase in *Mahr* (bride gift) and the extravagance in celebration of wedding parties, there was a delay in the age of marriage for both genders.

In a study by Al-Homiyri (1991), a change in preferred age of marriage was noted. The majority (52%) in Al-Homiyri's study thought that a suitable age for sons to get married is from 22 to less than 24 years old, and for daughters, from 18 to less than 20 years old.

An increase in the age of marriage has been found in Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi's (1992) study in a Bedouin community. They said that the spread of education had led to delay in age of marriage to between 20-22 years of old instead of 17 years for boys, and 18 years old instead of 14 years for girls.

However, such findings are not universal. When Bagader and Bashtah (2000) studied choice in marriage they found that women had married young, in both generation samples they surveyed. Both the fathers and sons questioned had generally married women less than 20 years old.

Indeed, early marriage continues to be more common for women than for men in developing countries generally. In a study about early marriage among women in forty developing countries, Singh and Samara (1996) showed that marriage during the teenage years is common in developing countries. Nevertheless, the situation varies greatly by country and region. Women are most likely to marry at a young age. In Sub-Saharan Africa, in all but a few countries, 60-92 per cent of all women aged 20-24 had entered their first union by age 20. The researchers found as well that there was a high prevalence of early marriage in a few countries in other regions: in Bangladesh, Guatemala, India and Yemen, 60-82 % of all women aged 20-24 had married by age 20. Although marriage during the teenage years is less common in Latin America, Middle East, North Africa and Asia than in Sub-Saharan Africa, beginning the first marriage before age 15 is common in Bangladesh and Niger, where about half of women aged 20-24 had married by that age. In general, women in Sub-Saharan Africa marry early; 11 of the 16 countries have a median age between 16 and 19 years. But in Mali and Niger, countries with a predominantly Muslim population, the median age at marriage is younger than 16.

Age at marriage, however, is quite different between women who live in urban areas and women who live in rural areas. This point has been raised by Singh and Samara (1996), who found that urban women are less likely than rural women to marry during their teens in all but a few countries. A big difference occurs in the Asian and North African countries, where urban women are generally two-thirds as likely as rural women to marry by age 20. Moreover, urban women in Egypt and Indonesia are only about half as likely as rural women to marry by that age.

In most of Latin America, urban women are about 75% as likely as rural women to marry before age 20.

The study of Singh and Samara shows no association between changes in urbanisation and changes in the prevalence of early marriage, but there was a relationship between education and early marriage; women with at least some secondary education are less likely to have married at a young age than are women with less education. Also, educated women living in urban areas may experience less family pressure to marry at a young age than their educated peers in rural areas, because their families are less likely to follow traditional norms (Singh and Samara, 1996).

Men tend to marry later than women, in both developing and developed countries. In a study of patterns of marriage in a Spanish province of Navarre, Barricarte (2001) examined marriage patterns in the last 300 years, using data from three Navarrese villages. The data from the communities examined all indicate that first marriages took place long after the age of maturity, particularly for men. The writer attributed delay in marriage to economic conditions, social customs, personal preferences, family pressures, and some other cultural aspects. Customs concerning age difference between spouses vary from one society to another. In many societies, it is

normal for girls to marry soon after puberty, while sons do so much later. As result of

that, it is common to find large age gaps between husbands and wives.

4.3.3. Family Structure

A theme emerging in a number of studies is the occurrence of a change in family

structure, as a result of social change.

In the past, people tended to have more wives and a lot of children as this provides a

degree of security to defend the family or the tribe from outside enemies or other tribes.

Moreover, in the absence of foreign labour, families relied on their members to fulfil the

daily tasks of survival and production for the family. It was common for two or three

generations of the family to live and work in the same home.

Hamdan (1990) in a study in Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia, about social change in the Saudi

family, found that the size of the Saudi family has been affected by development. With

the physical and social movement associated with changes in employment and

education, and as the nuclear unit has become more economically independent, the size

of the family has decreased to include only the unclear family instead of the extended

family of the past. Hamdan's study showed that the pattern of more than two or three

generations living in the same house was widespread among Saudi families in the past.

However, it is become less common in the Saudi society at the present time.

Al-Torki and Cole (1991), investigating the changes that had occurred in Unayzah City,

investigated development and social transition through the productions of the

community and the activities which were performed by the community members in

response to these changes. The study exposed transition and changes in the social life of

the population, including weakening of social relationships, and a change from extended

to nuclear families.

Al-Johani (1996), in a village in Western Saudi Arabia, found that the nuclear family had almost completely replaced the extended family. Nevertheless, the extended family remained to some extent due to the need for a large number of family members to run the family business, such as agriculture or herding animals. The family was considered as the basis of the kinship system, which played a major role in stabilising and supporting the social structure.

The size and structure of the family, in fact, reflects two sub-factors: residence, and whether marriage is polygamous or monogamous.

As regards residence, Busby (1995) in a study of the Mukkuvar fishing community in India, noted that marriage is uxorilocal, and after marriage a man takes responsibility for his wife's family as well as his own family. Uxorilocality makes women central in the kin network and makes the households live close to each other, with much coming and going between the houses, and frequent borrowing and lending.

The significance of family structure and residence for social cohesion was also commented on by Al-Saif (1990) in Saudi Arabia, from a different perspective: the weakening of social bonds as a result of a change in residence patterns. His study revealed that after marriage, people preferred to live independently from their families. In other words, neo-local settlement was replaced by bilocal. It was argued that in consequence, relationships between members of the society had weakened.

Another aspect of family structure commented upon by a number of writers is the number of marriage partners. This has attracted particular attention in Muslim societies such as Saudi Arabia. Islam permits a man to have up to four wives at one time, but subject to the proviso that they must all be treated equally. On the one hand, therefore, polygamy offers the advantage of a large number of family members to share

domestic and economic responsibilities; on the other, it place an economic burden on the man, who in Islam is responsible for providing for the family. The decision whether to take more than one wife may reflect a number of factors, and the complexity of the issue is reflected in the variety of research findings.

Antoun (1972) found in his study in Kufr al-Ma village, in Jordan, that the size of household varied from a single person to 22 in the case of a man living with three wives and their children. Sixty-four percent included 6 or more persons, with the modal number of persons in a household being 7. Despite the size of the households, the great majority of them (79%) could be described as nuclear rather than extended families.

Tayeb's study (1987) showed an increase in polygamy as a result of the high income of the household head. On the other hand, other studies reached the opposite conclusion.

A study was carried out about role change among rural families in Al-Baha region, Saudi Arabia, by Al-Ghamdi (1989). The main focus of this study was the examination of the roles of men and women. The author noted a change in rural families. The type of rural family had changed to the nuclear family and the extended family was in decline. Polygamy was also in decline; forty-seven percent of the sample had only one wife.

In Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi's (1992) study a change in this respect was observed from one generation to another. The young generation preferred monogamy and polygamous marriages were practised only by the older people at the time when the study was carried out. Al-Johani (1996) similarly found that trend had changed from polygamy to monogamy.

In this regard, Hamdan (1990) in a study in Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia, found that polygamous marriages have become less prevalent in Saudi society at the present time.

Moreover, in Al-Dajany's (2000) study, he found that polygamy among the 'Utaiba tribe in Saudi Arabia is in decline; 79.7% of the people had one wife, a small number of respondents had two wives, and none of them had three of four wives.

4.3.4. Marriage Customs

Comparatively few studies have looked in detail at marriage customs, although these are an example of the kind of shared ritual that binds a community and helps to create the sense of identity of its members.

Where marriage customs have been discussed, the main focus of interest has been the economic exchange that in some societies accompanies marriage. This may take the form of a dowry bestowed by the father of the bride, which can be interpreted as a provision for her future security or as an inducement to the groom to take on the responsibility of providing for her. In other societies, the exchange is in the reverse direction, from the groom and his family to the parents of the bride- 'the bride price' or 'bridal gift'. Saudi Arabia follows the latter tradition. These exchanges serve several functions, for example, as markers of social status, and as a means of creating and sustaining relationships. They influence who is able to marry whom, and at what age. Thus, they are of considerable interest to sociologist and anthropologist.

Several studies in India comment on the dowry. Types of dowry can be differ from one community to another. The bride's parents pay or present money, gold and other movable and immovable property to the groom his parents, which was treated as a dowry (Audinarayana and Uma, 1991).

Rao (1993) raised the issue of the increased size of dowries in India. Dowries in south Asia have risen steadily over the last 40 years and now often amount to 50 percent of a household's assets. Rao's study was an attempt to investigate the reasons behind the increase in dowries. Rao found that a marriage squeeze caused by population growth,

resulting in larger younger cohorts and hence a surplus of women in the marriage market, has played an important role in the rise in dowries, shifting the distribution of marital resources in favour of men. However, this is not the case in Assfan village, as the dowries should be paid by the groom or his family, according to Islamic teaching and custom; the same is true of most Islamic countries.

These payments, too, have become controversial, however, because of the extravagant expectations of some families, and the burden this imposes on young men seeking to marry.

The amount of dowry can be affected by the status of the family, and its spending, as Abduljabar (1983) found that, the amount of the bridal gift was less in the rural community than the urban community. In addition, in urban society the amount of *Mahr* is seen as reflection of the social status of the family, and can be up to thirty thousand Saudi Riyals (Abduljabar 1983).

Al-Dajany (2000) found that the responses of younger and older generations reflected a significant change in this respect. Among older people, the bridal gift had been small and simple, and often in kind rather than in money, for example, a few animals. Younger people, however, complained of the excessive demands now made; a bridal gift might include a substantial sum of money, as well as clothing, furniture and consumer goods.

A few studies mention other marriage-related customs, such as the adornment of the bride. Adornment of the bride is a matter of concern for the current study, as a custom which expresses celebration and shows the happiness of the bride and her family.

Abduljabar (1983) described the custom of adorning the bride with intricate designs painted on the hands with henna, in the rural community he studied. This usually took

place in the bride's house two days before the wedding, and was done by a married

female relative. The bride on this occasion wore a red dress and a head cover in the

same colour. Some traditional songs were performed while the adornment was carried

out. (Abduljabar 1983).

Jennings (1995) in her study found that the bride and some of her friends go to the

hairdresser to have their hair washed and styled and their faces made up with a variety

of cosmetics. In the *Alshbkah* (the ceremony before the wedding), the groom gave gold

jewellery to his bride, and a new dress, perfume and articles of personal adornment as

well.

Also of interest is the way the wedding is celebrated. Wedding celebrations are

considered as happy occasions in Assfan village, which hundreds of people will be

invited, a big party will be held, traditional folk entertainment will be performed, and

everyone is expected to participate.

Jennings (1995) mentioned that, and said, in the evening of the wedding, a big meal

was prepared by the bride's family for the guests.

Celebrations and happiness in weddings are expected and desirable between people in

communities, but Tayeb (1987) found that a common factor in the two villages which

he studied was a dislike of undue extravagance in parties.

Some studies have pointed out a change in trend as to the place where wedding parties

are held. In Wadi Fatimah, Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi (1992) said, wedding parties

were held in wedding halls in the nearby areas or cities, instead of in the home of the

groom's family or an open area, as before, would once have been the case.

Al-Dajanj (2000) found that most of the people in Utaiba held their weddings in the *Qaser Alafrah* (wedding hall), instead of *Bayt AlSha'ar* or tents, which was the custom remembered by the older inhabitants.

A similar change was reported in a study conducted in a Polish mountain village. Pine (2000) found that the wedding party was not held in the bride family's house or in the groom's family house, as it would have been in past years, but it was held in a community centre. Although the food was prepared as before, by the bride's kin, the work was organised by a local woman who had been hired to oversee the process from beginning to end.

A wedding is an opportunity for the demonstration of social solidarity among members of the family and community, and one way in which this may be demonstrated is by the provision of assistance to the bridal couple.

Sachchidananda (1968) in Bihar, India, highlighted the importance of assistance in marriage. This was especially important in view of the high bride price was very high in tribal village society, which prevented many young boys and girls from getting married. Such assistance played an important part in wedding celebrations.

As Antoun (1972) found in Jordan, one of the important obligations of older married brothers towards younger ones was to help them to marry by contributing to their marriage payment (*mahr*).

Jennings (1995) in a study of a Nubian community in Egypt, mentioned the assistance given to the bride and groom on their wedding. The guests, the bride's extended family and her friends gave gifts, usually in the form of money, to the bride and groom. Members of the groom's extended family and his friends gave money to him as well.

Usually, records of these gifts were kept, so they could be reciprocated at future family occasions.

In regard to assistance and solidarity between the community members, Al-Dajany (2000) found that people of the tribe assist the groom in paying the *Mahr*, which the majority of respondents in his study reported that relatives, friends and family assisted the groom in paying the *Mahr*.

One of the ways in which solidarity is shown in the Assfan community is by giving help and assistance to the groom on his wedding. This may take various forms: money towards the cost of the wedding party, furniture, or other items. Such assistance is a reflection of the Islamic belief that Allah almighty has assured help for three categories of people, one of whom is the man who wants to get married. This reflects the importance of marriage as a social bond and as a protection against sin.

The current study will try to find out whether any changes have occurred in customs related to the preparations for the wedding and the wedding party, including its relationship to the social status of the family.

4.3.5. Implications

Studies of family systems in various parts of the world have focused on a number of common themes: factors in spouse selection, age at marriage, and family structure and residence patterns. These are significant in relation to the way social roles are assigned, networks of alliance and obligation are maintained, and the economic needs of the family unit are assured. The effects of social change, particularly education and economic pressures, appear to have resulted in many cases in a weakening of the family authority in such areas as arrangement of marriage, in favour of self-selection of spouses and a trend away from the small, tightly-knit network perpetuated by endogamous marriage, to a wider and looser set of networks extending beyond the kin-

group. Marriage is occurring later, as young people seek to avail themselves of educational opportunities and establish careers. Younger people are increasingly forming new, unclear family units away from the parents home. These trends have been observed in a number of Saudi studies, as well as in other developing countries. They have not previously been studied in the Assfan area, and although intuitively it might be anticipated that the spread of education, and socio-economic growth and diversity, targeted by Saudi development plans, might have similar impacts in Assfan, empirical research is needed to explore whether and how far this is the case. Another aspect of the family system that has been less frequently studied is the set of rituals and customs surrounding marriage, for example, the value and nature of the gifts exchanged, the way the event is celebrated, and the extent to which other members of the community are involved in the celebrations and in assisting the bridal couple materially. Such practices, as examples, of the shared observances that contribute in creating identity and sustaining social solidarity, are worthy of further investigation, to see whether changes have taken place, which might reflect new circumstances or even changes in the value system

4.4. Social Change and Economic System

A key issue of interest to anthropologist and sociologist is the economic activity of the community studied. Where is a livelihood obtained? Who is economically achieve, and how is work divided? These issues are considered in this section.

The studies reviewed tended to identify three types of socio-cultural system: nomadic/pastoral systems, agricultural village systems, and urban systems, and a common theme was that of a community in transition from one system to another. In her study of Tell Toqaan, a small Muslim Arab farming, gardening and sheep- and goat-

raising village, in north-west Syria (Sweet, 1960), the researcher set the economic functions and social place of village life and villagers in the contrast of the whole socio-cultural system of the East. Tel Toqan reflected primarily the transition from the postoralist tradition to an agricultural village system.

Sweet illustrated how the people of Tell Toqaan ran their village economy through explaining daily life in the village, in relation to the land system of the village, agriculture and gardening, animal husbandry, buildings and compounds, household technology and economics, division of labour, social structure, and ideology and ritual.

Sweet commented that the majority of the population of the Near Eastern states were made up of agricultural villagers. Along with urban artisans and labourers, they constituted the bulk of the members of Near Eastern society, but in terms of economic and social status, villagers were different from the urban people.

The division of labour in Tell Toqaan was found to be associated with the heterogeneous character of the village and the economic differences among the village households, which comprised the foci of village economic activity. There was a division of labour between the classes of the village: the agrarian peasant and shepherd pastoralist traditions. Even within peasant households, traditional rules of division of labour, along sex, age, specialisation, and sub cultural lines, were cross-cut by a class division (Sweet, 1960).

The cultural patterns in Tell Toqaan were mixed. Present in the community and interacting with each other were elements of tribal shepherd pastoralist tradition, local peasant agricultural tradition, and practices of industrial agriculture. Regarding the direction of cultural change in Tell Toqaan, two questions were raised: one was whether the nomadic pastoral tradition, in content and custom, could survive in a sedentary agricultural situation; the other was whether the village would become a tribal village of pastoral derivation or remain primarily a peasant community.

Another study reflecting the transition from pastoralism to village agriculture was that of Katakura (1977), who conducted a field survey of a Bedouin settlement community in Wadi Fatimah (a Bushor community), in the Western region of Saudi Arabia, in an attempt to obtain detailed insights into the socio-economic structure of the village. She found that the way of life of Saudi Arabian villagers could be described only in terms of an extremely complex set of factors. The writer attempted to dig deep enough to understand how they thought, worked, dressed, played, socialised, celebrated, suffered, worshipped and died, within the context of the modernisation of Saudi Arabia, which was proceeding rapidly. An important purpose of the study was observation of the Bedouin living in complex interaction with the physical, social and economic forces operative in an area strategically located between two major cities.

Katakura reported that this village had a variable present and an unpredictable future. The people seemed to have a strong will to stay settled permanently. The villagers in Bushor depended more on agriculture, but the women still helped with herding the animals, which is characteristic of a nomadic Bedouin community. Thus, the village was a clear example of a community in transition, from nomadic to settled. Katakura gave a wide description of the economic activities in the village such as occupations, income, expenditure, indebtedness, landownership and agricultural labour, agricultural tools, marketing of produce, livestock, handcrafts, and shops

Katakura also examined the main economic forces and the traditional social forces, which shaped the existence of the Bedouin inhabitants. The *mustajir* (renter) appeared and started to control the water, which meant controlling the desert economy. New patterns of economy had had an impact not only on the farm structure but also on the inhabitants. Modern merchandise was penetrating into the life of Bedouins; trucks, jeeps, and bicycles had rapidly replaced donkeys and camels as transportation. People

owned radios, cassette recorders, and manual sewing machine. One of the major forces which played a major role in the modernisation of the socio-economic structure of the Bushor village was the force of education, which was available for all the villagers in their own village on in the nearby village. Katakura pointed out that Saudis who had been educated, whether in Saudi Arabia or abroad, preferred to seek work in the cities away from their own villages. However, people who worked and lived in cities frequently went back to visit relatives in their own area.

Whilst these studies reflected the coexistence of contrasting economic systems, other village studies have more clearly depicted a single predominant economic system. Village studies in the 1960s and early 1970s, in a variety of locations, depicted primarily agricultural communities. For example, Sachchidananda (1968) found that in his study in Bihar, India, the most important occupation in the village was agriculture. Men and women worked shoulder to shoulder in the field. In addition, women worked at home, cooking, spinning, and looking after children.

In Antoun's study (1972) of Kufr al-Ma, in Jordan, the village was dependent on agriculture, growing wheat, barley, and legumes in the winter and maize and sesame seed in summer. These crops were grown not only for subsistence, but for trade. The commodities were taken by truck and sold in Palestine. Technology was still very basic and traditional. Donkeys, oxen and horses were used for ploughing land. Land tenure was classified officially into five types: privately owned land, land held as a religious endowment, state land, communal land, and waste land. Although the village was primarily agriculture, a significant proportion of the inhabitants were engaged in other occupations. Regarding occupational structure in the village, 39% of the villagers were engaged in agricultural occupations, 29% of them were engaged in the military, 2% were retired, and 30% were in non-agricultural occupations. This can be seen as a reflection of the kind of occupational division and specialisation that Tönnies

(Martindale, 1998), associated with the growing complexity of society, and to which

Durkheim (Giddens, 1973) attached such importance.

Even where a community remains almost exclusively agricultural in orientation, change

may still be manifested in the manner in which it is practised. Development in the scale

of agriculture may be encouraged by external financial assistance, as described in the

study by Pak and Gamble (1975) on the rural life of three clan villages in South Korea.

The study was to find out what changes were taking place in the life of the Korean rural

community, and what were the factors contributing to these changes.

The economy of the village had been built by agencies such as the Agricultural

Cooperatives, which helped rural families to become farm operators. The activities of

Agricultural Cooperatives were varied and extended to all the village. They provided

farm credit to the village farmers and sold them fertilisers, seed, farm tools, and cattle.

A similar situation exists in Saudi Arabia, where such services are offered by the

Agricultural Bank. The people who benefit from them pay the Agricultural Bank back

in annual instalments, without paying any interest on the whole amount (Ministry of

Planning, 1996.)

Pak and Gamble mentioned several factors which had affected life in the villages such

as demographic factors, which include family size, age and sex, economic conditions,

and landownership. Fundamental changes in Korean rural social structure had been

caused by the land reforms of 1950. In addition to that, there were other factors: the

Korean War, the inflow of Western ideas, education and the mass media.

In the Middle East, a distinctive factor in socio-economic change was the discovery of

oil, which helped to finance the building of infrastructure. This resulted in the

development of urban centres which, with their varied job opportunities and better

facilities, attracted many people from the rural areas. Thus, research in the late 1970s and 1980s drew attention to the increasing trend of rural-urban migration.

In a study about socio-cultural changes in local communities, related to changes in the Saudi society, Shokri (1979) conducted an anthropological study on three villages, in the South of Saudi Arabia. The writer concluded that there had been changes in Saudi society which she attributed to the unification of Saudi Arabia, which set the basis for reform and the improvement of society, socially and economically, and discovery of oil. Shokri (1979) reported that change in the agriculture sector, and the discovery of oil, pulled young people (workers from rural areas and villages), to work in cities and companies, which in turn led to a decline in agricultural activity. The spread of education was another factor which encouraged people to migrate to cities, to continue their education or to seek jobs in keeping with their qualifications, which affected population density in both areas.

At the same time, changes had occurred in the three villages themselves. There had been a change in a commercial activity, with flourishing trade, and greater diversity of products. There was less livestock, due to the disappearance of herders as a result of the spread of education. Some changes had appeared in the traditional means of transportation. The availability of cars had ended the use of traditional means such as camels and donkeys. There were also changes in peasants' houses, customs and habits of food, and daily life style.

The role of oil in rural-urban migration was also highlighted by Hamdan (1990). After the discovery of oil and the development of industries related to it, people started to migrate to the eastern region looking for jobs and a better way of life. Rural people went to the cities to work and to improve their situation, not just looking for jobs but also looking for more education for them and their children

Al-Jifri (1989) examined the impact of these changing socio-economic conditions among the Bedouin in Saudi Arabia. He noted that the coming of oil and consequent economic development had changed what might be named the traditional Bedouin economy but had not significantly changed many traditional social features. The Bedouin still had few or no industrial skills to offer, and little formal education. They were, certainly, attracted by the wages, but the majority of them worked as unskilled labourers in the oil camps. All the facilities technology made available to the Bedouin, for example, cars, agricultural equipment, media (such as televisions, radios), comfortable houses, gas, telephone, electricity, health care, education and many other goods and services had, in Al-Jifri's view, made them more and more dependent on technological production and taken them further away from rural life.

In all parts of Saudi Arabia, the increasing 'pull' of the cities, the contact with new lifestyle features and the independence of communities through education and trade, for example, appear to have resulted in increasing urbanisation of what were once agricultural village communities, as reflected in later studies.

Movement from one village to another for work or for better services was highlighted by Tayeb (1987), who carried out a study in two villages called Al-Jamum and Hada al-sham, to explore the effect of socio-economic development planning on social change. It was found that there had been an increase in the population of Al-Jamum village, as a result of migration from the other village. There were some differences in occupation, as one had multiple activities while the other was basically agricultural. Moreover, the two villages had witnessed some types of urbanisation.

In regard to economic activities, there was a decline in the number of workers in agriculture in Hada al-sham, along with the appearance of a new types of occupation

and activities, such as factories and an agriculture research station. Modern technology was used in agriculture and marketing products. A similar phenomenon was mentioned by Al-Kahtani (1990) in a study of Al-Harjah village. The researcher found that the population of the village had increased as a result of migration to the village from others, because of the location of some governmental agencies in the main village. Although high percentage (48%) of the sample population was engaged in agriculture and herding activities, in the commercial sector, an increase was observed in the number of shops and services such as a bank to serve villagers, a door-making factory and some other workshops. The availability of some services in the village, such as telephone and post office, and some governmental agencies such as the *Emarat*, Islamic court, and police station, made the village attractive to people from other villages.

Al-Torki and Cole (1991) highlighted the emergence of new kinds of economic activities which had not been known previously, for example, work in commercial, industrial and investment sectors. Moreover, some changes had happened in agricultural activity, such as introduction of new products, and dependence on foreign workers in the fields, as a result of the engagement of the community inhabitants in governmental occupations.

Al-Homiyri (1991) found a change in occupational patterns, in that more than half of Godeyd society worked as employees, in commercial companies or government offices, while only 20% worked as farmers.

Similarly, Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi (1992), found the village of Wadi Fatimah had witnessed a decrease in agricultural activity. This had partly been a result of drought. However, increased education and urbanisation gave the villagers other opportunities

for occupation in the governmental sector, in teaching, health care, security, with Saudi

Airlines, and so on. Some were engaged in investment activities in the cities and in

commercial activities.

Al-Eryani (1994) mentioned in his study of Beleryan, that the main occupation in the

area of study was still agriculture. However, other occupations and commercial

activities were beginning to assume greater importance. The people of the Beleryan

community also continued to practise traditional handcrafts such as making some

agricultural tools and making traditional trinkets.

The development plans in Saudi Arabia have brought changes in different aspects of

life, especially in education, and the establishment of more governmental institutions in

villages, according to Al-Johani's (1996) investigation of social development and

aspects of change in a Bedouin society, in Wadi Al-Eis village. The study found that the

village had witnessed changes in different aspects, such as education, health, building

and infrastructure.

In housing, for instance, traditional mud houses were giving way to modern cement

houses, and there had been an increase in the number of districts and number of houses.

The writer highlighted the services and agencies which had helped to drive social

changes, particularly education and health services. Other factors that were said to have

contributed to social change in this society were transportation, electricity and the mass

media.

The mass media have played a role in changing community in Saudi Arabia, by

disseminating information about other lifestyles and encouraging the formation of new

aspirations, as Eben Saleh (1998a) revealed in his article about transformation of the

traditional settlements of South-west Saudi Arabia. He noted that within the society of his study, the agricultural community saw a chance to improve their standard of living by taking advantage of the wealth, job opportunities and facilities available through urbanisation. Most of the younger generation migrated and became new urban inhabitants. They became office workers and labourers, bringing home a regular salary, and wished to use their money to improve their homes. People wanted the kind of homes they saw in the films, in magazines and on television, complete with beautiful furnishings and all the benefits of twentieth century technology. However, what remained constant throughout this transformation was the religion and traditions of the society.

Despite the advance of modernity and a more urbanised lifestyle consistent with Tönnies "gesellschaft" ideal-type, however, Saudi villages are far from becoming totally urbanised, and there is still considerable interest in agriculture, particularly as it is actively sponsored by the government. This, indeed, has provided a new impetus and motivation for agricultural activity.

Al-Dajany (2000) highlighted that agriculture has played an important role in changing the economy and social life style within the tribe. He found that the two-thirds of farm owners in his study practised agriculture to get an interest-free loan from the government.

It can be seen from the forgoing account that a predominant theme in village studies, has been transition in the economic system. Other sub-themes emerge, however, which are of particular interest for their present study. One of these concerns the work opportunities available to women. This is an issue of particular interest in Islamic countries, where religious and cultural norms prevent women mixing with men.

Moreover, traditionally, the woman's role has been in the private sphere of home and family, while men have economic responsibility to maintain their families, and act in the public sphere of commercial and other relations outside the home.

This traditional division of labour was observed in Sohar, Oman, by Barth (1983).

The writer found that although a few women worked outside the home, they were exceptions: a few old women made use of their privileged access to the female, domestic sphere of strangers to work as peddlers offering women's wear and trinkets for sale. Other women worked within the domestic setting: sewing for families in the neighbourhood, embroidering men's caps for sale, or assisting their husbands in agricultural work in secluded gardens. This limited economic activity contrasted with the range of occupational choice for men, which included bank clerks, teahouse operators, taxi drivers, irrigation pump mechanics, house builders, carpenters, shepherds, etc. Moreover, since Sohar is a trading town, and many merchants visit the town market (*sooq*), which gives the people of Sohar connection with the outside world, it had become relatively common for its menfolk to travel as labourers; to Zanzibar or to the Gulf States.

A decade later, however, some studies discovered women working outside the home in a variety of spheres. In a country like Saudi Arabia, which adheres strictly to the tradition of gender segregation, the need to provide separate facilities for women has increased opportunities for women to work outside the home, providing services for other women. Al-Torki and Cole, (1991) , for example, found that women worked outside the home in the government sector, such as in the fields of teaching or health care.

Other studies found that women engaged in agricultural work. In West Aswan, Jennings (1995) found, married women did not only work at home, but raised and tended the domestic animals, helped weed and harvest the crops, and processed the products of the fields for human consumption.

However, in other studies there is evidence of rejection of women's work outside the home. Al-Homiyri (1991) found the majority (52%) of participants in his study did not approve of women's work outside the home, and most of the sample (94%) viewed teaching as the preferred job for women, because it did not require them to mix with men and, moreover, was considered suitable to their feminine nature, as an extension of their nurturing and educational role within the family.

Indeed, some research suggests that in rural communities, modernisation may have constrained women's opportunity to contribute to the household economy, rather than enhanced it. This is because traditional activities had declined, reducing women's opportunity to be economically active in the domestic sphere, while the tradition of seclusion prevented their engaging in alternative occupations.

The absence of women working outside the home was noticed by Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi (1992), who highlighted changes in women's work. Women stayed at home instead of helping with agriculture or herding the animals. Women had stopped handcraft work, which used to be one of their sources of income. Thus, most women were engaged in housework only.

Another phenomenon noted in a few previous studies, is the appearance in Saudi communities of an expatriate workforce. This is of interest, as the importing of both unskilled labour and skilled technicians and professionals from other countries has been

a characteristic of Saudi Arabia, and of the Gulf Countries generally, raising questions as to their role in the economic life of the community.

Barth (1983) found that in Sohar the economic life changes were reflected in the sector of health care, which was dominated by a number of Pakistani and Indian doctors, and Indian nurses; and in education which was provided by teachers from Egypt and Jordan especially. Omanis who were educated and lived abroad, were being encouraged to return home to reduce dependency on expatriates.

Al-Ghamdi's study (1989) pointed out that as a result of greater affluence, rural families had started to employ workers, such as housemaids and drivers from abroad. Housemaids performed tasks that would once have been done by the women themselves, while drivers provided greater freedom of movement. Thus, the lives of rural women changed as a result of changes in society as a whole.

The studies reviewed here raise a number of interesting insights into the processes and effects of social change, on the economic system. While some studies specifically set out to examine change, others provide snapshots of the way of life at a particular time and place, although the comparison of studies of different dates allows some trends to be observed. A predominant theme has been the economic transition from a pastoral, to an agricultural and then a more urban system. In Saudi Arabia, in particular, this seems to have accelerated since the late 1970s, as the socio-economic development financed by oil brought new infrastructure, wider communication, and more varied and complex relationships. Government intervention, education, and the mass media have all played a role in these changes. Trends inferred from previous studies include a shift away from agriculture, the development of new kinds of business, migration, changing roles for women, and the arrival of foreign workers. It will be of interest to see if similar

phenomena are observed in Assfan and, if so, how the community has been affected as a result.

4.5. Social Change and Religion

As indicated in section 4.2, the social functionalist perspective attaches considerable importance to religious and moral norms and values and their role in contributing to social stability. Sociological approaches to religion were prominent in the ideas of Marx, Durkheim and Weber. To Marx, religion contains a strong ideological element; religion provides justification for the inequalities of wealth and power found in society. To Durkheim, religion is important because of the cohesive function it serves, whereby people meet regularly to affirm common beliefs and values. To Weber, religion is important because of the role it plays in social change (Giddens, 2001).

In Western society, a decline in religious observance has often been remarked upon, and linked with an alleged breakdown in social structure. Whereas in the medieval period, church-going was more-or-less universal – even compulsory – and for centuries was a strong social norm, it is now a minority activity.

According to Giddens (2001) older people in the United Kingdom are more religious than younger ones; churchgoing among young people reaches a peak at the age of fifteen. Moreover, in the United States of America, some 40 per cent of the American population attend a church service every week, the majority of whom claim to be active within their congregations.

There has also been a trend in countries such as France, for example, to secularise the education system and consciously avoid the promotion of any particular religion. In the

U.K., although state schools must by law still provide religious education and a collective act of worship, the explicit Christian content is being diluted in favour of more general social and moral issues, at least in part to accommodate an increasingly diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-religious society (Al-Orini, 2001).

In commentaries on the Arab world, and particularly in Saudi Arabia, religion is acknowledged as a powerful force. Commentators on Saudi Arabia agree on the universal spread and profound influence of the Islamic religion.

Islam is founded on belief in one unique and incomparable Allah (God) whose final message to mankind was revealed by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and recorded in the Quran. This revelation, together with the Prophet's sayings and his tradition, provide the basis for a code of behaviour which links religion, law, commerce and social policies (Lipsky, 1959).

Saudi society was born from the religious and social reform movement instigated and led by Muhammad Ibn Saud and Ibn Abd alWahab. Moreover, Islam played a key role in the unification of the Kingdom by King Abd al-Aziz in the early twentieth century, being promoted as a cohesive force that overrode tribal differences and conflicts (Al-Dajani, 2000). Islam is the foundation of the Saudi constitution (Al-Hageel, 2001) and the heart of the education system (Al-Zaid, 1982). Religious values permeate every aspect of life: food, clothing, commercial dealings, broadcasting, and the contact of day-to-day relations, such that no aspect of life, public or private, can be separated or understood in isolation from the values and purpose of Islam (Al-Khalif, 1999). As the main source of community values, Islamic observance is reflected not only in acts of worship and in observance of religious festivals, but also in patterns of social support and obligation.

Despite the importance of religion as the basis of the social values throughout the Arab world, it has been mentioned surprisingly infrequently in studies of social change. Those writers who have touched upon religious values and behaviours have done so in terms of three main features: performance of prayer, religious consciousness, and social solidarity.

Collective performance of religious duties is considered both a source and reflection of solidarity among the community members. When the people of Assfan perform their prayers at mosques, this indicates the closeness within the village people. Such performance is an obligation for Muslims. *As Abu Huraira narrated, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "The prayer offered in congregation is twenty five times more superior (in reward) to the prayer offered alone in one's house or in a business centre, ..." Sahih Al-Bukhari, (Khan, 1994).*

In a study of rural Syria, Sweet (1960) refers to the practice of prayers, but does not indicate their collective performance in the mosque. Nor did she discuss other aspects of religion, such as religious festivals, or the help given to the needy.

Jennings (1995) noted that the villagers of Aswan in Egypt are considered to be devout Muslims, although few are fundamentalists. She commented that women, as well as men, are very religious, but they do not go to the mosque; they perform their prayers within the privacy of their homes.

Pak and Gamble's (1975) study in a Korean village, provides indications of the existence of religious belief in the village in general but does not indicate whether or how it is reflected in practice in the daily life of people.

Thus, these studies note the prevalence of religious belief, and even the performance of prayer, but they do not indicate the extent of collective religious observance, whether in daily prayers or in religious festivals. Information on this matter, and particularly whether there has been any change or inter-generational difference in the pattern of religious worship might be an interesting indicator of social solidarity and of the extent to which traditional values are changed or perpetuated.

One area in which previous studies point to possible change is in sources of values and religious consciousness. Whereas at one time in the Arab world the mosque was the sole provider of education and transmitter of religious values, the modern era has brought exposure to multiple sources of information. Some writers have highlighted the positive impact of such change. For example, Tayeb (1987), in a Saudi study, drew attention to sources of education for family members and found that some changes had appeared in cultural and social aspects, such as increased number of mosques, and availability of general education in both the villages he studied. Contact between the villages and urban centres was easier, which give the villagers opportunity for cultural communication with others. Thus, the mosque was no longer the only vehicle for transmission of religious and ethical values.

In another study by Hamdan (1990), the role of the mass media as a source of moral education was highlighted. Mass media enable the Saudi people to see the world around them and to benefit from their experience. They enable the Saudi family to acquire and absorb information related to the house and socialisation of children and how to care for them, as well as giving insights into relationships among family members.

Moreover, the mass media widen the scope of knowledge for men and women who did not have the chance to complete their education (Hamdan, 1990).

Asseri (1991) however, in his investigation of the impact of urbanisation in south-western of Saudi Arabia, saw both positive and negative effects of modernisation on the traditional value system. He claimed that relations between people in the community are weaker than in the past. This is attributed to the availability of foreign workers in the village, as well as machines, which had decreased the need for kin members to help each other. On the other hand, people had become more aware of the moral significance of religion as a result of their exposure to the outside world through education, migration and transportation.

Researchers have also provided insights into the way religious values are reflected in patterns of social exchange and mutual aid among members of a community. This is a topic of particular interest to this study, given the importance traditionally attached to community activity of this kind in Islam. Visits between community members and their neighbours show mutual love in the whole community. Therefore, *the Prophet Muhammad said, " Al-Qati (the person who severs the bond of kinship) will not enter Paradise" (Khan, 1994)*

Islam encourages people to mix together, and calls for collective actions and cooperation (Kendrick, 1991).

Previous studies have shown these values are reflected in community life. For example, in Antoun's study (1972) in Jordan, the researcher was interested in the relationship between Islamic law, ethics and ritual on one hand, and local customs on the other. He found that lineage membership was important for certain aspects of social relations such as visiting. Lineage members generally frequented each others' guest houses more often than those of other lineages. Moreover, invitations to feasts always included close patrilineal kinsmen, although neighbours and friends were also invited.

Aside from the nightly visits which the heads of household paid to one another in the guest houses of the village, visits took place on formal occasions such as feasts given at the time of circumcision or religious festivals, and after the completion of a new house.

Barth (1983) found in Sohar, relationships were very close-knit. Some groups of people practised a pattern of visiting all households on the occasion of weddings or funerals. One centre of social activity was the marketplace, where people gathered, while they were on business. They could sit and talk in one of the cafés set up in the market. Also, they could meet each other in the market's mosque (Barth, 1983).

Social solidarity in Islamic society is manifested particularly in help given to the needy. Helping the needy is one of the Islamic principles, which Muslims are enjoined to follow. Allah almighty in the holy Quran said;

(Those who spend their wealth day and night in secret and in public have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.) Holy Qur'an (1:274)

In his Sohari study, Barth (1983) noted that strong obligations of a moral kind existed between neighbours, involving mutual help in sickness and misfortune, for example looking after aged or crippled people.

In general, the few studies that have referred to religious and moral behaviour and values indicate that in the Islamic communities in question, traditional values remained strong. Indeed, the point was made explicitly by Alomari (1993) in his study of the village of Hwylan in the Al-Qasim region of Saudi Arabia. He particularly pointed out the continuity in such values, in contrast to the material changes he noted in village life. He noted that despite Hwylan's closeness to the city of Buraidah, social change in

family and community life did not seem to have developed as markedly as Ibn Saeed (1989) and Alnowaiser (1983) had found in the cities of Riyadh and Buraidah. In other words, although there certainly had been change, there was continuity also. He reported that the impact of religion and traditional life was more immediate in small communities and they seemed to constitute a stronger pressure to conform in his small community than in larger ones.

Moreover, Alomari's study highlighted the main finding of the study, which was that striking changes in prosperity and in housing and domestic technology had not been accompanied by fundamental changes in the value system of the community. The local culture remained strong and largely resistant to outside influences, despite the relations between the village of the study and the city.

The research reported in this section provides some indications of the importance and strength of religious values in the communities studied, reflected both in prayer and in close, mutually supportive social relationships. However, very few studies have explicitly addressed this issue. At a time of change in many aspects of Saudi life, it would be interesting to explore how far traditional religious values are observed by the Assfan community, and to what extent such values still provide a cohesive force in the face of modernisation.

4.6. Summary

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework for the study, and has identified key themes and issues emerging from previous village studies.

The research is underpinned by a social functionalist perspective, which examines networks of social relations and the way these contribute towards the stable and harmonious functioning of society. Drawing on the work of, for example, Tönnies and

Durkheim, attention has been drawn to the idea of a rural urban continuum, the increasing complexity of societies, the role of shared norms and values, and of mechanisms of exchange, in the creation and maintenance of social solidarity, and the different types of solidarity that characterise traditional and more modern societies. It has been shown that within thus overall perspective, anthropologists and sociologists have concerned themselves with such issues as urbanisation and migration, agrarian and rural change, gender roles, social norms and values, for example, religion, and community rituals such as those observed in relation to marriage.

Previous research was then reviewed in relation to social change, with a specific focus on three main systems: the family system – and particularly, marriage; the economic system; and the religious value system.

With regard to the family system, research in Spain, India, China, Malaysia, Latin America and the Arab world, including Saudi Arabia, reveals a number of common trends. In terms of choice of spouse, trends have been observed away from arranged marriage towards self-selection, and from endogamous to exogamous unions. Both men and women are tending to marry at later ages, particularly in urban areas. The extended family is giving way to the nuclear family and, in areas where polygamy has cultural and religious acceptance, it is less practised than formerly. These changes have been linked to the wider availability of education, economic pressures, and exposure to other cultures and value systems. Change has also been observed in customs and rituals associated with marriage, which have become in some ways depersonalised (for example, the trend towards celebration in hired hall rather than in the home area) and more ostentatious, with a focus on material display and status (reflected in increasingly extravagant dowry demands). Nevertheless, such celebrations still provide an opportunity for community members to come together in expressions of shared values and social solidarity.

Economic system, too, show the impact of social change, reflected in the gradual transition from nomadism/ pastoralism to settled agriculture and, eventually, urbanisation-although elements of different economic system often exist side-by-side. Since the late 1970s and 1980s, in particular, research in Asia and the Arab world reveals large-scale movement from rural to urban areas in search of education, job opportunities and a better standard of living; and gradual urbanisation of village communities, reflected in the appearance of new occupations in trade and services, and a decline in the importance of agriculture. These changes have been attributed to factors such as the spread of education and of energy and transport infrastructure, as well as the role of the mass media in raising awareness of other lifestyles and encouraging new aspirations. Conflicting findings exist on the impact of such changes on women; in some regions they appear to have benefited from increased work opportunities; in others, the loss of traditional occupations and the conflict between new economic patterns and the tradition of segregation may actually have constricted women's role.

In the face of social change, concern is often expressed that social bonds will be weakened. In thus respect, it is of interest to observe the role played by religion in maintaining a sense of community and social cohesion. A few studies in the Arab world have noted the communal observance of prayer and celebration of festivals; the role of education institutions and the media in supporting the value system of the mosque; and the Islamic traditions of communal activity and mutual assistance. The little evidence available suggests these remain strong in the face of social change.

It will be of interest in this study to observe whether or to what extent the sorts of changes observed elsewhere have affected Assfan, as a village community with a long pastoral and agricultural tradition which, like other parts of Saudi Arabia, has relatively recently been exposed to the expansion of infrastructure taking place under successive development plans, financial by oil revenues. Assfan, moreover, being located along the

route between Makkah and Madinah, is also exposed to pilgrims traffic, which may have multiple effects as a regular source of exposure to 'outsiders', an opportunity for economic transactions, and a constant reinforcement of the values of Islam. Before exploring the situation of Assfan, however, it would be worthwhile to examine the dimensions of socio-economic change in the Kingdom as a whole. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIMENSIONS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC

CHANGE IN SAUDI SOCIETY

Chapter Five
Dimensions of Socio-economic Change in Saudi Society

5.1. Introduction

Saudi society today is different from that of 30 years ago. Many things have changed within the society and the Saudi village has been affected accordingly. Changes in the economic, educational, transportation and communication institutions can be seen in the country at the present time. In this chapter, a description of the changes in these institutions and their effect on Saudi society in general will be presented. First, an overview will be presented of the government's efforts towards socio-economic development. Then, specific dimensions, namely, economy, education, technology and religion, will be considered in turn.

5.2. Overview of Government Development Efforts

Initiation of change in Saudi Arabia has been the result of internal and external pressures and has consequently caused many conflicts and tensions. King Abdulaziz and his successors hoped to maintain a viable socio-economic order based on Islam that is flexible enough to adjust to changing circumstances. They introduced change to accommodate emergent situations but continued to invoke religion as a means to rationalise that change. Despite the increase in oil revenues, King Saud (1956-1964) did not introduce significant changes in Saudi living conditions. In King Faysal's reign, he introduced his Ten Point Reform Programme, which was rationalised in religious terms. These reforms were mostly in the education and economic spheres (Lenczowski, 1967).

King Faysal proceeded cautiously, but emphatically, to introduce Western technology.

He was continually forced to cope with the incessant demands of the Saudi technocrats

to move faster and with the equally vociferous urging of the *Ulama* to move not at all.

He chose the middle ground, not merely in a spirit of compromise to appease the two

forces but because he earnestly believed that a religious orientation would mitigate the

adverse effects of modernisation (Nyrop, 1985). Whereas the advocates of change

demanded political and socio-economic reforms, the *Ulama*, merchants, and tribal

leaders supported the prevailing conditions. To the latter, change meant displacement

and the loss of status. Although religion legitimates Al Saud's rule, religious opposition

has begun to emerge in recent years, demanding the creation of a stricter Islamic rule.

From the beginning of the present Saudi regime, the government has sought to guide

and control the process of modernisation at an evolutionary pace. When King

Abdulaziz united the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 he was faced with many

problems in his attempt to transform Saudi Arabia into a modern country (Philpy, 1972;

Troeller, 1976; Almana, 1980). He introduced aspects of modern administration and

Western technology considered essential for effective government and not contradictory

to the principles of Islam. The increased oil revenues enabled him to purchase

armaments and means of transport and communication. Agricultural development on a

modern basis was a first priority because he believed that technological development in

this respect would be more effective in promoting the welfare of his people. He settled

the Bedouins and taught them how to farm and live in permanent settlements. He

encouraged them to trade and set up a simple industry. For that purpose he sent

religious people to teach them Islam. At the beginning, the economy was unstable

because agriculture was dependent on rain water. The economy became more stable

after the discovery of oil in 1938 and people migrated to Saudi Arabia.

The reign of King Saud (1953-1964) is generally considered a period of regression, economic difficulties and political fermentation. He abolished some of the reforms introduced in the last decade of his father's reign, and above all he reactivated control by the Ulama. King Faysal (1964-1975) comprehended the enormity of the task of modernisation and accepted total responsibility for achieving it. Reforms were initiated which included the establishment of elementary schools for girls. Health and medical centres also multiplied (The Gulf Bureau for Organisation and Statistical Studies, 1984). Modern educated bureaucrats replaced expatriate Arabs and increasingly eroded the monopoly of the conservatives in the Saudi government services. King Faysal reorganised his cabinet and entrusted some of the new ministries which he created, and many key positions in his administration, to university-trained Saudis. In 1970, he launched Saudi Arabia's first five-year development plan (1970-1975) as a modern system to allocate resources for stated policies and programmes on periodically evaluated priorities.

The government policy of guided modernisation and the careful intention to preserve the country's religious and traditional character is reflected in the main principles underlying the long-term goals of development for Saudi Arabia, which seek to maintain the basic continuity of balanced development through the sequence of five-year plans. The long-term strategic goals of the Kingdom's development have been formulated since the First Development Plan to provide a foundation for future development efforts and for the achievement of national objectives. Over the past two decades, these strategic goals have been re-emphasised or modified, but their basic thrust has guided the development process. Two basic principles guiding national development and providing essential continuity and stability have been the sustained preservation of religious values and the provision of national security. Beyond these fundamental principles, several other broad goals have guided development plans

101

(Ministry of Panning, 1991, p. 4). Development plans in Saudi Arabia strive for economic diversification by, first, establishing new non-oil industries and expanding agriculture, and secondly, by focusing on improving and enlarging the Saudi manpower base to carry out more effectively the nation's development, with a heavy emphasis on vocational and technical training (Al-Farsy, 1986; Crane, 1978; El-Mallakh, 1982).

One of King Khalid's (1975-1982) major domestic accomplishments was the decision to place a greater emphasis on agricultural development, which previously took a lower priority because of manpower shortages and Saudi inexperience in planned agriculture. The decision to support increased production of locally produced foodstuffs was due, among other factors, to the rapid rise in local food demand and the waster exploration data proving that the Kingdom's water resources were capable of supporting major agricultural projects far beyond existing subsistence and small scale, traditional landholders' farms. This approach resulted in a substantial increase in wheat production, fruits, vegetables and other crops that satisfied local needs while the surplus was exported (Nyrop, 1985, pp. 46-48).

King Fahd (1982) accelerated Saudi Arabia's development, concentrating on building the Kingdom's infrastructure, diversifying its economy, and expanding its welfare and other services which benefited the citizens. This necessitated a substantial increase in the workforce, at a time when Saudi manpower was already in short supply. It also necessitated that the central government administration and its specialised agencies be expanded. The employment demands required, in addition to a large number of foreigners, many more educated Saudis in the government services and in managerial positions in the private sector. In spite of the decline of the oil revenues in the 1980s, because of a decreased demand for oil and declining oil prices, the government succeeded in overcoming most of the economic problems and continued its plans for

modern development, with some cost containment measures such as budget cuts in some areas and limiting the amount of foreign labour.

5.3. The Economic Dimension

After the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia in 1938, the economic condition of the country was changed from dependence on agriculture and trade as the chief sources of income to a new source that greatly increased the wealth of the country. This huge wealth enabled the government to plan for a bright future through many projects and policies to enable the country and its people to progress. Lipsky (1959) mentioned that:

> Oil has had a great political, economic and social impact on Saudi Arabia. Future changes are certain to be even more profound. The differences between the traditional order and what is taking place is very great, and for the present at least, change is occurring more rapidly here than in any other country in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia used to export only crude oil to several countries in Western Europe and Japan, but after the construction of many refineries, it now exports both crude and refined oil.

The budget of the country depends mostly on revenues gained from oil production and exports. It is easy to imagine how important oil revenues have become to the country's budget if it is recalled that, in 1989, the budget was 116 billion SR (Saudi Riyals), or about 32 billion dollars (National Guard Magazine. 1989), compared to about two million dollars forty years ago (Middle East Daily Newspaper. 1989)

The huge wealth contributes to improved economic conditions in the country, which are reflected in improvement in social, educational, and health conditions. Many schools and hospitals were established. Almunahi (1983) found that about 70 percent of his sample reported their monthly income to be from 8,000 to 12,000 Riyals. In

contrast, about 61 percent indicated that their income had been from 300 to 600 Riyals ten years previously. Al-Juwayer (1982) reported in his study that 66.67 percent of his sample indicated that their family's monthly income was at least 6,000 Saudi Riyals.

As a consequence of economic progress, education for boys and girls has been improved and the number of schools is increasing with each passing year. According to the Ministry of Planning, in 1996 there were 4,181,149 students from both sexes and in all types and levels of education in more than 21200 educational institutions, serving both boys and girls. These institutions included kindergarten schools, intermediate schools, secondary schools, higher and university education, technical education schools, teacher training institutes and centres, and adult education institutes (Ministry of Planning, 1996).

The government of Saudi Arabia started a process of development planning through a series of five-year plans in order to benefit from the economic progress and to employ these revenues in a number of projects which would help the country to develop and continue to progress year after year. The programme of these plans started in 1970 with The First Five-Year Development Plan (1970-1975) followed by The Second Five-Year Development Plan (1975-1980), The Third Five-Year Development Plan (1980-1985), The Fourth Five-Year Development Plan (1985-1990), The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1990-1995), after The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (1995-2000). The Seventh Five-Year Development Plan (2000-2005) is now in effect. These plans contain strategies to develop and improve economic resources, human resources, the social sector, and the physical infrastructure (Sindi and Alghofaily, 1982). In order to accomplish these objectives, the government spent 288 billion dollars on projects that were planned during the first, second, and third five-year development plans (Saudi Arabia Embassy to the United States, 1985).

One of the goals of these plans was that all people in the country should benefit from

health care and medical services, of matter where they live. Because of that, new hospitals and health care centres were built and old hospitals renewed. Medical services in Saudi Arabia today are very advanced and Saudi patients are now treated locally rather than being sent abroad for medical care. The number of hospitals and health care centres has increased from 67 hospitals and 847 health care centres in 1978 to 176 hospitals and 1,731 health care centres in 1996 (Ministry of Planning, 1996). One important observation is that all medical care in Saudi Arabia, including medicine, is free. In cases where patients cannot be treated locally, they are sent abroad with the government paying all expenses. As a result of the improvement in medical services, child mortality rates have decreased and longevity has increased among Saudis. Control of diseases in rural areas has improved as people become more aware of health issues. The impact of development on health institutions can also be seen through the decrease in the number of Saudi patients who travel abroad seeking medical care, which saves them money and time.

The achievements of the development plans can be recognised in the entire country in all social and economic domains. Among these achievements are the Real Estate Development Fund which has provided Saudi citizens with interest-free loans to build houses, which cost about 2187 million Riyals, the Industrial Development Fund which has provided investors with loans to start their projects and industries, which cost about 2410 million Riyals, and the Agricultural Bank which has provided farmers with loans to buy machines, seeds, and fertilisers at a cost of about 412.6 million Riyals (Ministry of Planning, 1996). Along with these achievements, the government subsidises several products and the cost of electricity. It also provides needy people with social security subsidies so they can live a better life.

Another goal of the development plans was to diversify economic resources away from

dependence on oil, since it is an exhaustible resource. With this in mind, the government allocated a large part of its budget during the development plans to build the basis for new resources of revenue, such as industrialisation and agriculture.

Before the discovery of oil, the country was not industrialised, but now, many products manufactured in Saudi Arabia, especially those products related to oil, are exported to countries throughout the world. The government, in order to develop the industrial sector, established the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) in 1977 which is engaged in various industries to produce petrochemicals, iron, steel, and other products dependent on crude oil (Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation, 1981). To promote industrialisation, the government built two huge industrial cities (one in Jubail on the east coast and another in Yanbu in the west coast) to be the starting points for industrialisation. Those two cities were built with the intention of diversifying economic resources and they are the locations of several industrial projects and complexes which have the potential to improve the trade balance between the country and the nations of the world and to enhance the country's economy. Jubail and Yanbu are considered among the largest industrial centres in the Middle East. Their numerous factories produce plastics, fertilisers, steel, cement and other oil derivatives (Middle East Newspaper, 1989).

To meet the demand for vocational skills and abilities needed by factories, several vocational and training centres and institutes have been established in various specialisms in all regions of the country. By 1996 there were 126 schools and institutes with about 33,885 trainees. The number of industries in the country has also increased. In 1976, the number of factories was 1,017, while in 1996 there were 2,476 factories producing various kinds of products such as food stuffs, textiles and clothing, leather, wood products. chemicals, building materials and metal (Ministry Planning, 1996).

Another goal of the development plans in Saudi Arabia is to get the private sector

involved in the development of the country. The development plans encourage the private sector to play a vital role in the process of modernising the country's economy. Businessmen and investors are increasingly investing in the country by establishing industrial and agricultural projects. Saudi businessmen and investors are eligible to get loans from the Development Bank so they can start their projects and contribute to their country's development.

Agriculture is the second important resource that the government planned to develop as a way of diversifying the national economy. The agricultural sector has been developed in the past few years as a result of the introduction of new methods, such as the use of advanced machines, fertilisers, and extension services, along with encouragement and support by the government to the private sector. Among the achievements of the development plans related to agriculture is that the total crop area increased in ten years from 360 thousand acres to 5.5 million acres (National Guard Magazine, 1989).

Agriculture in Saudi Arabia in the past was practised in a limited way, with traditional methods. The fact that the desert dominates the landmass contributes to the limitation of this sector as an effective source of economic revenues. Consequently, 90 percent of the country's food needs were imported from other countries as recently as the 1970s and early 1980 (National Guard Magazine. 1989). Today, agriculture is flourishing and progress can be measured in the self-sufficiency that has been accomplished through the significant investment in the country. The country has created an agricultural infrastructure which provides everything to the farmers, from providing modern farming technology, the construction of roads, irrigation networks, storage and export facilities to the establishment of agricultural research and training centres and extension services (Saudi Arabia Embassy to the United States, 1989). The result of these strategies can be seen by the fact that Saudi Arabia has achieved self-sufficiency

in wheat production, with a considerable surplus, which is exported to other countries.

In 1978, wheat production was about 3,000 tons while in 1996 it increased to about two million tons (Ministry of Planning, 1996).

Saudi Arabia today exports its production of "wheat, dates, dairy products, eggs, fish, poultry and vegetables to markets throughout the world (Saudi Arabia Embassy to the United States, 1989). In Saudi Arabia, anyone aged 18 years or over who wishes to start an agricultural business is eligible to get a piece of land of up to 200 acres free, and to get a loan from the Agricultural Bank with no interest. The government will pay about 50 percent of the cost of the farming and irrigation machines, fertilisers and seeds.

Economic development has had an important effect in bringing about change in Saudi society. Families are no longer food production units, as this function has been transferred to other agencies in the society. People are enjoying employment outside the village domain and their monthly income and standards of living have improved. Moreover, many people have left their home areas looking for a better way of living in the cities where industries and employment opportunities are available. Also, Saudi boys and girls seek the opportunities for more and advanced education and thus the level of education is increasing, as will be seen in the next section.

5.4. The Education Dimension

Education is a very important sector for any country that aims for development and prosperity. The development of human resources through education must go side by side with the development of other sectors in order to achieve progress. In Saudi Arabia, education has improved tremendously over the last twenty years in quantity and quality. In the past, education was restricted to religious education for both boys and girls. There were no formal schools and boys used to study in the mosques, and the girls with a woman, in the teacher's house. Students learned to memorise the *Quran*, the Islamic holy book and to study the Arabic language. However, it was found that the traditional

schools alone could not provide the personnel the new state required, nor meet the challenges of rapid development. A Directorate of Education was founded in 1926 to oversee and develop formal education within the state. To expedite development further, the Directorate was upgraded to a Ministry in 1953. Formal education for girls started in 1960, under a separate administration, in order to preserve the segregation which Islam requires. The first university in the Kingdom was established in 1957. General education (from kindergarten up to high school) is currently provided by two main agencies, the Ministry of Education, which oversees boys' education, and General Presidency for Girls' Education. Along with these two main agencies, several other ministries and agencies are responsible for providing education for their staff and their families. Among these agencies are the National Guard, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Defence (Ministry of Finance and National Economy, 1987). Higher education is provided by eight universities under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education.

The number of schools for boys in 1954 was 469, and the number of schools for girls, when the formal education was introduced in 1960, was 52 schools. However, by 1996, the number of educational institutions for boys and girls totalled 19,641 (Ministry of Education, 1996). Also, the number of students has increased from 42,000 male students in the mid-1950s (Almunahi, 1983), and 32,391 female students in 1964 (Alomari, 1984) to 1,416,594 male and 1,066,207 female students in 1996 (Ministry of Education, 1996). One can hardly imagine the effect of education on those students which will be reflected in their lives and families.

When the formal educational system was started in 1953, teachers were provided from other Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. But over time, the number of Saudi teachers increased, and the Arab teachers were replaced by Saudi graduates year after year. In 1982, the number of Saudi teachers was 54,962,

and it increased to 93,909 teachers in 1987 (Ministry of Education 1988). By 1996, the number of teachers in general education was 207,418 (Ministry of Planning, 1996). The Kingdom's ratio of 15.1 students to every teacher is one of the lowest in the world.

Educational profession is also made for those people who are unable to attend the regular schools because of some handicap or those who did not have the chance to be educated when they were young. For these people, education is available everywhere in the country, and the schools are equipped with the appropriate materials. This type of education is known as special education, and it includes 30 institutes, which provide their services to blind, deaf and dumb, and mentally retarded learners (Ministry of Finance and National Economy, 1987).

Adult education gives those who did not attend schools in their youth the opportunity to learn and improve themselves. This type of education has been very important in reducing illiteracy and the number of schools and students of this type of education is increasing. In 1973, the number of schools was 768 and the students numbered 52,822 males and 2.293 females (Ministry of Education, 1982). In 1996, there were 2,836 schools and centres, with 43,700 male students and 69,691 female students (Ministry of Finance and National Economy, 1987).

Higher education is another area where development can be seen in the educational system in Saudi Arabia. There are eight universities divided into 67 faculties or colleges, along with 16 colleges for girls, providing undergraduate and graduate education in several subject areas. The enrolments in these colleges in 1996 were 206,272 students, 110,066 were males and 96,206 were females (Ministry of Planning, 1996). The number of students, particularly females, is increasing. In 1973, the number of students, both males and females, was only 11,337 (10,002 males and 1,335 females) and the number of colleges was 19 for males and only one college for girls (Ministry of Education 1982).

Some Saudi students are given the opportunity to travel abroad to pursue advanced study in various specialisms in order to create an educated cadre available to participate in the country's development. Many of these students are on scholarships where the government pays all expenses and provides them with jobs after they complete their studies. In addition there are some students who are not on scholarships, and pay their own expenses, but these, too, will find jobs readily after their graduation. Students are studying in several countries such as Arabian countries, European countries, the United States of America and Canada.

The number of students studying abroad increased in the early years of development, but it has started to decrease as the universities and colleges within the country have improved and are able to provide advanced studies and a wider range of specialists. In 1973 the number of Saudi students studying abroad was 2,574 males and 219 females, and in 1982 the number was 10,943 males and 968 females, but in 1996 the total number dropped to 6,726 students, 5,007 males and 1,719 females. (Ministry of Planning, 1996)

The government's development plans for education are intended to achieve four strategic educational goals: to improve the quality of education and training, to make the education and training system more responsive to the needs of the economy, to increase efficiency through improved administration and management, and to facilitate quantitative growth of the system (Ministry of Planning, 1980). Furthermore the development plans for education emphasise the importance of Islamic values, in the sense that these plans must be in congruence with the Islamic heritage of the country. So religious studies are offered in all schools, along with other universities and institutions. Yahya (1986), in his content analysis of textbooks in some the Middle Eastern countries, said that Saudi textbooks included more religious content in both titles and pictures than did those in the other countries (Jordan, Libya. and Syria).

FIGURE 2.1

MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
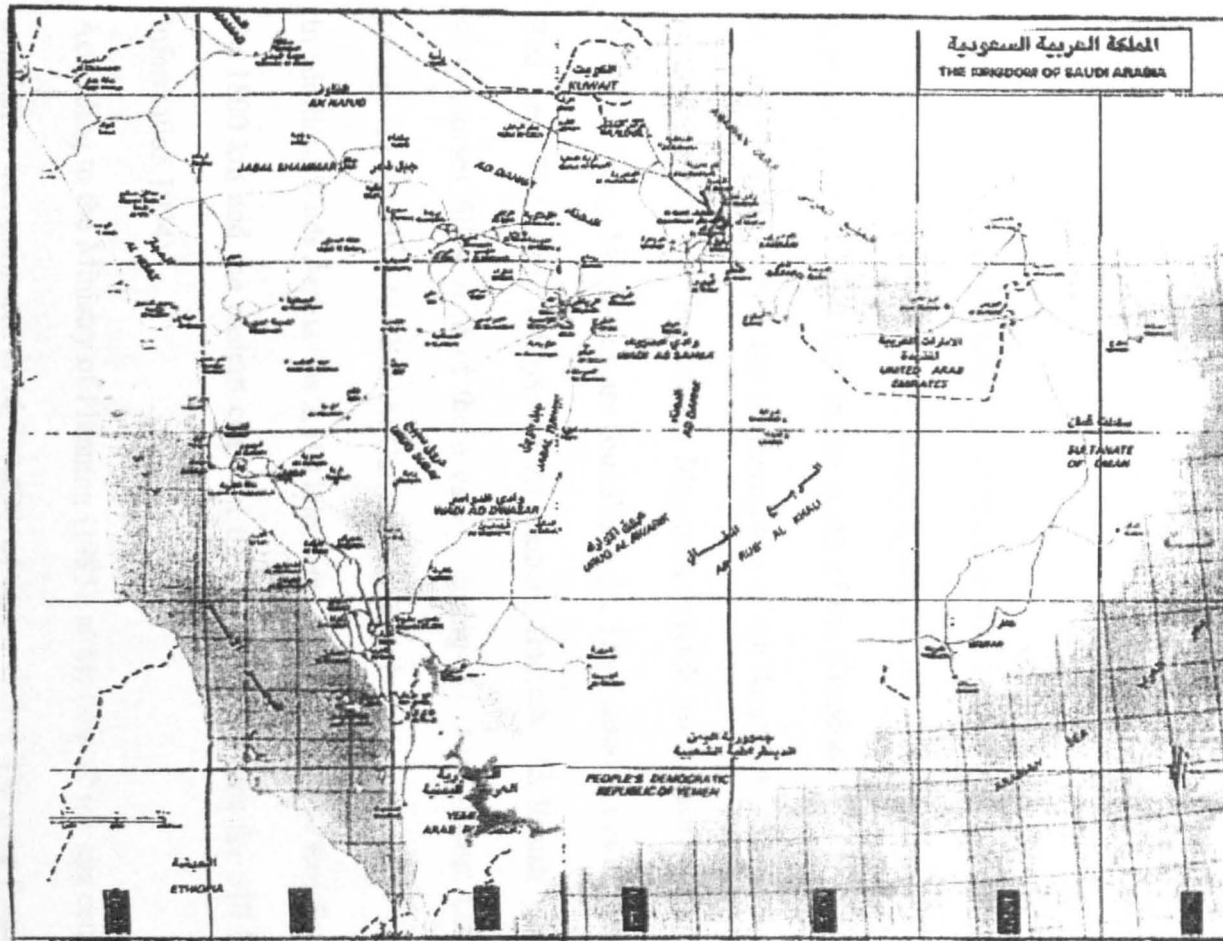
Source: Farsi, Z (1992), National Guide and Atlas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2nd edition, 2nd print, Pp111-112, Engineer Zaki M. A. Farsi, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Consequently all kinds of technological techniques and devices have been made available for the Saudi people. Since technology plays a very important role in the development process, and since Saudi Arabia has very little indigenous technological ability, the country has been importing technology from other countries, particularly the West, and has made it available for the people to use. The transfer of technology to Saudi society is determined by its suitability to the society. Technology will only be accepted in Saudi Arabia if it is in accordance with the values of Islam. Saudi society has been exposed to different kinds of technological devices and services, thereby saving time for the people. Technology has made several functions within the family domain, such as cooking, cleaning, and sewing easier and faster.

The impact of the development of transportation and communication on Saudi people can be seen through the increase in mobility, both inside and outside the country. The availability of modern transportation system enables people from rural areas to go wherever they want and increases their freedom to move and be in contact with other people. Moreover, better communication systems make it easy for them to get in contact with their relatives and friends or to seek work in the cities.

The mass media's effect is also great. As we know, the mass media play an important role in bringing about change in any society, as people depend on them for news and information. Mass media can connect people in different societies and provide them with common experiences. The mass media have affected the people in the Saudi society and helped in bringing about changes in the society through their programmes, news, and information.

There are several ways in which the influence of the mass media can be recognised. Among these influences are connecting the people to the social and cultural heritage, discussing peoples' problems and needs, connecting the Saudi rural areas to the outside world, and educating and orienting the villagers. Several factors have

affected the transfer of technology to Saudi Arabia. Among these are the following:

A) Economic factors: In Saudi Arabia, the huge amount of wealth from oil has made it possible for the country to establish development projects and given it the opportunity to import different technological capabilities which further contribute to the development and progress which the country enjoys today. In turn, technological achievements led to modernisation and a break up of traditional ways of life (Al-Farsy, 1986).

The economic conditions of Saudi Arabia not only contribute to importing technology into the country, but also in training the local population through technical and vocational schools. Saudi Arabia is already doing whatever it can to educate and train people to use and operate technological devices, whether in industry or at home. For example, personal computers are a new phenomenon in the society, and several economic and social establishments offer training programmes on how to operate and benefit from them. In addition, women's social associations in the country provide these programmes for Saudi women.

The economic prosperity enables the importing corporations whether through the government or the private sector, to request special kinds of technology, which are adaptable to Saudi society. For example, computers with Arabic language instructions about how to use, operate, and assemble these devices and safety instructions for automobile vehicles also to be written in the country's language, are now available.

The economic ability also makes it easy for the government and the private sector to manufacture technological devices locally. For example, domestic appliances such as air conditioners, gas stoves, and washing machines are now produced locally.

The availability and widespread use of electricity all around the country, in addition to its low cost, helps in introducing technology to all sectors of the society.

Today, technology is available to rural people and Bedouins as well as to urban people and the availability of electricity in the country makes it easy for all people to get whatever they need.

Technology affected by the economic conditions in the country, in turn affects economic conditions in the sense that it brings about development and helps in diversifying economic resources. For example, the technological devices which are used in agriculture and industry have reduced dependence on oil export as the only economic source, and helped create new resources. With the help of technology, Saudi Arabia has achieved the status of self-sufficiency ion many agricultural products, such as wheat, dates, and poultry, and the surplus is exported to other countries, particularly the Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia Embassy in the United States, 1989).

B) Educational factors: The availability and spread of education, especially in technical schools, enable people to become acquainted with the diversity of technological devices.

One of the goals of education is the periodic renewal of the schools' curricula in order to keep up-to-date with progress and advancement in technology locally and in the international spheres, especially in the technical schools where specialists must be added or modified to be suitable for the new technological capabilities imported to the country (Al-Zaid, 1982). Whenever a technological innovation is introduced to the world, and the government finds that it is appropriate to import it into Saudi society, it will not hesitate to do so. But first, the staff that can use it must be trained. To prepare these people, new curricula will be added and a group of trainers may be brought into the country to educate Saudi workers. Another alternative is to send some Saudis abroad to be educated and trained to master this kind of technology.

The relationship between technology and education in the Saudi society is a reciprocal one. Education gives people the ability to harness and control many

technological devices, while technology in many cases helps in facilitating the educational function. Technology makes the educational function easy and understandable through many devices and instruments used to explain subjects, such as the overhead projector, and other devices in laboratories. Another example of the relationship between technology and education is the transportation system, which connects those in the rural areas to the cities, thereby enabling people to pursue advanced studies. In Saudi Arabia, there are two systems of transportation for students, one serving the boys and the other serving the girls. With this technological help, people can avail themselves of education, regardless of physical distance.

C) Social factors: Saudi society has become receptive to technological innovation through the mass media such as television, radio and newspapers, and education. The attitude towards technology has changed, and the people are willing to acquire as much technological capability as possible, especially that which is relevant to the Saudi society. The government is aware of the values and heritage of the society, and pays special attention to the selection of appropriate technologies. As mentioned in UNESCO'S book (1976) about Saudi Arabia, special attention is necessary so that the foreign technology does not impair the development of indigenous technological potential.

Another phenomenon related to the issue of people's attitude toward technology is the increased enrolment in technical and vocational schools. Saudis attend these schools for training to be eligible to work and master technology in the society. In addition, as a result of the increased use of technological devices by Saudi people, the vocational and technical schools have started to offer evening classes for those who would like to be trained to operate and maintain some devices (Ministry of Planning, 1996). The enrolment in these sessions is increasing day after day. One important thing about these

116

sessions is that the subjects of study are related to technologies that people are most familiar with, for example, the electrical devices used at home and auto mechanics. These sessions enable people in the society to learn a second specialist, and give them the opportunity to learn how to operate and maintain domestic appliances and vehicles for themselves, to save money.

The effect of translating instructions into Arabic language is great and it encourages people to acquire different kinds of technological capabilities. All domestic appliances used in the Saudi households, for example, the sewing machine, the washer, the television and the microwave oven, have instructions written in Arabic.

5.6. The Religious Dimension

Islam is the religion of Saudi Arabia, and most of the characteristics of Saudi society reflect it. Islam has more influence on the lives of the people in Saudi Arabia than in any of the other Islamic countries (Walpole et al., 1971). Saudi Arabia is considered the centre of the Islamic world because it is the home of the holy places (Al-Yassini, 1986). Islam is the religion that was revealed to the last prophet, Mohammad (PBUH) for all mankind, and the followers of this religion are called Muslims. The Muslims believe in one God, "*Allah*", and must follow the teaching of the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*, which represent the sources of the Islamic religion. The *Quran* is the holy book for the Muslims and it is the revelation from *Allah* to his prophet Mohammed, so it is the word of *Allah* himself. The *Sunnah* contains the sayings and the actions of the prophet Mohammed which explain many aspects of the religion.

Islam for Saudi people is not only a religion but also a way of life that can be applied to all aspects of life. Islamic teaching directs all activities and relationships in the social, economic and political systems (Berger, 1964). The *Quran* and *Sunnah*, as Islamic references, are considered the sources for the country's constitution which directs all

aspects of life for the people in the country. The government exerts great effort to keep Islamic values intact, and pays much attention to them when it plans for development projects. Therefore, seeking an Islamic way to development is a very important matter to Saudi Arabian planners, who are concerned about the Islamic values which represent the country'' culture and heritage (Al-Yassini, 1986). When the Five-Year Development Plans were introduced in 1970, to achieve development in all sectors of society, it was explicitly stated that this development must be attained within "an Islamic framework" (Ministry of Planning, 1970).

Islam assures the rights of women as well as those of men. It also emphasises the equality of all people, irrespective of their sex, race, colour, or nationality (Siddiqi, 1977). In addition, Islam emphasises the importance of the family. As mentioned in the holy *Quran, Allah* says, *"And among his signs is this, that he created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and he has put love and mercy between your hears" (The Holy Quran, Verse 21).*

Islam views the family not only as the cornerstone of the society but also as the bond in which male and female meet in marriage, and produce new generations. Therefore Islam emphasises that the basis of human existence is the family. Islam assures the rights of women to be educated in order to learn about their religion and to be better mothers, able to educate their children and socialise them correctly. *In one of the prophet Mohammed's sayings, he said, "Seeking knowledge is a must for every Muslim, males and females". The value of education is also asserted in the story of a man who came to the prophet, and asked him to officiate his marriage contract to a woman. The prophet asked him, "How much dowry do you have?" The man said, "I have nothing". Then the prophet asked, "How many verses of the Quran do you know?" The man replied, "I know some verses". Then the prophet told the man, "Those verses of the*

Quran are the dowry of your wife, so you must teach her these verses" (Al-Nawawi, 2002).

Islam does not contradict or oppose social change and development as long as human improvement will be achieved and equality and justice will be assured. So the objective of development in Islam, as Qutb (1977) mentioned, must be the achievement and growth of the people in several directions. Development in Islam must be intended to increase and improve the well-being of all sections of society within the framework of Islam. When speaking about the purposes of economic development in Islam, Chapra (1979) mentioned economic improvement according to Islamic values: equality and justice when distributing income, and assuring good social welfare and freedom. In addition, within any kind of development, human rights must be preserved in the first place so people can enjoy the outcome of development.

5.7. Summary

Changes have been reported in several institutions in Saudi society such as the economy, education, health care, mass media and communication and transportation.

Economic development in Saudi Arabia led to educational development through the increased emphasis on universal education and the spread of modern education throughout society. With the help of economic development, many schools were established and more modern buildings equipped with modern devices and materials were constructed.

In the case of the impact on health institutions, the changes in economic conditions not only aided in increasing the number of health institutions, but also in improving their services through more modern equipment and devices.

Economic development has served to spread the mass media to reach all of the country. With the widespread availability of television and radio, the Saudi people nc

listen to the same messages, watch the same channels and listen to the same stations. So the people in rural, urban and nomadic areas are introduced to the same information and news at the same time, no matter how far they are. Thus, the mass media have contributed to a levelling of the Saudi society.

The impact of economic prosperity on the transportation and communication structure of Saudi society has been significant. Economic development has helped in improving these institutions to resemble those available in modern countries. Cars, aeroplanes and communication devices such as telephones, telegraphs, telex and mail services are much improved and very prevalent in modern Saudi Arabia.

Finally, the impact of economic development can be seen in a more equitable distribution of the country's income among the people in all regions of the country through increased individual income, better services, and improved facilities. This represents a rational way in which people can benefit from economic development. Also, investing a part of oil reserves to create new resources for the country's income in the future means that people will benefit for the long term.

The village population has probably increased as a result of the sedentarisation process. That trend is by no means uniform, however, and, despite new incentives to engage in agriculture, Bedouins who have turned to farming frequently go back to nomadic existence. The villages themselves are gradually being changed. The people are becoming acquainted with new tools and machines; merchants with wares never seen before visit village markets more regularly. Communities formerly psychologically and physically isolated are coming into touch with new worlds. The safety from tribal raiding brought about by the government is reducing the villager's sense of vulnerability and is perhaps encouraging him to attempt to accumulate more of a surplus that in the past. The government and organised private groups are attempting to improve health

conditions in the villages and in so doing are inevitably introducing new ideas and new attitudes toward social and personal life (Lipsky, 1959.)

To investigate the impact of these broad social developments at the village level, ethnographic research was carried out in the village of Assfan. The methods adopted in exploring the selected issues are explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Chapter Six
Research Methods and Procedures

6.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to explain the methods used in collecting data by which to assess socio-economic change in a village in Saudi Arabia. Issues of validity and reliability are discussed and the contribution of each of the chosen methods to achieving the study objectives is highlighted.

6.2. Research Questions

The main objective of this study was to determine the changes in the socio-economic aspects in a Saudi village. To facilitate achievement of this objective and to determine the research problem more precisely and clearly, it was considered helpful to state this objective in terms of questions (Fox, 1969; Kerlinger, 2000).

It was intended to obtain answers to the following questions:

First: What are the changes noticed in marriage customs?

1. What is considered the suitable age for marriage in the community?

2. How are weddings celebrated in the village?

3. How is the bride adorned in the village?

4. What are the criteria for choosing a wife among the inhabitants?

5. What kind of assistance is given to the groom on his wedding?

6. How much is the dowry (*Mahr*) in the village and is it reasonable for the people?

Second: Have any changes appeared in economic life?

1. What work opportunities exist for the inhabitants?

2. What are the fields of work available for the villagers?

3. Do women work in the village?

4. Are there foreign workers in the village? If so, what nationality are they, what kind of work do they perform, and are they skilled?

5. What types of businesses are available?

6. Do people emigrate from the village?

    Third: Are there any changes in observance of religious duties and values in the village? Specifically:

1. Do people still perform such religious duties as saying prayers in the village mosques?

2. How are religious festivals celebrated in the community?

3. Do the people help the needy in their society?

6.3. The Research Setting

This research was carried out in the Western Region of Saudi Arabia, in the village of Assfan, about 60 km from both Jeddah and Makkah, two of the biggest cities in the region. The male population of Assfan village is about 3,309 people according to the Central Department of Statistics (1999).

The people in this community are mainly from the Albishri tribe; the second population group is called the Alsyeed and the third is the Almwalad. Most of them were originally Bedouins, who lived in the desert with their livestock looking for grass and water. Since they settled, they have had their own lands, farms or businesses, or been

employed in governmental work. The inhabitants of Assfan are settled in five districts

(*harah*) as explained in Chapter 2.

It was decided to study Assfan village for the following reasons:

1. The village of Assfan has never been studied or involved in any type of sociological or

    anthropological research.

2. The region has witnessed many of the dramatic recent changes which have characterised

    the country as a whole. Therefore it would be interesting to see what impact these have

    had during the last three decades.

3. The staff in the sociology department at King Abdulaziz University suggested that this

    village was worthy of study.

4. The village is located on the main road between Makkah and Madinah which would

    facilitate access. It might also increase the likelihood of the village having been

    exposed to change.

5. The researcher was educated in the village, has relatives and friends there, and is

    acquainted with some of the local people, particularly the Amir, the Imam, and the head

    teacher, which would facilitate gaining access to respondents.

6. A village of this small size would give the researcher an advantage in the task of getting

    into close contact with the inhabitants.

7. Because of Assfan's proximity to the researcher's own village, and because of the

    factors mentioned in 5, above, the researcher has considerable personal knowledge of

    the village. Familiarity is an important aspect in interpreting the findings of any

    research.

Peil noted that:

> "An outsider can never be as full a
> member of a society as someone who
> has grown up in it" (Peil, 1982, p. 159).

6.4. Research Design

The purpose of social research is to apply scientific methods to the complex task of

discovering answers to questions. Bailey (1999) stated that social research has been

concerned with gathering data that can help us answer questions about various aspects

of society and thus can enable us to understand society.

In any field study it is necessary to carry out careful planning and establish appropriate

research design before proceeding to the study itself. In this respect, Peil (1982) says

that:

> "Designing a research project involves
> organising the collection and analysis of
> data to fulfil the purpose of the research,
> to provide the information which is
> sought" (p. 10).

As Hall and Hall advise, the data collection methods adopted depend not solely on

technical considerations, but on the basis of what is thought to be the best way of

providing explanation and understanding of the social situation with which the

researcher is confronted (Hall and Hall, 1996).

The general design of this study is a descriptive survey, which is widely used and

demands high standards of precision. Usually, such surveys are concerned with a large

population, from which a sample is drawn which can be related to the parent population

by identification of characteristics, which are common to them both (Oppenheim, 1998).

The social history method (historical method) is also applied. Oral historical evidence

is an important part of social research today. This research investigates from a

historical perspective specific topics such as religious observances and marriage

customs, as well as exploring individuals' life-histories.

Hall and Hall clarify the respective uses of the survey and the oral history approach,

noting that:

> "Survey research is a 'snap-shot' of a
> moment in time, whereas oral history
> allows the informant to talk about
> changes in their life and the way
> attitudes have altered" (Hall and Hall,
> 1996, p.50).

The research is also comparative, in that, comparisons are made between the

experiences of different age groups in the same society, to explore the changes that have

taken place in people's lives over recent decades.

To serve the purposes of the study, the researcher collected quantitative data through a

questionnaire survey, qualitative data through participant observation and in-depth

interviews. Such methodological triangulation is consistent with Hall and Hall's (1996)

suggestion that different methods can be used together within combined research

strategies in various ways. For instance, qualitative studies can be used to set the scene

for a quantitative survey, or to explore in more depth issues thrown up by such a survey.

In the present case, information about the period prior to 1970 was obtained by means

of in-depth interviews with older people within the community. Information about the

present day was obtained by participant observation, and in-depth interviews, as well as

by the questionnaire interview method. By comparing the information obtained about

past and present, it was hoped to gain some insight into the impact of social change on

Assfan's community. The various elements of the research are explained in detail in the

following sections, beginning with the quantitative survey.

6.5. Quantitative Data Collection

The sample survey technique was used to collect the data for this study. Information about changes which have occurred in the socio-economic aspects of life in the village was gathered from a sample of people living in the village of Assfan in the Emirate of Makkah Al-Mukaramah, in the western province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The sample survey is practical and economical in terms of time, effort and resources. Bulmer and Warwick stated the advantage of sample survey as:

> ". . . providing extensive quantitative data relatively cheaply. Broad generalisation can be made from a relatively small number of observations as long as probability sampling methods are used." (1993: 31)

This section describes the construction and development of the survey instrument, and the procedures used in its administration.

6.5.1. Choice of Instrument

The principal instrument for the collection of data in this study was a questionnaire. However, the researcher chose a structured interview method to administer the questionnaire and to collect information from respondents of Assfan village. As Hoinville (1985) stated:

> "Questionnaires come in many shapes and sizes, from postcards to be filled in by respondents to multi-page documents to be filled in by interviewers. Broadley speaking, however, the same design rules apply to all of them" (p. 27).

The use of structured interviews is associated with survey research. This is perhaps the technique with which most people are familiar. This method relies upon the use of a

questionnaire as the data collection instrument, the rationale behind this method being

that each person is asked questions in the same way so that any differences between

answers are then assumed to be real ones and not the result of the interview situation

itself (May, 2001).

There are many advantages of using a structured interview. This method is said to

permit comparability between responses. It relies upon a uniform structure, while a

calculated number of people are interviewed so that they are representative of the

population for the purposes of generalisation. The resultant aggregated data are then

examined for patterns of responses among the target population, which are explained in

terms of causal analysis. This method permits the range of possible responses to be

covered by the interview schedule. It depends upon the interviewer being similar to the

target group who, in turn, need to share a similar culture in order that the interpretation

of the questions and the dynamics of the interview do not vary to a great extent (May,

2001).

Dexter raised the importance of using the interview technique in collecting the data in

social surveys and said:

> "Interviewing is the preferred tactic of
> data collection when in fact it appears
> that it will get data or more data or data
> at less cost than other tactics" (Dexter,
> 1992).

Moser and Kalton (1985) suggested that the advantage of the interview over other data collection tools is that:

> "Although observations and mail questionnaires could probably be employed more frequently at present, interviewing is without doubt generally the most appropriate procedure even though it introduces various sources of error and bias"   (p. 270).

The use of a questionnaire to be filled in by the respondents themselves was rejected because it was anticipated that the sample would include some illiterate respondents. The instrument was therefore designed to be administered as a face-to-face interview. Its advantages include the ability of the interviewer to explain any questions that the respondent does not understand, and to make sure that all questions are answered by the respondent him or herself, not by someone else.   Another advantage of an interview, rather than a mailed questionnaire, in the present context, was the likelihood of a higher response rate. In Saudi villages, there is often no clear address system, so there is a high risk that mailed questionnaires would not reach the intended recipient. Even if they were delivered, they might well be ignored, due to local people's lack of familiarity with research procedures. Face-to-face administration offers the opportunity to gain respondents' trust and encourage their co-operation.

6.5.2. Questionnaire Design

Before undertaking the fieldwork, the researcher made efforts to benefit from previous social researchers' work, and learn about instrument design, sampling, data collection and the difficulties which may face the researcher in the field. For this purpose, he joined a class (Survey Methods and Questionnaire Design) which was run by the Faculty of Social Sciences in Hull University. He also participated in postgraduate

seminar workshops run by his department and held in the Graduate Research Institute (GRI). The researcher gave a seminar about his study which provided an opportunity to receive some comments and suggestions from the workshop members.

The questionnaire devised by the researcher was arranged into four sections:

Section I obtained information on the characteristics of respondents, including age, education level, occupation, income, size of household, type of house, number of years living in Assfan and plans to leave Assfan in the future. Such data collection served to identify the demographic profile of the study sample.

Section II consisted of questions relating to the customs of marriage, such as age of marriage, assistance with the wedding, early marriage, place of holding the wedding, dowry and the criteria for choosing the bride.

Section III contained questions dealing with the religious duties of the villagers in Assfan, such as performing prayers in the mosques, the people's sources of religious consciousness, the celebration of religious festivals and the provision of help for the needy.

Section IV contained questions about the labour market in the village, such as kinds of business in Assfan, foreign workers, women's work, preferred jobs, who runs the businesses in Assfan village.

6.5.3. Validity

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996), "validity is concerned with the question, am I measuring what I intend to measure? (p. 165). Sekaran (2003) defined validity as follows: "validity tests how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is supposed to measure" (p. 171). Thus, validity is concerned with whether the instrument is measuring the right concept or not. Also, according to Schmitt Kilmoski (1991), "validity refers to the degree to which a test measures what it

131

is supposed to, or more formally, the degree to which inferences made from test scores or other instruments are correct or accurate" (p. 101).

"The problem of validity arises because measurement in the social sciences is, with very few exceptions, indirect. Under such circumstances, researchers are never completely certain that they are measuring the variable for which they designed their measurement procedure" (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996).

There are three broad kinds of validity, each of which is concerned with a different aspect of the measurement situation, namely: Content validity, Empirical validity and Construct validity (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). These types of validity tests are used to test the goodness of measure (Sekaran, 2003). In the following there is more description regarding each type of validity.

A) Content Validity

According to Sekaran (2003), "content validity ensures that the measure includes an adequate and representative set of items that would tap the concept" (p. 171). She added that "content validity is a function of how well the dimensions and elements of a concept have been delineated" and she argued that face validity is a basic, and a very minimum, index of content validity. According to the same author, "face validity indicates that the items that are supposed to measure a concept do on the face of it, look like they are measuring the concept". On the other hand, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) make it clear that there are two common varieties of content validity, which are face validity and sampling validity. Face validity, as they defined it, "rests on the investigator's subjective evaluation of the validity of a measuring instrument". They explained in regard to face validity that it does not relate to the question of

whether an instrument measures what the researcher wishes to measure, rather, it concerns the extent to which the researcher believes that the instrument is appropriate. The second type of content validity is sampling validity. Sampling validity is concerned with whether a given population is adequately sampled by the measuring instrument in question (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996).

b) Empirical Validity

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996), "Empirical validity is concerned with the relationship between a measuring instrument and the measurement outcomes". They added that "scientists assume that if a measuring instrument is valid, there should be strong relationships existing among the variables measured".

c) Construct Validity

According to Sekaran (2003) "Construct validity testifies to how well the results obtained from the use of the measure fits the theories around which the test is designed" (p. 173). She added that construct validity is assessed through convergent and discriminate validity. "Convergent validity is established when the scores obtained by two different instruments measuring the same concept are highly correlated" (p. 173). "Discriminate validity is established when, based on theory, two variables are predicted to be unconnected, and the scores obtained by measuring them are indeed empirically found to be so" (p. 173).

Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) explained construct validity by saying that "researchers establish construct validity by relating a measuring instrument to a general theoretical framework in order to determine whether the instrument is tied to the concepts and theoretical assumptions they are employing" (p. 168).

In the present study, the content validity approach was considered most appropriate, since there were no comparable research instruments with which to compare results, and the aim of the study was to explore diverse perceptions and experiences, not to predict outcomes or to measure a psychological construct.

To check the content validity of the questionnaire, the method of obtaining experts' opinions was adopted, by means of the following steps:

In designing the first draft of the questionnaire, the researcher drew on the literature of previous research experience, ideas gained from a research methods and questionnaire design module at Hull University, and discussions with the research supervisor. At this stage, the questionnaire was ready for content validity to be judged by a panel of jurors, who were asked whether they thought the questionnaire was relevant to the research questions and the main purpose of the study. The value of review by judges was highlighted by Mouly (1978) who said:

"The help of outside consultants is essential; outsiders, being generally more objective, can recognise flaws that investigators invariably are too close to see" (p. 191).

The panel consisted of five Ph.D. students at Hull University, four members of staff in the Sociology department at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, together with the research supervisor.

The above people were given a copy of the questionnaire and asked to return it with their comments and opinions within a week. The panel's comments were very beneficial in providing feedback regarding the structure and the content of the questionnaire. The researcher made the recommended changes, after which the questionnaire was ready in the final draft, to be used to collect information and data from the research sample in Assfan village, Saudi Arabia.

As a further measure to ensure the validity of the questionnaire, special care was taken in the translation of the questionnaire from English to the main language of the sample,

which is Arabic. The issue of translation in cross-cultural research is crucial. Iyengar (1993) has discussed its importance for questionnaire validity, noting that:

"Validity thus requires that questions in one language be translated into another language in such a way as to retain their meaning. Validity would be determined simply by the accuracy of translation" (p. 174).

The technique which was used here was to translate the questionnaire from the English language to Arabic and then have it back-translated from Arabic to English by a different person, as recommended by Bulmer and Warwick (1993):

"The interview schedule is translated from the original language to the local language. It is then translated independently, by another translator, back from the local language into the original language" (p. 152).

The researcher translated the questionnaire from English to Arabic then handed it to an expert in both English and Arabic languages to translate it back to English. After this step, some adjustments were made to match the aim of the questionnaire. This translation was then double checked by native Arabic speakers and an Arabic language scholar, to achieve complete accuracy.

6.5.4. Pilot Study

The questionnaire schedule was piloted, in the same location and among the same target population, that were planned for the main study. Piloting is regarded as an essential part of the research process. It provides an opportunity to obtain preliminary data which might lead to the addition, deletion or refinement of hypotheses and research questions. It enables the planned statistical and analytical procedures to be carefully checked to ensure their appropriateness and feasibility, and show how effort, time and money can

be saved. The feedback from research subjects and additional knowledge obtained can

be used to improve the questioning and sampling, and avoid error in the main study (Al-

Seed, 1995, 23 9-240).

A pilot study was defined by Hall and Hall as follows:

> "This is the stage where you try out the questionnaire on a small number of people from the same population as the one you wish to survey. The aim is to reveal any further unanticipated problems with the questionnaire before you commit your time and effort to the fieldwork proper" (Hall and Hall, 1996, p. 126).

The pilot study was carried out in June 1998, before the actual process of data collection

started. After the questionnaire had been constructed, its validity checked and its

translation to Arabic completed, questionnaires were distributed to 20 randomly-

selected householders in Assfan village, 10 in each age group.

In the case of illiterate respondents, the researcher wrote their answers. Literate

respondents completed the questionnaire themselves, but in the presence of the

researcher, who was thus able to answer any questions and make sure the respondents

understood what they were being asked to do. No major problems emerged in terms of

respondents' understanding of the questionnaire, although as a result of some comments

and questions raised, the researcher amended the wording of some items, and added

some questions to the questionnaire.

6.5.5. Sample Selection for the Main Fieldwork

The definition of a population for a certain study is the targeted group of interest to the researcher, to which the results of the study are to be generalised. Nwana (1982) suggests the population of the study to be:

> ". . . all the members of the target of the study as defined by the aims and objectives of the study" (p. 57).

Moser and Kalton (1985) state the population of the study to be:

> "The totality of the elements under study, where the 'elements' are the units of analysis. The elements may be persons, but they could alternatively be households, farms, schools, or any other unit. The population definition needs to be precisely and carefully specified according to the survey objectives, because the results will depend on the definition adopted" (Moser and Kalton, 1985,p. 6).

In a broad sense, the universe for this study would be the people who lived in the village of Assfan in the western region of Saudi Arabia. Since it would not be feasible to survey the whole population of the village, a sample had to be drawn to represent the population as a whole.

The sample unit used in this study was heads of households who lived in Assfan village and were living there during the time of the study. By head of household is meant the male who is responsible for the people who lived in this house. Usually, this person is the father. In Saudi society, which is an Islamic society, the authority of the family is in the hands of the father, who is the head of the family. The duties of each member of the family are determined by Islamic law. The father has a prominent position in Islam, since he is responsible for his family economically and materially. The father is the

person responsible for earning a living for his family and providing it with the necessities of life. If the father dies or is incapacitated, those duties will be taken on by another male, e.g. uncle or oldest son. It is not the woman's responsibility. Thus, the information needed for this study would be more likely to be possessed by the men of the village. Moreover, Islamic values and the traditions of the Saudi society do not allow free association between men and women, so it would not be feasible for the researcher to interview women. However, women's perspective were obtained with the aid of a female assistant, who carried out in-depth interviews on the researcher's behalf (see section 6.6.2)

As this study aims to investigate the socio-economic changes in the Saudi village, the sample for this study consisted of two groups of the population in Assfan, an older generation and a younger generation.

1. The older generation aged 39 years or older, would therefore be able to recall life before the First Development Plan, implemented in 1970, which was the turning point for Saudi society.

2. The younger generation, aged 18-38 years.

    The researcher used Health Centre records as a sampling frame. For that purpose the researcher obtained an official letter from his university to the Directorate for Health Affairs (Primary Health Care) who in turn supplied a letter to the Health Centre in Assfan, for their help and authorising access to the records.

Many writers have discussed the difficulty of determining the appropriate and optimum size of the sample in social research (Bailey, 1999; Cohen and Manion, 2000). The correct sample size is dependent upon the nature of the population and the purpose of the study. In general, it is better to have as large a sample as possible, to reach general conclusions.

Nwana (1982) highlighted this point and said:

> "The larger a sample becomes, the more
> representative of the population it
> becomes and so the more reliable and
> valid the results based on it will become"
> (p. 71).

From the health records, the researcher took a random sample of 10% of the male population of 3,309, 165 cases in each age group (18-38 years; 39 years and over). Responses were received from 154 respondents of the young group and 150 replies from the older group. Despite repeated efforts, he could not gain access to the remainder.

6.5.6. Questionnaire Administration

When the researcher was ready to conduct his fieldwork, he obtained a letter from his supervisor requesting permission to carry out his field study. This was sent to the Saudi Cultural Attach in London and forwarded to the researcher's sponsor in Saudi Arabia, which is the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah. After several months, the researcher received formal permission to begin. The researcher therefore travelled to Saudi Arabia on 14th October 1998, for four months.

Despite the personal administration of the survey instrument by the researcher, some problems were faced in obtaining responses. As is typical in developing countries, the rural people of Saudi Arabia are unfamiliar with such research and do not realise its importance. Consequently, some of the selected subjects were reluctant and some of them refused to be interviewed when they were informed about the topic of the research. Concerning the reluctant ones, the interviewer gave them more information and made further efforts to persuade them. Where intended respondents refused to participate, another subject was selected. Such a difficulty was time consuming in research limited to a three months period.

The interviews took place in respondents' houses, schools, wedding parties, at gatherings during the holy month of Ramadan, and at *Eid* parties. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes.

6.6. Qualitative Data Collection

This section describes the procedures followed in conducting participant observation and in-depth, unstructured interviews. The approach adopted in relation to the reliability of this part of the research is also considered.

6.6.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation was a useful method of obtaining information about current lifestyles. Peil stated:

> "Much can be learned by observing what people actually do and how they do it. As a research method for social scientists, observation involves more than just looking at what is going on. Because our subjects can talk and therefore explain their behaviour, observation includes listening and asking questions, and often participating in activities of the group to get first hand experience of what daily life involves" (Peil, 1982, p. 158).

As a member of the community, the researcher was able to observe people's lives from within, and so get a picture of all matters relevant to the research objectives. This method often gains insights and develops interpersonal relationships that are virtually impossible to achieve through any other method (Borg and Gall, 1996). As Kluckhohn (1940) noted, participant observation is useful for extending the range, relevance and reliability of the data obtained, as the information available to a participant observer is deeper and wider in scope than that observable by someone who remains a foreigner, marginal to the community. Observation over a period of time enables a rich picture to

be built up, of complex social relationships. This method also enhances the validity

and reliability of the research, because it is more likely to reflect the needs and interests

of society members than a survey completely devised from outside. The observer

investigates activities, relationships and values as defined by the people being studied,

rather than in terms of abstract concepts, which may be irrelevant in the local context

(Peil, 1982, pp. 159-160).

The exact time period of participation and observation is difficult to define, since the

researcher had experience of the region and community before the research period as

such, began. Observations were made of the general way in the village, values and

customs and changes in housing styles and conditions. Moreover, he attended many

social and religious events within the village community, such as parties, marriages,

Ramadan gatherings, and the *Eid* festivals.

During the research period, the researcher's integration within the Assfan community

was facilitated by their common unity as Muslims, and the researcher's being a member

of the Albishri tribe, which gave them common values, customs and dialect.

6.6.2. In-depth Interviews with Women

As the Saudi society practises al-Shary'ah (Islamic law), and has its own customs

and traditions, including segregation between the two genders, so it is not

permissible for males to mix with females unless they are close relatives. Special

arrangements therefore had to be made for interviews, as the researcher to wanted

women's participation in the current research, to enable their perspective, which

might differ from men's to be reflected.

Therefore, the researcher, in order to obtain information from women asked a female relative[1], who is a college graduate, to act as his assistant and to interview females on his behalf.

The female assistant was briefed about the interview questions and given instructions as to how to conduct the research. She was given information related to every item of the questions and how to deal with any question that might be raised by the interviewees.

6.6.3. The In-depth Study (Life History)

Finally, the researcher used in-depth interview to collect qualitative data about life before 1970. The researcher used this technique because in general, the data relevant to this issue related to the older generation and most of them were uneducated.

The purpose of the in-depth interview is to collect perceptions and ideas and to improve the picture about the research problem. Interviewers must be well briefed so that they fully understand the objectives of the research. Since there are no fixed questions, each depth interview will be equipped with a list of general topics or areas around which the interview should be conducted. The job of the depth interviewer is thus not that of data collection, but idea collection. Depth interviewers must, as the saying goes, listen with the third ear (Oppenheim, 1998, p. 67).

In the pilot study, the research selected a random sample of 10 respondents for in-depth interviews. He found, however, that some informants could not explain their ideas clearly, and did not like to interact with other people. Others were not active, or had poor memories, and if the researcher wanted to continue they were not happy and refused to arrange another meeting.

---

[1] The researcher's sister.

In the light of these difficulties, the researcher changed his technique for the main study, selecting informants by what is known as snowball sampling. As Hall and Hall explain:

> "A snowball sample is often useful in exploratory research, when it is impossible to identify beforehand all those who might fall into your category of interest. Instead, you start with one or two informants, and get them to refer you on to others whom they think you should talk to as well" (Hall and Hall, 1996, pp. 113-114).

The researcher chose this technique after testing it in the pilot study and finding it helpful. Another reason for choosing this method is that there were some people who were well-known for their love of talking about the past, and people often went to listen to them talk. If they were asked about the family and the marriages in the village in the past, they would explain it clearly and tell as well about some neighbouring tribes in the surrounding villages. Moreover, they were skilful when they recounted their experiences of marriages, dowry, shops, their business dealings, religious duties, and their solidarity.

The researcher had an opportunity to talk to more people when a big party was held for the Amir of Assfan, on the occasion of extending his services for five years more before retirement.

If the interviewee responded positively, the researcher would either continue the in-depth discussion, at the time, or arrange another time for a further meeting to continue the interview. Finally, when the researcher finished interviewing someone, he would ask to refer him to others, whom they thought would be useful contacts. Also, he would ask him for the names and addresses. By this means, the researcher was able to select a

sample of 17 informants for in-depth interview, to get information about the Assfan village in the past.

Various ways of meeting interviewees proved fruitful; good opportunities for meeting people were the times of gathering. In the *Asr*, the late afternoon, people sat alone or in groups in the front yards of their shops or their houses. In the evenings, they gathered in the middle of the courtyard in the houses. During such gatherings, people often talked about the past and recounted stories about their experiences. Another convenient time was after prayer. The researcher prayed with the inhabitants in the mosque, especially at the weekends when some of the villagers were accompanied by visiting relatives. On such occasions, the researcher was often invited to villagers' houses, as is their custom when they see someone they have not seen for a long time, or a stranger. The researcher found it very helpful to accept their invitations and sit with them. After that, he started to tell them the purpose of his visit to the village and the purpose of his study.

Before the researcher went there, he had learned by heart the contents of the interview schedule. The interviews were always informal, being conducted in the Arabic language. The researcher usually introduced himself, although sometimes the host introduced him, and he briefly explained to the interviewees the purpose of the interview. Sometimes the researcher indicated why he needed the information and mentioned its possible benefits to the country, or to any institution of particular relevance to the interviewee. Usually, mutual trust prevailed and the interview proceeded without hindrance.

These occasions took the form of informal gatherings. The researcher recorded the interviewee's responses and sometimes the researcher took notes when necessary, and directly after the interview he wrote up the notes. The informal manner in which the researcher conducted the interview fitted into the life of the people of the study area, which helped to gain their trust and co-operation.

The researcher in the interview moved naturally from topic to topic, maintaining the fiction of an interesting conversation. It was often not possible to cover all the topics in a single interview. For example, when the researcher met a respondent in the market, the latter mentioned the labour market in Assfan at the present time and how a lot of things have changed in this respect. This provided a convenient opportunity for the researcher to ask the respondent to talk about the labour market in general and his own business in the past. The interview continued with discussion of more aspects of the labour market in Assfan.

6.7. Reliability

Several of the common techniques for measurement of consistency, such as the split-half, test-retest, or calculation of Cronbach's alpha, were not appropriate for the quantitative study, which was trying to investigate, not respondents' academic knowledge or attitudes, but their experiences, which are constantly changing. Moreover, the whole point of the study was to explore socio-economic changes. The survey was therefore not expected to yield consistent results over time. For this reason, it would not be appropriate to use, for example, a test-retest procedure. Nor would it be practical to do so. It would be very difficult to find the same respondents on two successive occasions, or to guarantee that the same circumstances and conditions prevailed during two test periods.

The ethnographer is not necessarily concerned with the internal consistency of the instrument or the reliability of results. What is more important is the extent to which it is likely respondents were telling the truth as they perceived it at the time of the study, and the likelihood of their answers being correctly interpreted by the researcher. For this reason, the researcher tried building close relationships with the villagers, and to gain their interest and trust. A check on reliability was, in addition, provided by the

combination of complementary data collection methods, enabling quantitative and qualitative information to be compared and cross-referenced. Participant observation in particular, helped the researcher to interpret the questionnaire findings, and enabled him to check the consistency between what respondents said, and what they did. This kind of approach is supported by the comments of Warwick and Lininger (1993, p. 18) who recommended that:

> "A design, which combines participant observation or other qualitative methods with a sample survey, provides opportunities for cross-checking and for a much more complete picture of the situation being studied".

6.8. Summary

This chapter has described the research design and explained the considerations which influenced the researcher's decisions and actions throughout the empirical investigation. A methodological triangulation approach was adopted, whereby quantitative data collected by means of a questionnaire were complemented by qualitative information obtained from interviews and observation. Samples of two broad age groups were selected to allow comparison of the experiences of respondents who remembered village life before 1970 (the start of conscious development planning) and those whose experience was more recent. The data are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven
Presentation of Data

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the responses obtained from the structured survey are presented. The chapter begins with a profile of the respondents, based on the fourth section of the schedule; these data had been placed last in the schedule, as it was thought that respondents might be deterred from participating if the interviews began with personal questions not directly related to the subject of the survey. In this chapter, however, they are presented first, in order to provide the context for interpretation of the answers which follow. The remainder of the chapter presents, in successive sections, participants' responses in relation to marriage, the labour market and religion.

7.2. Respondent Profile

7.2.1. Educational Level

The distribution of respondents according to their educational level is shown in Table 7.1. It can be seen from the table that 42.7% of the old people were illiterate, and a similar proportion had only a low level of education. In contrast, there was no illiteracy at all among the young people, almost half of whom had intermediate or secondary education and almost as many had attended tertiary education. According to the X^2 test there is a statistically significant difference between the two age groups in their educational level.

Table 7.1

Distribution of the Sample According to Level of Education

Educational Level	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Illiterate	0	0.0	64	42.7
Low education (primary & lower)	17	11.0	68	45.3
Mid education (intermediate &	75	48.7	14	9.3
High education (college & higher)	62	40.3	4	2.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N= 304. Chi-Square= 187.358 Df =3. P<0.001

7.2.2. Occupation

The occupations of the respondents are shown in Table 7.2, below.

Table 7.2

Distribution of the Sample According to Occupation

Occupation	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Government employee	88	57.2	38	25.4
Private sector employee	12	7.8	5	3.3
Trader	20	13.0	22	14.7
Driver	15	9.7	22	14.7
Farmer	0	0.0	26	17.3
Student	15	9.7	0	0.0
Unemployed	4	2.6	17	11.3
Retired	0	0.0	20	13.3
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N= 304. Chi-Square=93.154 Df =7. P<0.001

The table shows that the large majority (87.7%) of the young group and more than three

quarters of the old group (75.4%) were engaged in work. Among younger respondents,

the majority (57.2 %) were working in the government sector. A much smaller proportion of the old group (25.4 %) were working in the government sector, though this was still the largest single occupational category for that age group. It is noticeable that almost a fifth of the older group were farmers, whereas none of the younger respondents were engaged in farming. There were expected age - related differences, whereby only younger respondents were students and older ones retired. In addition, it is noticeable that the proportion of unemployed was higher among the older people: 11.3 % as against 2.6 %. The X^2 test shows there is a significant difference between the two age groups in their occupations.

7.2.3. Household Size

The distribution of respondents according to household size is shown in Table 7.3. The majority (69.5 %) of households in the young group had 1-4 members, whereas only 24 % of the old group were in the same category; almost half of the old group (46.7%) had between 5-8 members per household, compared with only 30.5 % of younger ones. Moreover, it was only in the older group that very large households of 9 or more members were found. The Chi Square test was carried out, and shows there is a significant difference between age groups in the number of members in their household.

Table 7.3

Distribution of the Sample According to Household Size

Number of Household Members	Young group Freq.	%	Old Group Freq.	%
1-4	107	69.5	36	24.0
5-8	47	30.5	70	46.7
9 or more	0	0.0	44	29.3
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N= 304. Chi-Square=83.735 Df =2. P<0.001

7.2.4. Income

Table 7.4. shows that respondents in the old group earned less than the young group. More than half (54%) of the old ones were in the category of no income or less than SR 1,000, whereas only 14.6 % of the young group were in this category, and almost a quarter of the old group of respondents had an income between SR 1,000 and 4,000 per month. In contrast, the highest concentration of younger respondents was in the category of SR 1,000 - 4,000, while almost a quarter earned between SR 4,000 - 7,000. According to the X^2 test there is a significant difference in income between the age groups.

Table 7.4

Distribution of the Sample According to Level of Income

Income	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
No income	9	6.0	30	20.0
Less than SR 1,000	13	8.6	51	34.0
Between SR 1,000 and 4,000	65	43.0	35	23.3
Between SR 4,001 and 7,000	37	24.5	16	10.7
More than SR 7,000	27	17.9	18	12.0
Total	151	100.0	150	100.0

N= 301. Missing cases=3. Chi-Square=52.988 Df =4. P<0.001

7.2.5. Duration of Residence in Assfan

Table 7.5

Distribution of the Sample According to the

Number of Years Living in Assfan

Years in Assfan	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
30 years or less	70	45.5	16	11.0
31-45 years	84	54.5	48	33.1
More than 45 years	0	0.0	81	55.9
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**145**	**100.0**

N=299. Missing = 5 cases. Chi-Square=124.567 Df =2. P<0.001

Table 7.5 gives the answers of respondents regarding the number of years they had been

living in Assfan. The majority (55.9%) of the old group had been living in the village

for 45 years or more, and more than half (54.5%) of the young ones had been living in

Assfan for between 31 and 45 years, which suggests that most of the people were born

in the village or had settled there a long time ago.

7.2.6. Plans to Leave Assfan

Table 7.6

Distribution of the Respondents According to their
Plan of Leaving Assfan in the Future

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	24	15.6	1	.7
No	73	47.4	119	79.3
I do not know	57	37.0	30	20.0
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**150**	**100.0**

N=304. Chi-Square=40.515 Df =2. P< 0.001

Table 7.6 shows respondents' answers regarding their intention to stay in Assfan or leave it. The majority (79.3%) of the elderly people said they had no plan to leave the village, as did nearly half (47.4%) of the younger group, while more than a third (37%) of the young and a fifth (20%) of the older groups had no idea at the time of the interview, whether they might leave Assfan or not. However, nearly a sixth of the younger respondents said they would like to leave Assfan in the future. Some of them wanted to continue their education, others had had enough of the daily journey to their jobs in the cities and wanted to be closer to their jobs, and some of them intended to move in search of better services, because of the shortage of services in Assfan. The X^2 test was carried out, and the test indicated a significant difference between the age groups in their plans whether or not to leave Assfan in the future.

7.3. Marriage

This section contains two parts. The first is a qualitative account of traditional marriage customs before 1970; the second contains the questionnaire findings on marriage customs.

7.3.1. Marriage in the Past

Assfan, as a Saudi Muslim community, derives its values, traditions, norms and social life from the Islamic religion and according to the Prophet Mohammed's traditions. As marriage is considered the basis of the Muslim family, and as Assfan is a Muslim community, marriage should be according to Islamic teachings. Marriage in Islam is the only acceptable form of union between a man and a woman.

The minimum age for marriage in Islam is when the women reaches puberty. The marriage should be with her consent, otherwise the marriage is considered invalid and

illegal. For the man, marriage can take place when he reaches adulthood and will be capable of fulfilling the duties and requirements of married life. In other words, he should be able to support his wife financially and satisfy her emotionally and physically. This is considered the only restriction on marriage in Islamic law.

Among Assfan's villagers, in the past, a suitable match was usually identified by women while the prospective partners were children. Serious negotiation began between the bride's and the groom's fathers when the prospective bride and groom were quite young. Parents married off their daughters as soon as they reached puberty and pressurised their sons to marry when they grew their moustache, usually between 12-16 years old, to encourage them to depend on themselves and take on the responsibility of establishing the household. Usually, marriages among Assfan people were cross-cousin marriage, between brothers' families. It was difficult, if not impossible, for the groom to reject his family's choice of marriage partner, especially in view of his lifelong and continuing dependence on them for economic support. The income he gained from his employment was not enough to provide the necessities of marriage or to pay the *mahr*, which his father would provide. For this reason, parents usually imposed their views and choice of marriage partner and it was considered shameful to refuse the family choice.

The fathers usually did not mention their negotiations to anybody apart from their wives, until they both agreed, then they might mention their negotiations to their relatives.

Marriage in Islam is a contract between two partners, a man and a woman, in the presence of the *qadi* or *mathoon* (judge or marriage official), two witnesses and the woman's guardians (i.e. father, brother, uncle and grandfather). Assfan only has one *mathoon* (marriage official), who is from the older generation and still draws up

marriage contracts. Usually a payment of a few hundred Riyals is given to him by the groom or his father, for this service. The marriage need not take place in a mosque or with a religious ceremony, but the *mathoon* must hear the women's acceptance of the marriage when he asks her or, alternatively, silence on her part indicates acceptance.

In fact, there is a law in Saudi Arabia that the judge must hear the woman's consent expressed aloud. Also "blood and milk relations" (two children who have been breast fed by one woman) are required to ensure that there is nothing to prohibit the marriage. The marriage must be held in public and must not be restricted to a limited period. Among Assfan's people, most parents did not ask for their daughter's agreement on marriage directly, but by allusion. For example, they might ask her about selling the family's land in such a place; if she agreed, they considered that as an agreement to marriage.

Among Assfan people, the mothers discussed the *Mahr* (bride gift) with their husbands. The *Mahr* could be in the form of money, gold, silver, animals or land. However, the amount was a few thousand Riyals or less.

The marriage was never mentioned to the bride herself until a few days before the wedding, or on the wedding day itself. It would be considered shameful if she were to show delight or any strong feelings. If she was happy, she was expected to keep quiet all the time. Families might be worried about a violent reaction from the bride. Another reason for not mentioning the wedding is that some girls might be worried about the idea of getting married and the subsequent change in their lifestyle.

Some arrangements were made before the wedding party, such as invitations, buying food, gathering firewood and sitting up a place for it. Invitations were usually issued by a responsible adult from the groom's family. He went around the village, visiting tents or *bayt alsh'aer* (house woven of wool), which were held up by a big wooden post in

the middle. If he went to invite people to the wedding and could get no answer, he made a mark with a sharp knife on the house post, to indicate that an invitation had been left.

The celebrations were held in the bride's household, for the women, and for the men, in a *bayt alsh'aer* or tent which was located away from the houses in a large space. Because the bride was not supposed to know about the marriage until the night of her wedding, it was explained to her that they would have a special party on this night. Some mothers mentioned it to their daughters a month before the wedding. Sometimes, all the women would have their hands and feet decorated with *henna,* so that the bride would not feel different from the others. Then she put on her dress which did not have any distinguishing colour or style,(usually she designed and sewed it) and her *burq'a* (a cover worn over women's' faces) without putting on any makeup, so that she looked natural and the groom could see her as she truly was.

The groom never saw his bride until the night of his wedding, or on the next day in his house. In fact, Islamic tradition allows the groom to see his bride, but usually the contract was written and signed in the late afternoon on the day before the wedding, or on the same night, which did not give the groom chance to see his bride.

The bride's actual attendance in the company of men was not allowed. Hidden behind a partition, she might be asked by the marriage official, "Do you accept and agree to be wife to 'X'?". If she gave no answer it was taken as affirmative, a common custom at one time.

After that, the wedding party was held in outdoor places such as tents or *bayt alsh'aer,* which had been set up by relatives and neighbours one or two nights before the wedding. As the informants said, this was where villagers' assistance was provided, as all the work needed for the party preparations, such as gathering firewood, bringing

water, collecting coffee and tea pots, very big plates, and cooking pots, and gathering

some rugs for guests to sit on, would be done by the people in the village

Early on the day of the wedding, people started to come to help and join the groom's

family on this occasion. People would come from the village and from outside it, as

members of the tribe would have to accept the invitation. People would bring with them

their *m $\bar{a}$d* (assistance) in the form of money, bags of rice, sugar, tea, coffee and a lamb

to slaughter. The closer a person was to the family, the more *m $\bar{a}$d* he would bring. Some

others of the villagers prepared themselves to slaughter the animals and cook them. An

informant said, "We did not hire anyone to cook for us, we did it ourselves. It would be

shameful to (hire an outsider) and would not show the villagers' solidarity".

After the guests and people of the village had finished their meal, some type of folk

entertainment (called *majroor*) would be performed as a sign of happiness and

enjoyment, and participation with the groom's family in their celebration. Most of the

attendants performed the *majroor* as a traditional play in the tribe.

This rich account of traditional marriages raises many issues related to the age of the

bridal couple, criteria for arranging marriages, the role of family and friends, and the

manner of celebration. Next, the current practice in relation to these issues will be

explored, based on the questionnaire findings.

7.3.2. The Current Marriage System

7.3.2.1. Choice of Wife

Table 7.7

Distribution of the Respondents According

to Choice of Wife

Who Choose your Wife?	Young Group Freq.	Young Group %	Old Group Freq.	Old Group %
Myself	81	52.6	43	28.7
My parents	57	37.0	102	68.0
Friends & Relatives	16	10.4	5	3.3
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=30.095 Df =2. P<0.001

The distribution of the villagers of Assfan according to their way of choosing their

wives is shown in Table 7.7. It can be seen from the table that more than half (52.6%) of

the young people had chosen their wives by themselves, whereas only 28.7 % of the

older ones had done so. The majority (68%) of the old respondents had their wives

chosen for them by their parents, as did 37 % of the young ones, which reflects the

continued tradition of arranged marriages (e.g. cross-cousin marriage), and obedience to

parents in choice of partner. According to X^2 test there is a significant difference

between the age groups in their answers about the wife is choice.

Moreover, an important matter related to this issue that needs to be clarified is that the

decline in the family's direct role in choosing a man's wife does not mean that he will

not need his family's assistance any more. The family still has the role of providing a

man with information about several girls and he has to choose the one he prefers, the

one who has the characteristics he likes and wants in a wife. Gathering information

about different girls is as in the past, the duty of the female members of the family

(mother, sister, aunt, grandmother), because meetings between unmarried men and

women are not permissible according to the Islamic values of Saudi society. Furthermore, the family still has other duties in completing the marriage arrangements, such as the betrothal and the wedding celebration.

7.3.2.2. Criterion for the Choice of Wife

Table 7.8

Distribution of the Respondents According to the
Criterion of Choice of Wife

Choice Criterion	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Piety	56	36.4	78	52.0
Personal	23	14.9	5	3.3
Family lineage	28	18.2	45	30.0
Age	32	20.8	14	9.3
Educational level	15	9.7	8	5.3
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=28.268 Df =4. P< 0.001

Table 7.8 gives the respondents' main criteria for their choice of wives. For the majority (52%) in the older group and the largest single group among the younger men (36.4%) piety was the most important factor in their choice, in line with Islamic teaching, *as prophet Mohammed said: "A woman is married for four things, i.e., her wealth, her family lineage, her beauty, and her religion. So you should marry the religious woman [otherwise] you will be a loser" (Sahih Al-Bukhari (Khan, 1994))*. It appears that family lineage was more important to the older group than to the younger, whereas the reverse was the case for age. The X^2 test was carried out and shows there is a significant difference between the age groups in their criterion for choosing a wife.

7.3.2.3. Age of Marriage for Son

<u>Table 7.9</u>

<u>Distribution of Respondents According to the Suitable</u>
<u>Age for Son to Get Married</u>

Son's Age of Marriage	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Less than 20 years	8	5.2	21	14.0
20-25 years	46	29.9	82	54.7
26-30 years	92	59.7	41	27.3
31 years or older	8	5.2	6	4.0
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=35.748 Df =3. P<0.001

Table 7.9 gives the answers of the respondents regarding what they considered a suitable age for a son to get married. It is noticeable that few respondents in either group favoured very early marriage (less than 20 years); on the other hand, nor did they favour delaying marriage beyond the age of 30. The majority of the older group (54.7%) favoured marriage at 20-25 years. Younger respondents, however, seemed more inclined to delay marriage by a few years; 59.7% thought that 26-30 years was the best age to marry. According to the Chi Square test there is a significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about the suitable age for a son to get married.

7.3.2.4. Age of Marriage for Daughter

Table 7.10

Distribution of Respondents According to the Suitable
Age for a Daughter to Get Married

Daughter's Age of Marriage	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Less than 20 years	50	32.5	88	58.7
20-25 years	82	53.2	55	36.7
26-30 years	22	14.3	7	4.6
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=23.495. Df =2. P< 0.001

As it can be seen from Table 7.10, both groups appeared to believe that marriage for a

daughter was desirable at a younger age than for a son. It is noticeable, however, that

the old group favoured earlier marriage than the younger. Whereas the majority (58.7%)

of older respondents thought daughters should marry under the age of 20, the majority

view among the younger group (53.2%) was that 20-25 years is the appropriate age. The

X^2 test shows there is a significant difference between the age groups in opinion about

the suitable age for a daughter to get married.

7.3.2.5. The Place of Wedding

Table 7.11
Answers of the Respondents According to the
Place of the Wedding

Place of Wedding	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
In the family house	12	7.8	129	86.0
In hall in Assfan	89	57.8	21	14.0
In hall outside Assfan	53	34.4	0	0.0
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**150**	**100.0**

N=304. Chi-Square=192.102. Df =2. P<0.001

From Table 7.11, it can be seen that the majority (86.0%) of the villagers in Assfan in the past used to hold their wedding parties in their homes, because of the small number of the guests and lack of availability of public places, such as halls or community centres for this purpose. In contrast, in the present time, the majority (92.2%) of the people in Assfan held their parties in a wedding hall, either in Assfan or outside the village. Indeed, two large wedding halls have been built in Assfan itself, to serve Assfan and the surrounding villages.

7.3.2.6. Customs and Issues Related to Marriage

a) Early Age of Marriage

Table 7.12
Prevalence of Early Age Marriage in Assfan

Early Age Marriage	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	73	47.4	116	77.3
Uncommon	81	52.6	34	22.7
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**150**	**100.0**

N=304. Chi-Square=28.944. Df =1. P< 0.001

According to the respondents' answers, as seen in Table 7.12, more than three quarters (77.3%) of elderly people replied that early age marriage was common in the village community, and just less than a half (47.4%) of the young, said this type of marriage is common nowadays, suggesting that the trend of early marriage may be declining somewhat.

b) Girls' Education

Table 7.13

Prevalence of Girls' Education in Assfan

Girls' Education	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	144	93.5	55	37.4
Uncommon	10	6.5	92	62.6
Total	154	100.0	147	100.0

N=301. Missing = 3 cases. Chi-Square=105.620. Df =1. P< 0.001

Table 7.13, shows the responses of the people about girls' education. The majority (93.5%) of the young group replied that girls' education is common in the village at the present time. In contrast, among the old group, just 37.4% of them said that girls' education was common in their day.

c) Increasing Gift

Table 7.14

Prevalence of Increasing Bridal Gift

Increasing Dowry	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	92	59.7	48	32.0
Uncommon	62	40.3	102	68.0
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=23.536. Df =1. P< 0.001

Table 7.14, shows the respondents' answers about the increase in size of the expected bridal gift. More than two thirds (68%) of the old group replied that such an increase used not to be common in the village community, but more than half (59.7%) of the young group, replied that the increase in the bridal gift is common nowadays. According to the X² test there is significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about the tendency for the size of the expected bridal gift to be increased.

Table 7.15

Distribution of the Respondents According
to the Amount of *Mahr*

The Amount (Saudi Riyals)	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Less than 10,000	13	8.5	131	87.3
10,000-20,000	12	7.8	19	12.7
20,001-30,000	106	68.8	0	0.0
More than 30,000	23	14.9	0	0.0
Total	154	100	150	100

N=304. Chi-Square=209.726. Df =3. P< 0.001

Table 7.15, shows the respondents' answers in respect of the *mahr* (bridal gift). The majority (87.3%) of the old group replied that the amount of *mahr* was less than 10,000 Saudi Riyals. In contrast, the majority (68.8%) of the younger group said that the amount of mahr nowadays is between 20,001 to 30,000 Saudi Riyals, while 14.9% replied that the amount of *mahr* is more than 30,000 Saudi Riyals. According to the X² test there is a significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about the trend in the amount of *mahr* (bridal gift).

Table 7.16

Distribution of the Respondents Opinions
about the Amount of *Mahr*

The Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Excessive	84	54.5	44	29.3
Not excessive	70	45.5	106	70.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=19.814. Df =1. P< 0.001

Table 7.16, shows the respondents' answers with regard to the excessiveness of the amount of *mahr*. More than half (54.5%) of the young group said this amount is considered excessive. More than two thirds (73.7%) of the younger group said the amount of *mahr* is more than 20,000 Saudi Riyals, which they considered to be too high for them. However, the majority (70.7%) of the older group said this amount of *mahr* in their day was not considered as an excessive, because the majority (87.3%) of them had married for less than 10,000 Saudi Riyals.

d) Extravagance in Celebrating

Table 7.17

Prevalence of Extravagance in Celebrating

Extravagance in Celebrating	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	131	85.1	19	12.7
Uncommon	23	14.9	131	87.3
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=159.342. Df =1. P<0.001

From the respondents' answers, as seen in Table 7.17, the majority (87.3%) of the

older respondents replied that extravagance in celebration was uncommon in their day.

The majority (85.1%) of the younger group, in contrast, said this type of celebration is

common in the village community nowadays. The X^2 test was carried out and shows a

significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about prevalence of

extravagance in celebration.

e) Polygamy

Table 7.18

Prevalence of Polygamy

Polygamy	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	21	3.6	69	26.0
Uncommon	133	96.4	81	74.0
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=38.189. Df =1. P< 0.001

Table 7.18, shows the respondents' answers about polygamy. The majority of both

groups, 96.4% of the young ones and 74% of the older, said that polygamy was and

still is uncommon in the Assfan community.

f) Cross-Cousin Marriage

Table 7.19

Prevalence of Cross-Cousin Marriage

Cross-Cousin Marriage	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	102	66.2	122	81.3
Uncommon	52	33.8	28	18.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=8.935. Df =1. P< 0.005

From Table 7.19, it can be seen that the majority (81.3%) of the old group said cross-cousin marriages were widespread in their time. This type of marriage is still practised by the people in Assfan, but less so than in the past; 66.2% of the young group were married to their cousins. According to the Chi Square test there is a significant difference between the age groups in their opinions about the prevalence of cross-cousin marriages.

7.3.2.7. Assistance Given at Weddings

Table 7.20

The Respondents' Answers about the Assistance
for the Groom on his Wedding

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	144	93.5	143	95.3
No	10	6.5	7	4.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=480. Df =1. P>0.5

Table 7.20, shows the respondents' answers on the practice of assisting the groom on his wedding. The majority of both groups gave positive responses; 95.3% of the old ones and 93.5% of the young group said that assistance was given to the groom on his wedding. The X^2 test was carried out and shows there is no significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about the prevalence of assistance for the groom on his wedding.

Table 7.21

Type of Assistance

Type of Assistance	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Money	89	61.8	95	67.9
Furniture	34	23.6	19	13.6
Gifts	21	14.6	26	18.6
Total	144	100.0	140	100.0

N=284. Missing=20 cases. Chi-Square=4.917. Df =2.P>0.05

As seen in Table 7.21, the assistance given to the groom on his wedding was mainly in the form of money; 67.9% of the old group and 61.8% of the young group said that. Gifts were the least common type of assistance reported by the young group (14.6%), whereas provision of furniture was the least common (13.6%) type of assistance according to the older ones. According to the Chi-Square test there is no significant difference between the age groups in their opinions about type of the assistance given.

7.3.2.8. Adornment of the Bride

Table 7.22

Custom of Adorning the Bride

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	137	89.0	98	65.3
No	17	11.0	52	34.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=24.178. Df =1.P< 0.001

From Table 7.22, it can be seen the majority (89%, 65.3%) of both groups replied that

the custom of adorning the bride on her wedding was observed in the village community

and it is common nowadays.

7.3.2.9. Opinions about Changing Customs

Table 7.23

Distribution of the Sample According to their Answer about
the Changing of the Wedding Customs in the Village

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	136	88.3	134	89
No	18	11.7	16	11
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=080. Df =1. P>0.5

From the table above, which shows the respondents' answer regarding the wedding

customs, the majority of both groups, 88.3% of the young ones and 89% of the older,

said that wedding customs have changed from what they were in the past. According to

the X^2 test there is no significant difference between the age groups in their opinion

about the change of the wedding customs.

7.4. Economic Life

The researcher will describe the traditional economic life of Assfan's people (before

1970), in the following section: types of work performed by men and women, their daily

tasks, their involvement in agriculture, herding, and commercial activities. Following

this, the questionnaire findings on economic life will be presented.

7.4.1. Economic life before 1970

In the past, the people of Assfan were nomadic and some of them were semi-nomadic, having tried to settle in the village while keeping the Bedouin lifestyle. But by this time, most of Assfan's people had settled in the village

Some of Assfan's people had no concern for education. For example, when the researcher interviewed Atteah, aged 70, and asked him about the importance of education, he said, "We used to encourage our children to help with work and we said to them it is better than reading and writing, and what will you gain from education?" Also, the late arrival of formal education in the village in 1960s gave the villagers of Assfan no chance to be employed in the governmental sector, especially the well paid jobs, as they had no qualifications, with the exception of a few of them who were more ambitious and they went outside the village for education. Some other villagers did not leave Assfan, because they disliked city life. They saw life in a city as imprisonment, and they were very proud to live in a desert or a village in their tribe's territory.

Usually, a family business was open to participation by sons, uncles, and male cousins, and functioned as the social welfare safety net for all members of the extended family. A household acted as a production unit in which all members contributed to the family economy. They worked on the farm, with the herds, which all members and each one had a role to play. Women and children had a light tasks to do and men usually performed the harder tasks. Therefore, the villagers did not employ foreign workers; in the case of a particularly large or difficult task, the villagers would help each other.

Traditionally, the people of Assfan used to plant and harvest some seasonal crops, which depended on rainwater, such as watermelons, millet and durra (sorghum). They also grew other crops such as vegetables and date palms. They depended on these crops

for food and income, as they sold any surplus either in Assfan's shops or in the urban centres through a *jammal* (camel driver) who took products from the village to the city for sale, and brought back what they needed, such as clothes and goods.

In the past, most farmers owned their own lands, which varied in the size depending on whether they inherited or bought the land. However, villagers who had no land could either work as labourers or work land owned by someone else on a sharecropping basis, the proceeds being divided fifty-fifty between the owner and the worker.

Traditionally, Assfan is located in an important commercial location, on the main road between Makkah and Madinah, and is a centre for the surrounding villages. This affected economic life. An informant said, "People from other villages come to Assfan because it is considered for them as a commercial market centre, to buy millet, sugar, salt, date and clothes. Moreover, they bring with them ghee, *madeer*, and so on, for sale or exchange."

In the past, each household might have over a hundred of *ghanam* (a herd of sheep and goats) and a few camels, and they lived off the sale of *ghee* (sheep and goat fat), *madeer* (dry cottage cheese) and *souf* (sheep and goat hair), as well as of the animals themselves. Moreover, they drank the milk, which was considered a basic food.

Women used to produce goods such as butter and yogurt from their livestock's milk and they made ghee for cooking or to sell. Also, they used tanned animal hides to make various items, such as:

Segaa a container to keep milk in protection, after the milk became acidulous then milk and butter separated.

Oakah a small container made of goat's or sheep's skin, in which ghee was kept, it would be kept for a long time, even a few months, without change in its taste.

Girbah: a water canteen, used to bring water from wells, or to keep cool.

Also, the women used to make pillows, and clothes for themselves and their husbands. They would help on the farm, with harvesting, looking after animals, and bringing water and firewood. Small children's job was to protect the farms from birds and look after the animals.

In the next section, it will be seen whether or to what extent this pattern of economic activity has been retained in modern Assfan.

7.4.2. Current Economic Life

7.4.2.1. Secondary Occupations

Table 7.24

Distribution of the Respondents According to
their Secondary Occupation

Answer	Freq.	%
Yes	44	14.8
No	254	85.2
Total	**298**	**100.0**

N=298. Missing = 6 cases.

As seen in Table 7.24, the majority (85.2%) of respondents did not have a secondary occupation, either in the village or elsewhere. Those who worked in the Civil Service would not be allowed to have another job, according to service regulations. However, a small minority (14.8%) of the sample had informal secondary occupations, such as driver, farmer, or shop-keeper, as shown in the next table.

Table 7.25

Distribution of the Respondents According to Type
of the Secondary Occupations

Secondary Occupation	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Driver	11	42.3	6	33.3
Farmer	2	7.7	5	27.8
Part-time employee	1	3.8	0	0.0
Salesman	2	7.7	1	5.6
Businessman	10	38.5	6	33.3
Total	26	100.0	18	100.0

N=44. Chi-Square=3.759. Df =4. P> 0.01

The above table categorises the respondents' secondary occupations. The largest

percentage, 42.3% of the young and 33.3% of the elderly, were working as drivers.

There is a demand for this service as every year, thousands of people from around the

world come to perform Hajj or Umrah in Makkah or visit the prophet's mosque in

Madinah. The next largest percentage was for the businessmen as 38.5% of the younger

group and 33.3% of the older group were in this category. Part-time employment with a

company was the least common occupation for the young, and no older men had such

work. Moreover, very few in either group worked as salesmen. The X^2 test was carried

out to see if there were any significant between the groups differences, The test shows

no significant difference between the age groups in their secondary occupations.

7.4.2.2. Businesses Run by Respondents

Table 7.26

Distribution of the Respondents According
to their Business in Assfan

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	28	18.5	42	28.2
No	123	81.5	107	71.8
Total	151	100.0	149	100.0

N=300. Missing= 4 cases. Chi-Square=3.900. Df =1. P<0.05

Table 7.26, gives the respondents' answers regarding businesses in the village. The majority of both groups (81.5%) and 71.8% did not have any business in Assfan. This can be explained partly by scarcity of capital. The villagers have traditionally lived a simple life without keeping any money to use for investment. Moreover, business opportunities are few, given the small number of consumers in the area. On the other hand, there are some investors in the village, as 28.2% of the older people and 18.6% of the younger ones ran businesses to meet people's daily needs. The X^2 test was carried out and shows there is a significant difference between the age groups in the prevalence of their owning businesses in Assfan. The nature of these businesses is shown in the next table.

Table 7.27
Distribution of the Respondents According
to the Kind of Business

Type of Business	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Agricultural	4	14.3	19	45.2
Commercial	24	85.7	18	42.9
Pastoral	0	0.0	5	11.9
Total	28	100.0	42	100.0

N=70. Chi-Square=13.375. Df =2. P< 0.005

Table 7.27, shows the types of business in Assfan. The majority (85.7%) of the young

group were engaged in commercial business, compared to 42.9% of the older group.

Agriculture is still practised in the village, but not to the extent that it was in the past;

just 14.3% of the younger group were engaged in agriculture, compared with 45.2% of

the older ones. According to the X^2 test there is a significant difference between the age

groups in their kind of business.

7.4.2.3. Employment of Others

Table 7.28

Distribution of the Respondents According
to their Employees

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	44	28.6	51	34
No	110	71.4	99	66
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=1.042. Df =1. P>0.1

As seen from Table 7.28, the majority of respondents in both groups did not employ any

workers; 71.4% of the younger ones and 66% of the older ones did not have any

employees. The X^2 test was carried out, and shows no significant difference between the

age groups in this respect. This can be explained partly by the fact that most respondents did not run a business, and some of those who did would run it alone or rely on family help. Nevertheless, the number of respondents claiming to employ someone was greater than the number who said they had a business. This apparent discrepancy might be accounted for by the employment of domestic workers.

Table 7.29

Distribution of the Respondents According
to Number of Employees

Number of Employees	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1-4 people	32	72.7	24	47
5-8 people	7	15.9	16	31.4
9 and more	5	11.4	11	21.6
Total	44	100.0	51	100.0

N=95. Chi-Square=6.434. Df =2. P<0.01

From Table 7.29, it can be seen that the majority (72.7%) of the young and 47% of the elderly employed a small number, just four workers or less. The older respondents tended to employ more workers, a fifth of them employing nine or more workers, compared to just 11.4% of those in the younger group. The Chi Square test shows a significant difference between the age groups in their number of employees.

Table 7.30

Distribution of the Respondents According to
Nationality of their Employees

Nationality of the employees	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Arab	11	25	14	27.5
Asian (non Arab)	33	75	37	72.5
Total	44	100.0	51	100.0

N=95. Chi-Square=073. Df =1. P> 0.1

As seen in Table 7.30, three-quarters (75%) of the young group answered that their employees were Asian non-Arab and 72.5% of the old group gave a similar response. This is probably because Asians are usually paid lower wages than Arabs. The X^2 test was carried out and shows no significant difference between the age groups in the reported nationality of their employees.

7.4.2.4. Work Opportunities in and around Assfan

Table 7.31
Places where Assfan's Inhabitants Work

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
In Assfan	18	11.7	40	26.7
In neighbouring villages	22	14.3	8	5.3
In nearby cities	114	74	102	68
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=15.495. Df =2. P<0.001

Table 7.31, shows that about three quarters (74%) of the young group and more than two thirds of the old group (68%) were engaged in work in the nearby cities. Among the elderly, more than a quarter (26.7%) were working in Assfan itself, though this was still the second largest place of work category for that age group. A large number of the elderly were engaged in work in the village which is considered suitable for them, such as school guard, school bus driver, boys' school servant, or as an assistant or servant to the Amir. In contrast, in the younger group, only a small percentage (11.7%) were working in the village, as teachers, as clerks in the boys' school, or in the health centre, or in the post office.

Table 7.32

Place of Work for People who are not well Qualified

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
In the governmental sector	99	64.3	102	68
In the private sector	22	14.3	11	7.3
In their own businesses	33	21.4	37	24.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=3.888. Df =2. P> 0.2

According to both groups of respondents, work for the unqualified was available in the governmental sector (Table 7.32). This was the view of 68% of the elderly and 64.3% of the younger group. However, the private sector came in the last place as a source of work opportunity, because the private sector looks for high calibre employees, though at lower wages than in the public sector. According to the X^2 test there is no significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about work opportunities for non-qualified people.

Table 7.33

Place of Origin of the Shopkeepers

Originality of the Shopkeepers	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
From Assfan itself	61	42	98	65
From outside Assfan	83	58	52	35
Total	144	100.0	150	100.0

N=294. Missing = 10 cases. Chi-Square=15.613. Df =1. P<0.001

Table 7.33, shows the respondents' answers about the origin of the shopkeepers in Assfan village. Almost two-thirds (65%) of the old group said that the shopkeepers in Assfan were from the village itself, whereas the majority of the young group said that shopkeepers were from outside Assfan village.

178

Table 7.34

Availability of Jobs in Assfan for Female Graduates

Answer	Freq.	%
Yes	103	34.8
No	193	65.2
Total	**296**	**100.0**

N=296. Missing = 8 cases.

From Table 7.34, it can be seen that the majority (65.2%) of the respondents said that

girls who graduate from university cannot find jobs in the village, so they must stay at

home or find a job outside the village. The kinds of jobs available to the few who find

work in Assfan are indicated in the next table.

Table 7.35

Jobs Available for the Girls in Assfan

Kind of Job	Freq.	%
Teaching	93	90.3
Health care	10	9.7
Total	**103**	**100.0**

N=103.

From this table it can be seen that the majority (90.3%) of the respondents replied that

the only job available in the village for girls is teaching. Education is the main sector of

female employment in the country, because Saudi Arabia is a developing country which

has in recent years rapidly expanded its educational provision. Moreover, teaching is

considered a respectable job for Saudi women; Saudi Arabia observes strict segregation

of the sexes, and single sex schools are among the few places where women can work

while maintaining this tradition. Some work is also available in health care.

Table 7.36

The Alternative if there is no Job in Assfan for Girls

Answer	Freq.	%
Stay at home	57	28.4
Find a job outside Assfan	144	71.6
Total	**201**	**100.0**

N=201.

Table 7.36 gives the respondents' answers regarding the alternatives available to women if no jobs are available for them in Assfan. The majority (71.6%) said they try to find a job outside the village in the surrounding areas and nearby cities. This might involve, for example, accepting a teaching post in a faraway area.

7.4.2.5. Occupational Preferences

Table 7.37

Preferred Jobs for Men

Preferred Jobs for Men	Freq.	%
Teaching	99	33.1
Clerical & administrative	93	31.1
Military	61	20.4
Health care	15	5
Private sector	31	10.4
Total	**299**	**100.0**

N=299. Missing = 5 cases.

Table 7.37, shows the respondents' answers about preferred jobs for men. The biggest single group (33.1%) of the sample preferred teaching. They were followed by people who liked to work in clerical or administrative posts in the governmental sector (31.1%). However, the health care profession was disliked, being ranked last, and chosen by only 5% of the whole sample.

Table 7.38
Preferred Jobs for Women

Preferred Jobs for Women	Freq.	%
Teaching	248	82.9
Clerical & administrative	6	2
Health care	45	15.1
Total	**299**	**100.0**

N=299.

From Table 7.38, it is noticeable that the majority (82.9%) of the sample said the preferred job for women is teaching, because in this field women can work very comfortably without mixing with men, since the education system in Saudi Arabia is segregated. Health care was mentioned by 15.1% of the sample, while clerical or administrative jobs came last, being chosen by 2% of respondents.

Table 7.39
Respondents' Liking to have
their Own Business

Answer	Freq.	%
Yes	253	83
No	51	17
Total	**304**	**100.0**

N=304.

Table 7.39, reveals that the majority (83%) of the sample would like to have their own businesses in their own village, although this is not the current situation in the village, as indicated in relation to Table 7.24.

Table 7.40

Importance of Activities in Assfan

The Activities	Agricultural		Commercial		Pastoral		Light Industry	
The Ranks	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
NO 1	97	31.9	116	38.2	42	13.8	49	16.1
NO 2	98	32.2	74	24.3	62	20.4	71	23.4
NO 3	71	23.4	50	16.4	71	23.4	111	36.5
NO 4	38	12.5	64	21.1	129	42.4	73	24.0
Total	304	100.0	304	100.0	304	100.0	304	100.0

N=304.

From Table 7.40, it can be seen that commercial activity was the highest ranked, with 38.2 % of the sample giving it top priority, while agricultural activity came in second place, being ranked in that position by 32.2%. Meanwhile, pastoral activity was ranked last; 42.4% of the sample ranked it in fourth place.

7.4.2.6. Outsiders

Table 7.41

Do Outsiders Work in the Village?

Answer	Freq.	%
Yes	225	77.1
No	67	22.9
Total	292	100.0

N=292. Missing = 12 cases.

More than three-quarters (77.1%) of the sample reported that a number of people from outside the village work in Assfan (Table 7.41). Their places of origin are indicated in the following table.

Table 7.42

Places of Origin of Non-local Workers

Where are They From?	Freq.	%
From nearby Urban centres	54	24
From neighbouring Villages	32	14.2
Foreign (non-Saudi)	139	61.8
Total	**225**	**100.0**

N=225.

From this table it can be seen that the largest group (61.8%) of respondents reported that

Assfan attracts foreign workers from outside the country, who come into Saudi Arabia

to gain some money. Often, they work in the private sector, as drivers, builders, waiters,

and so on. Incomers from the nearby urban centres were reported by 24% and the

smallest proportion (14.2%) of respondents said Assfan has workers from neighbouring

villages.

Table 7.43

Opinions of Foreign Workers' Skill

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	70	45.5	98	65.3
No	84	54.5	52	34.7
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**150**	**100.0**

N=304. Chi-Square=12.146. Df =1. P< 0.001

From Table 7.43, it can be seen the majority (65.3%) of the elderly people said the

foreign workers in Assfan are skilled; however, the majority (54.5%) of the younger

group replied that foreign workers are not skilled. According to the X^2 test, there is a

significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about foreign workers'

skills.

Table 7.44

Opinions of Foreign Workers' Skill Levels

Level of Skill	Freq.	%
Unskilled	62	20.6
Semi – skilled	135	44.9
Skilled	104	34.5
Total	**301**	**100.0**

N=301. Missing = 3 cases.

Table 7.44, shows the respondents' opinions about the level of foreign workers' skills in the jobs which they perform. It can be seen that 44.9% said the foreign workers are semi-skilled, while 34.5% said the foreign workers are skilled, and finally 20.6% of the sample said they are not skilled.

7.4.2.7. Emigration from the Village

Table 7.45
Do People Emigrate from Assfan?

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	66	42	49	33
No	88	58	100	67
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**149**	**100.0**

N=303. Missing = 1 case. Chi-Square=3.355. Df =1. P>0.05

Table 7.45, gives the respondents' opinions about the prevalence of emigration. The majority (67%, 58%) in both groups said that people do not tend to leave Assfan. This can be attributed to 1) the availability of some services in the village, 2) the easy communications with urban centres like Makkah and Jeddah, and 3) the preference for life in rural areas such as Assfan village. The X^2 test shows there is significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about emigration from the village.

Table 7.46

Reasons for Emigration

The Reasons for Emigration	Freq.	%
Seeking better services and facilities	28	25
For better jobs	56	49
To study	30	26
Total	**114**	**100.0**

N=115. Missing = 1 case.

It can be seen in Table 7.46, that nearly half of the sample (49%) thought that the reason for emigration from Assfan was to get better jobs outside the village. After that came pursuit of education and seeking better services (26% and 25%).

Table 7.47

Opinions on Who Mostly Go to Find
Jobs Outside the Village

Answer	Freq.	%
Elderly people	54	18
Young people	246	82
Total	**300**	**100.0**

N=300. Missing = 4 cases.

Table 7.47, shows the respondents' views about which age group are most likely to seek work outside the village. The majority (82%) of the sample population said that young people are the most likely to go outside the village to find suitable jobs, whereas elderly people are more likely to stay in the village.

Table 7.48

Educational Level of those who
Leave Assfan for a Job

Educated People	Freq.	%
Yes	130	43.5
No	169	56.5
Total	299	100.0

N=299. Missing = 5 cases.

Table 7.48, shows the respondents' opinions about the educational level of the people

who leave Assfan to find jobs. The majority (56.5%) answered that they are not well

educated when they leave to work outside their community. However, this was not a

large majority; opinions appear to be quite divided on this point.

7.4.2.8. Women's Work

Table 7.49

Prevalence of Women's Work Outside the Home

Women's Work Outside the Home	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Common	88	57.1	104	69.3
Uncommon	66	42.9	46	30.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=4.853. Df =1. P< 0.05

As seen in Table 7.49, more than two thirds (69.3%) of the old group answered that it

was common in the village for women to work outside the home, and more than a half

(57.1%) of the young group said that for women to work outside the home is common at

the present time. This pattern of results may appear counter to expectation. However, it

may be that in the past, when the community was more isolated, women could help with

agricultural work or provide services to other women of the village, without risk of

contact with outsiders. Now, this is not the case. Also, more educated women are

likely to seek the kinds of occupation which are only available at some distance.

Constraints on women's travel (they are not allowed to drive, and should be escorted by

a male relative) make it difficult for them to take work away from the village.

According to the X^2 test there is a significant difference between the age groups in their

opinion about women working outside the home.

Table 7.50

Distribution of the Respondents According
to the Reasons for Women to Work Outside the Home

The Reasons for Women Work	Freq.	%
To earn money & to help their husbands	146	49
To occupy their time & and use skills they have learned in school	60	20
To help their parents	94	31
Total	300	100.0

N=300. Missing = 4 cases.

Table 7.50, shows the sample populations' views about why women work outside the

home. Nearly half of them (49%) said it was to earn money and help their husbands, and

just 20% of the respondents replied that it was to occupy their time and use the skills

which they learnt in school.

Table 7.51

Distribution of the Respondents According to their
Opinions about Women's Work

Agree to Women's Work	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	37	24	81	54
No	75	49	41	27
Uncertain	42	27	28	19
Total	**154**	**100.0**	**150**	**100.0**

N=304. Chi-Square=29.125. Df =2. P<0.001

Table 7.51, shows the respondents' opinions about women's work. The majority (54%) of the old group said it is desirable for women to work outside the home; however, almost half (49%) of the younger group answered that it is not desirable for women to work outside the home.

Table 7.52

Distribution of the Respondents According to their
Wives' Engagement in Work

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	71	47.3	85	59.4
No	79	52.7	58	40.6
Total	**150**	**100.0**	**143**	**100.0**

N=293. Missing =11 cases. Chi-Square=1.363. Df =1. P>0.1

From Table 7.52, it can be seen that the majority (59.4%) of the older group replied that their wives had jobs. In contrast, more than half the young group (52.7%) said their wives are not involved in any job. In addition to the factors already mentioned, a possible explanation of these responses may be that younger men would be more likely

to have young families, so their wives may be fully occupied with child-rearing. As the children get older, it may be easier for a woman to go out to work. The X^2 test shows no significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about their wives' engagement in a work.

7.5. Observance of Religious Duties and Values

Islam, for the Saudi people, is a basic system of life. They try to follow and apply the Islamic teachings correctly in their daily life. Assfan's people are no different in this respect, and their village's proximity to the holy places gives them an advantage. Therefore, in the following section, the traditional performance of religious duties by Assfan's people will be highlighted, as they were practised by them in the early days before 1970. This will be followed by the questionnaire findings, which indicate current practice.

7.5.1. Traditional Religious Observance

The people of Assfan, as they have been brought up as Muslims, should practise the religious duties throughout their daily life, according to the Islamic teachings. However, many people were uneducated, as a result of the late arrival of formal education in the village. Moreover, as the village had only one mosque at that time, it was a difficult for them to go to the mosque on a regular daily basis, apart from the Friday sermon and prayer. The first type of education in the village was in the mosque, delivered by the *Imam* of the mosque, who taught people to memorise some verses of the *Quran* and to read and write. This education was, however, not available for the majority, as they were needed to help in the family business; in the village market, in looking after

livestock or on the farm. Villagers used to perform religious duties according to what they had learnt and gained from their parents, which was a very rudimentary level of teaching. This can be seen now from the mistakes made by some of them in performance of the rituals. Lack of education, absence of mass media and the shortage of mosques in the village kept the people of Assfan less aware of Islamic teachings and knowledge. As a result of that, people performed their religious duties less in their early life, and sometimes some people did not do so at all, as a result of ignorance.

The family was the main focus of life, and the main source of religious consciousness. The man performed his prayers joined by his sons, either at work or at home, and the woman taught her daughters how to perform the prayers.

Some people chose a small place between their houses and surrounded it with some stones, to mark out a place which five to six people could use for prayer.

Religious festivals were celebrated in Assfan. As soon as the people of Assfan knew that the month of *Ramadan* had finished and *Eid al-Fitr* had arrived, or when the *Eid al-Adha,* arrived, on the tenth day of *Thul Hijjah* month, the last month of the Islamic calendar, they started the celebration. The news about the *Eid al-Fitr* sometimes come late as a result of the lack of communication and mass media. Atteah, aged 70 years, said, "Once, we did not know about the coming of *Eid al-Fitr* and we carried on fasting and went to our work until a few hours after sunrise, when somebody came to us and said, 'It is not *Ramadan* today, it is an *Eid* day.' After that, we went back home and started the celebration."

In the past, the celebration started when men and boys went to perform the *Eid* prayer in the *Wadi* (valley) because it is considered better to perform it outdoors, as the Prophet Mohammed did (Al-Jibali, 1996). When the villagers gathered in the *Wadi*, the men sat in parallel lines and listened to the *Imam*. *Imams* were not formal; they were volunteers

who led people in prayers and gave a speech. When the *Imam* had finished his speech, somebody would stand up and hold a *kuffiya* (a small white cap), as a collection box, to collect money for the *Imam*. When the prayer's rites were finished, the villagers embraced each other saying, "Every year may you be well" (*kull am wa antum bi khair, min al-aidin al-faizin*). The other party replied, "May *Allah* make this occasion return while we and you are well" (*Allah yueyduh alaina wa alaikm be khhair*). They greeted each other and asked about each other, which kept the relationships between them strong.

Moreover, the *Imam* sometimes gave the *Eid'* speech in more than one place, especially when another group did not have anyone to lead them in prayer and give the speech. However, the *Imam* might arrive late to the other group as a result of lack of transportation; sometimes he used a donkey to make the journey easy for him.

In the past, most of people were in a similar economic situation and were in need. Therefore, help between them rarely came in money form, but could be given by helping each other in farm tasks or by taking the livestock to the market. People helped each other in building their houses and stockades for animals, or by lending each other animals to use on the farm or for household tasks.

The researcher asked Bin Agel about the help between people in Assfan. He said, "There were relationship ties between the families in Assfan and they helped each other. Accordingly there was mercy and kindness between them."

Visits in the past between people were more frequent. People saw each other in the evening when they finished their daily tasks. Usually they gathered in groups in different dwellings, and talked to each other and had coffee and tea together, and shared

the news with others or listened to a radio if somebody had one, or listened to a story

or poems.

In the following sub-section, it will be seen whether these traditions religious

observances and values of social solidarity were still in evidence at the time of this

study, as reflected in the questionnaire responses.

7.5.2. Observance of Religious Duties at Present Time

Table 7.53

Distribution of the Sample According to Observance the
Religious Duties in the Mosques

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	111	75.5	79	52.7
No	36	24.5	71	47.3
Total	147	100.0	150	100.0

N=297. Missing=7 cases. Chi-Square=16.809. Df =1. P<0.001

The data from the table above show that more than three quarters of the young group

sample responded that the people in the community still observe the religious duties

such as the prayers in the mosques, but at the same time, just over half of the old group

said people are still doing so. According to the X^2 test, there is a significant difference

between the age groups in their perception that religious duties such as prayers are

observed. The young age group were more likely than the elderly to consider that these

obligations were fulfilled.

Table 7.54

Distribution of the Sample According to the Sources
of Religious Consciousness for the People

Answer	Young Group Freq.	Young Group %	Old Group Freq.	Old Group %
Education in School	69	44.9	33	22
Mosques	39	25.3	68	45.3
Family	19	12.3	40	26.7
Mass Media	27	17.5	9	6.0
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=36.994. Df =3. P<0.001

From the table above, the majority (44.9 %) of the young group replied that education in

school is the first source of religious education, but the elderly group (45.3%) answered

that the mosques are the first source of religious education. The family was the last

source of religious education for the younger ones (12.3%) and the mass media was the

last one for the elderly ones, being listed by 6.0% only. According to the X^2 test there is

a significant difference between the age groups in their opinion about sources of

religious consciousness.

Table 7.55

Distribution of the Sample According to the
Continuity of Religious Observance

Answer	Young Group Freq.	Young Group %	Old Group Freq.	Old Group %
Yes	121	80.7	108	76.6
No	29	19.3	33	23.4
Total	150	100.0	141	100.0

N=291. Missing =13 cases. Chi-Square=718. Df =1. P>0.2

Table 7.55 shows that the majority (80.7%, 76.6%) in each group thought that there was

continuity in religious observance by the villagers in Assfan. A Chi Square test was

carried out, and shows that there is no statistically significant difference between age

groups in their perception on this matter.

Table 7.56

The Respondents' Answers about not
Celebrating the Religious Festivals

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	116	75.3	90	60.0
No	38	24.7	60	40.0
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=8.169. Df =1. P<0.005

Table 7.56, shows that more than three-quarters (75.3%) of the young group answered

that people do not celebrate the religious festivals, while the majority (60%) of the older

ones said that this was the case. A Chi Square test was carried out and shows that there

is a statistically significant difference between the age groups in their perceptions.

Table 7.57

The Respondents' Answers about Offering
Help to the Needy Relatives

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Yes	107	69.5	72	48.0
No	5	3.2	23	13.3
Sometimes	42	27.3	53	38.7
Total	154	100.0	150	100.0

N=304. Chi-Square=18.354. Df =2. P<0.001

Table 7.57, shows that the majority (69.5%) of the younger group, and under half the older group said that they gave help to their needy relatives if they needed it. A X^2 test was carried out to see if there was any statistically significant difference between the age groups; the result confirmed that there was such a difference.

Table 7.58

The Respondents' Answers about Type of
Visits between the Villagers

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Neighbours only	18	11.7	24	16.6
Neighbours & Relatives in Assfan	72	46.8	38	26.2
Relatives Outside Assfan	28	18.2	78	53.8
Friends	36	23.4	5	3.4
Total	154	100.0	145	100.0

N=299. Missing=5 cases. Chi-Square=58.172. Df =3. P<0.001

Table 7.58, shows that more than half (53.8%) of the old group they said the main type of visit which takes place between people is with relatives outside Assfan, and less than a fifth (18.2%) of the young group answered in the same category. In contrast, almost half (46.8%) of the young ones replied that the main types of visit were between neighbours and relatives in Assfan, compared with 26.2% of the old ones in contrast. The X^2 test was carried out to see if there is any significant difference between age and groups in types of visit and the result of the test revealed a statistically significant difference.

Table 7.59

The Respondents' Answers about who Practises
Religious Duties Most

Answer	Young Group		Old Group	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
The Elderly	87	59.2	116	78.4
The Youth	60	40.8	32	21.6
Total	147	100.0	148	100.0

N=295. Missing=9 cases. Chi-Square=12.661. Df =1. P<0.001

From Table 7.59, it can be seen that the majority (59.2%, 78.4%) of both groups replied that the elderly people in the village are more conscientious in practising religious duties than younger ones. According to the X^2 test there is significant difference between the age groups in their answers on this point.

7.6. Summary

This chapter has presented the results of the questionnaire survey of Assfan's inhabitants, about their marriage customs, economic activities and religious observance. Significant differences were found between older and younger respondents in terms of their personal characteristics, experiences and perceptions. Younger respondents tended to be better educated and less likely to be engaged in agriculture. They had smaller families, but higher income. Younger respondents were more likely to be considering leaving Assfan.

The responses related to marriage showed a trend towards personal choice of spouse. Younger people appeared more likely to delay marriage, and to place less emphasis than older ones on piety as a criterion for selecting a bride. Modern trends towards extravagant celebrations were reported, but young people were helped in this respect by their families and friends.

Regarding means of livelihood, most respondents had only one occupation and only a minority ran their own businesses, or employed others. Most work opportunities were perceived to be in nearby cities. It was particularly difficult for girls to find suitable jobs locally. Teaching was the preferred job for both sexes, but especially for women. A trend was noted for young people to emigrate from the village, and the better job opportunities elsewhere were cited as a major reason for this.

In contrast to social life and work, religion might seem to be a more stable dimension of life, it was generally held that religious duties and values are still observed. Nevertheless, younger and older respondents differed in their perception of the way these obligations are carried out.

The findings will be considered in more detail in the next chapter, where they will be viewed in the light of the qualitative findings and of previous research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

Chapter Eight
Discussion

8.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to explore and investigate the nature of the social change in the socio-economic aspects of life among the people in Assfan village. It is intended to determine the changes which have occurred in social life, specifically in marriage customs; to determine the changes that have occurred in economic life and in the labour market; and to investigate changes in people's observance of religious duties and values (See Chapter One).

8.2. Changes in Marriage Customs

Marriage customs were investigated as an aspect of social life which might reflect wider social change. Specifically, the investigation focused on the following points:

1-The preferred age for marriage;

2-The way weddings are celebrated;

3-The custom of adorning the bride;

 4-The criteria for choosing a wife;

5-The assistance given to the groom on his wedding by his relatives, friends and

   guests;

6-The amount of the bride gift (*Mahr*) and how far it is acceptable to the people.

8.2.1.The Preferred Age for Marriage

The study shows that the preferred age for men to get married, in the view of younger respondents, is between 26-30 years of age, and according to the older respondents, between 20-25 years of age. In this respect M.Al-Asmi[2], 65 years old, unemployed and married with 9 children said, *"I got married when I was 19 years old."*

Moreover, Mastoor[3], 53 years old, a retired teacher said, *"I was 20 years old when I got married."*

These findings point to a trend towards later marriage, among both sexes, a view supported by the different responses of the two generations regarding the prevalence of early marriage.

The findings of this study contrast with those of Redfield and Rojas (1962), who found that both sexes married soon after puberty, but are consistent with more recent findings in Saudi Arabia and in the Gulf generally. The preferred ages reported in this study are similar to those reported by Othman (1986) in urban Jordan, and by Bagader (1993) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The increase in the age of marriage for women, in particular, is reported by Al-Mazrou and others (1995), who note that, in Saudi Arabia over 20 years ago, nearly 90% of girls under-20 years old were married, but that at the time of their study, the proportion marrying at under-20 years old had fallen to 16%.

Thus, the present findings support indications in previous research of a trend toward a later age of marriage for both males and females. Similar trends have been reported worldwide, for example, in Senegal (Enel, 1994) and in Pallapalayan, India (Audinarayana and Uma, 1991).

This tendency to delay marriage can be attributed to a number of factors. One of

---

[2] Interview with M. Al-Asmi on November 1998, in Assfan.
[3] Interview with Mastoor on November 1998, In Assfan.

them is the increased participation of both genders in education. Abduljabar (1983) noted a trend to postpone marriage until the young people had obtained their degrees. Particularly notable is the greater participation of women in education, compared with the past.

On the subject of girls' education, whereas 62.6% of the old group reported that in their days it was uncommon, among the younger respondents, the great majority (93.5%) said it was common. Girls now continue their education to university or college level, in order to qualify for careers in fields such as teaching and nursing.

Education is considered one of the main causes for delaying marriage for girls in many societies and in Saudi society in particular. This was mentioned by Bagader (1993) Al-Obidi and Al-Khleefah (1992), Huatlee (1982), Othman (1986) and Kim and Stinner (1980).

Another possible factor in the trend towards later marriage is economic change. Other researchers, such as Von Elm and Hirschman (1979), Carlson (1979) and Huatlee (1982) have found that marriage tends to occur earlier among rural and agricultural communities than among more urbanised groups, and the findings of this study indicate that Assfan is experiencing a transition towards greater urbanisation (this point will be discussed in more detail in section 8.3). Movement of young men to the city for work, greater career opportunities for women, changing expectations regarding standards of living, and the high cost of marriage celebrations and establishing a new family, may all contribute to delay marriage, as people try to establish themselves financially before marriage. Similar factors were cited as explanations for later marriage by Al-Obidi and Al-Khleefah (1992).

8.2.2. Choice of Wife

Regarding choice of wife, the majority (68%) of the older respondents had their wives chosen for them by the parents, whereas only 37% of the young generation had done so.

In some cases, other family members were involved in the choice of groom or bride.

For example Muzoon[4], 50 years old, said, *"The groom's uncle arranged the betrothal for our marriage."* M.Al-Asmi, said, *"My father chose my bride for me."* Moreover, Mastoor, said, *"My bride was chosen for me by my parents in consultation with each other."*

Um Salem[5], a 65 year old, is a widow who has brought up 9 children said, *"She was chosen to be a bride by the groom's father and uncle, and the betrothal was arranged by the groom's uncle who visited her family and asked for her hand officially"*.

It would be difficult for the groom to reject his family's choice, especially when the son would spend the rest of his life in the family household, in line with the tradition of keeping a big family together. Nevertheless, the findings show a distinct trend towards self-selection of spouses. Choice of wife was made by the individuals concerned, in the case of more than half (52.6%) the younger respondents. This may be partly explicable by wider social horizons as the younger people of Assfan have mixed with the others in education, the workplace, or business, and have opportunities to find a wife from outside the community or tribe. This finding is consistent with that of Al-Johani (1996), who noted that 40.6 % of his sample had chosen their wives by themselves and the role of the family members in choosing their son's wife had changed and decreased. Similar trends towards self-selection have been found in other cultures, for example West Java (Jones et al., 1994), although in some societies, change has been slower; Audinarayana and Uma (1991) found that in Southern India, arranged marriages were still the norm.

---

[4] Interview with Muzoon, on June 2003, in Assfan.
[5] Interview with Um Salem, on June 2003, in Assfan.

Fatimah Al-Bishri[6], a married housewife with 7 children said, *"In the criteria of choice people used to look for family reputation, but now they look at the financial position, employment, educational level and beauty in the bride."*

A. Sager[7], 58 years old and married said, *"The groom used to ask about the bride's piety and morals and she had to be his uncle's daughter. But now there are other criteria people look for in the bride, such as financial status, beauty, family lineage and piety."*

The main criterion for choosing a wife, reflecting the continuing strength of religious values, was the girl's piety; 52% and 36.4% of older and younger generation chose their wives according to that. For the older generation, the next most important criterion (30%) was the bride's family lineage, while for the younger generation (20.8%) it was the age of the bride. The continuing importance of religion as a factor in the choice of a wife is consistent with the findings of other Saudi studies, such as those of Al-Homyri (1991), Al-Johani (1996) and Al-Dajany (2000), as is the emphasis placed by the older respondents on lineage. Lineage appeared, however, to be less important to the respondents of this study, than to those of the Bedouin community described by Al-Johani, who made it their first priority. Interestingly, despite the increased participation in education by both sexes, little more importance was attached to education as a criterion in spouse selection, by younger respondents than by the older generation. This finding contrast sharply with that of Al-Dajany (2000), who found that almost two thirds of his sample wanted an educated wife, however, this can be attributed to the less chances of education in the past in Assfan.

Another consideration in the choice of a wife is a continuing preference for cross-cousin

---

[6] Interview with Fatimah Al-Bishri, on June 2003, in Assfan
[7] Interview with A. Sager, on June 2003, in Assfan.

marriage, which was said to be prevalent by 81% of the older and 66.2% of the younger respondents. The findings suggest that support for cross-cousin marriage is still strong, although it is practised less than formerly; a situation also noted by Abduljabar (1983), Al-Saif (1990), Al-Eryani (1994) and Al-Johani (1996).

Cross-cousin marriage is still practised in Assfan as a way of keeping the two brothers' families together. This is a common practice in the Middle East (Simon et al., 1996) and serves, among other functions, to maintain property within the kinship group. Generations of close-kin marriage create dense social ties for the community, the members of whom become related to one another by overlapping patrilineal, matrilateral, and marriage bounds.

8.2.3. *Mahr*

Sixty eight percent of the old generation answered that a high level of bridal gift was uncommon in Assfan, while the majority (59.7%) of the younger generation thought otherwise, suggesting that the amount of the *mahr* may be increasing.

Muzoon, said, *"My dowry was very simple, about 1,000 Saudi Riyals, which is very different from today's dowries, which can sometimes be up to 35,000 Saudi Riyals."*

Moreover, Fatimah Al-Bishri, said, *"My bridal gift was very simple, such as a watch, clothes, a little gold; all this was provided by the groom and his family."*

Although Abduljabar (1983) found the amount of *mahr* paid to be less in rural than in urban communities, a trend towards a large *mahr* was reported by Al-Obidi and Al-Khleefah (1992). In this respect, the experience of Saudi Arabia seems to be consistent with what has been reported in the Arab world.

Dergham (2001), for example, reported that such changes have found their way into Upper Egypt. Whereas, thirty years ago, the bridal gift (*Mahr*) was 30 LE. now it is

1,500 LE. Dergham found that the groom paid 100 Egyptian pounds in cash, as well as buying "*El-Shabka*" which consisted of a gold *kholkhal* anklet, rings and a thin necklace. This is as well consistent with Rao (1993) study in India.

Such expenditure, despite the higher incomes brought by new job opportunities (see section 8.3) would still be a heavy burden on the groom, increasing the importance of any assistance available from family and friends, discussed in section 8.2.5.

The younger generation thus face heavy commitments in preparing for marriage, such as the large *mahr* demanded by brides' families, as well as the cost of meeting these modern bride's expectations for an expensive dress, a large quantity of jewellery, and a separate house.

8.2.4. Adornment of the Bride

The custom of adorning the bride was still observed in the community. The majority (89% of young and 65.3% of old) affirmed the observation of this custom in Assfan village, implying a high level of continuity in the preservation of this custom. The younger generation have addressed adornment of the bride more than the older generation as they get in more contact with other communities and societies, and have an easy access to mass media.

Abduljabar (1983) reported the adornment of the bride in his study. He said the bride in the village community was hennaed two days before the wedding, by a married lady from among her relatives, who should preferably not be widowed, divorced nor unhappily married. Some ladies sing, while the henna is applied to the bride.

The same practice was described by Jennings (1995). She found that the night before the wedding is called *leylet el-henna* (*Henna* night). On the morning of the wedding day, both the groom and the bride, along with their respective bridal parties, go to the

hairdresser. Before the coiffure, however, the bride is bathed, hennaed and depilated in her own home. She sits first in a room in which incense burns over a low fire, while a paste of milk, eggs, and a finely ground, cornmeal-like substance is massaged upon her face and body. This procedure opens the pores and sloughs off dead skin, making the body smooth and soft. Next, she is washed with warm water, and her bodily hair is removed with a mixture of sugar, water, and lemon. This mixture is put on while it is warm and left on until it becomes viscous. Then the hairs are pulled off in a painful but effective manner; body hair is considered repugnant to a newly married couple. Her friends draw designs upon her hands and arms and feet and legs with the henna.

The bride and some of her friends go to the hairdresser to have their hair washed and styled and their faces made up with a variety of cosmetics. At the hairdresser's, her friends help her put on the white, Western-style wedding dress in which she will sit, silent and expressionless.

The adornment of the bride in Assfan is common, but nowadays takes a form more like that in the urban areas. After the family of the bride receive the dowry from the groom's family they start to get the bride ready for her wedding. First of all, they go to one of the biggest jewellery centres in Jeddah or Makkah to buy the latest models of rings, earrings, bracelets or necklaces, made of gold and gemstones. Usually, they spend around two thirds of the dowry amount. After that, they go to a dressmaker to choose a dress, usually in a pink colour, which the bride will wear on an evening two or three days before the wedding, called *altagdeemah*, when a dinner is given by the groom for his bride. On this night, the groom brings to his prospective in-laws a number of sheep (between five to eight), a few bags of rice, sugar, tea, coffee and cardamoms, and sometimes some boxes of fruit and vegetables. The party is for women only. Invitations are sent by the bride's mother, one or two weeks in advance, to the village's women and relatives in other villages. The bride buys a white, Western-style dress for the actual

wedding. This costs between 2,000-5,000 SR., but will be worn once only and after that will hang in the wardrobe. On the night before the wedding, the bride will call a lady to henna her. This lady can be from the village or from an urban centre, but will be a professional. She paints the bride's hands, arms, and feet, with some stylish design. The cost is between 200-500 SR. for the bride and between 100-300 SR. for the bride's sisters and relatives. Early in the evening of the wedding night, the bride goes to a hairdresser, usually in *Qasr Al-Afrah* (the wedding hall), who coiffeurs the bride's hair in a modern style and makes up her face with the preferred cosmetics. This preparation can take up to three or four hours. Usually, after the late evening prayer, when most of the invitees have arrived, the bride comes out to the female guests and ascends the dais and sits. It can be seen that adornment of the bride in the past was the tradition of the community, but nowadays, it reflects a mixture between the tradition of the village and the ways of modern society. This is a result of the influence of the mass media in the village's daily life and of the contact between the rural areas and the urban centres.

The comment of interviews on this subject showed consistency with descriptions in the literature, and continuity between the generations, in certain details, such as the wearing of a new dress, and the use of henna. However, they indicated that the modern style of adornment was more elaborate than in the past, reflecting a generally more complex and affluent lifestyle. For example, Marzzokah[8], 55 years old and a housewife said, *"Adorning the bride was very simple. The bride wore a new dress, made by herself and some simple and traditional make up such as kohl, because life was so easy, there were not many things to have or to wear."*

Um Salem similarly described the simplicity of the bride's adornment in her younger days, contrasting it with the modern practice. She said, *"The bride was adorned by*

---

[8] Interview with Marzzokah, on June 2003, in Assfan.

wearing a new dress and putting some henna on her hands and feet, and she wore a face cover called (Burqu). However, the custom of adorning the bride has changed nowadays, from the past. The bride wears a white dress, some suitable accessories, make up, styles her hair in a modern style and decorates her hands and feet with henna."

8.2.5. The Assistance Given to the Groom on his Wedding by his Relatives, Friends and Guests

The majority (93.5% of young and 95.3% of old) said the practice of giving assistance to the groom on his wedding is still prevalent in the village community.

In terms of the type of assistance, the largest group (61.8 % of young and 67.9% of old) of the sample said that money was the main form of assistance for the groom on his wedding. Furniture was least often given among the old generation by (13.6%), and gifts were least frequently cited by the young generation (14.6%).

Usually, assistance comes in the form of money to help the groom towards paying back some of his debt, because usually, people in Assfan hire a wedding hall, buy animals for slaughter, and some other requirements for the wedding party; and pay for all these after receiving people's financial contributions. When the groom receives such assistance, it gives him a good chance to pay back all or most of the debt incurred in arranging the wedding.

In the respect, Faraj[9], a 58 year old driver with 9 children said, *"The assistance to the groom on his wedding took the form of cattle; every seven guests brought with them a sheep to be slaughtered and provided for the people to eat. However, at the present time*

---

[9] Interview with Faraj, on December 1998, in Almukyta.

the assistance comes in money form. The guests put the money in an envelope and give it to the groom with words of congratulation. The amount varies according to the relationship between the guests and the groom; relatives give more than others. "

When Al-Yubi[10], 49 years old with 7 children, a private sector employee, was asked about the assistance for the groom on his wedding, he said, *"The assistance which was presented to the groom was in the form of cattle, or money, called Rifdah, as a gift or a loan which he had to pay back after the wedding. Sometimes the guests brought clothes, furniture, pots and so on. But in the current time most of the invitees give the groom their assistance in money form, which varies between 50-100 Saudi Riyals per person and they call it Alwajeb. Some people give electrical appliances, bedroom furniture or kitchen goods. "*

Moreover, Atteah[11], 70 years old, married and unemployed, mentioned the assistance for the groom on his wedding and said, *"It was in the form of coffee, sugar and cardamom. But at the present time it is given in money form, or some furniture for the home as a gift from relatives and friends. "*

The practice of providing material assistance to a family member on the occasion of his marriage is consistent with earlier reports by Antoun (1972) and Abduljabar (1983) suggesting a high level of continuity in this practice.

This evidence of solidarity in major life events suggests that the weakening of social relationships reported by Al-Saif (1990) and Ireson (1996) is far from complete. The reason for the difference may arise because Assfan is less urbanised than Unayzah, a city which attracts people of different origins, which makes them less co-operative with

---

[10] Interview with Al-Yubi, on June 2003, In Assfan.
[11] Interview with Atteah, on October 1998, in Almukyta.

each other. In Assfan, most people are from the same tribe.

The continued practice of giving assistance on marriage may also, similarly to the assistance given to needy relatives, reported by Al-Johani (1996) be attributable to the influence of Islamic values of cooperation.

8.2.6. Wedding Celebrations

When asked where marriages were held, the majority (86%) of the older generation replied that they held their wedding parties and celebrations in their family houses, but most (92.2%) of the young generation replied that they held their parties in wedding halls either in Assfan or outside the village. This finding is consistent with trends observed in other regions of Saudi Arabia by, for example, Asseri (1991), Alomari (1993) and Al-Dajany (2000).

The wedding halls are designed to provide separate, totally segregated facilities for males and females. This strict adherence to Islamic tradition, despite the trend to using public buildings, is typical of Arab communities; a similar practice was observed by Dergham (2001) in Upper Egypt; two separate places were designated, one for women and the other for men. The two sexes were not allowed to mix together. The groom sat with the invitees and his future father in law and the bride sat with the women. Each enjoyed themselves in their own ways.

A modern trend observed in the present study is the increasing extravagance and ostentation in wedding celebrations. There were significant differences between the respondents' age groups in their reports of this phenomenon, which was commonly reported in the replies in the young group (85.1%), whereas 87.3% of the older group replied that extravagance was uncommon in Assfan in their day. In this respect, the findings are consistent with the comments of Al-Obidi and Al-Khleefah (1992) and

Kutubkhanah and Al-Kholi (1992).

The extravagance in wedding celebration is a heavy burden on younger men. Custom demands that they invite many people which means the groom has to hire a big place for them, such as the wedding hall. He is also expected to provide a certain type of food to honour his guests, for example a plate full of rice topped by a quarter of a lamb for each four to five people, which means sometimes thirty or forty lambs are slaughtered for one party. The researcher observed such extravagance in weddings. Much of this food is not eaten and has to be thrown away, yet it would be considered mean and shameful not to provide it. All this it has to be paid for by the young people, to meet social expectations.

The majority (88.3% of young and 89% of old) of the sample were of the view that the wedding customs in the village have changed from what they were in the past life of Assfan's people. New customs are being introduced to the village, such as sending invitation cards, putting decorations in the groom's car, or sometimes hiring a luxury car for that night or a short period of time, and some grooms go on a honey-moon outside Assfan.

8.3. Economic Life

Changes in the village economy, and specifically the labour market, were explored through investigation of the following:

1-The work opportunities which are available for the village's inhabitants;

2-The fields of work in which Assfan's people are engaged;

3-Whether women work in the village or outside;

4-The presence of foreign workers in the village, their places of origin, the main kinds of jobs which they perform, and their perceived level of skill;

5-Businesses run by Assfans people;

6-The emigration of the villagers.

8-3-1-The work opportunities which are available for the village's inhabitants;

In the light of the Sixth Plan strategy, the labour market objectives are:

(a) to replace non-Saudis by appropriately qualified Saudis in a gradually progressive manner in all occupations and economic sectors;

(b) to rationalise the growth of the non-Saudi labour force in all occupations and economic sectors;

(c) to provide job opportunities for all Saudi new entrants to the labour market, mainly in the private sector;

(d) to increase job opportunities for women in conformity with Islamic Sharia;

(e) to increase the number of graduates with skills and qualifications consistent with the requirements of the national economy;

(f) to reduce the number of unskilled Saudis entering the labour market before completing their education and training;

(g) to develop labour market services, including appropriate statistical information services.

With the virtual completion of the physical infrastructure, concentration in recent years has shifted towards the operation and maintenance of the existing facilities using skilled and semi-skilled non-Saudi workers. At the same time, there has been the rapidly rising demand for unskilled non-Saudi workers in the community and personal services sector. Continuous recruitment of non-Saudi workers will increase the difficulties in finding such jobs for poorly qualified Saudi workers, who make up such a high proportion of new entrants to the labour market.

In Assfan, as in other societies in developing countries such as Gambia (Akinboade, 1994) there is evidence of a shift away from the land in search of formal sector jobs. As a result of the Saudi government policies on training and recruitment, however, Assfan's villagers had less difficulty finding such jobs than is reported by Akinboade. Nevertheless, this often necessitated travelling to neighbouring towns and villages, or to the city, and only a minority, particularly among the young, were employed in Assfan itself.

A similar minority of the population had secondary occupations. Most younger men in the village were in regular paid employment or self-employed, and a small minority had a second occupation. Public sector employees are officially not allowed to have another occupation or business, which might detract from their performance of their public duties, but some inhabitants have informal secondary occupations as drivers, farmers or salesmen, for example. Some managed this by having a formal day-time job and engaging in their second occupation in the evenings or at weekends. Other employed foreign workers to manage their businesses while they worked elsewhere.

A popular secondary occupation among young people was driving. At the end of the working day, they would gather in a station to take passengers from and to Assfan by taxi or buses. Such services were in high demand for driving in the Hajj season, when more than two million people come to visit the two holy cities. Assfan's location 75km north of Makkah along the old road leading to Madinah, provides good opportunities for the inhabitants to supplement their incomes by arranging trips to the holy sites and providing refreshments for travellers.

Reasons for engaging in a secondary occupation varied. Some people were in low paid jobs and took extra work to improve their income.

Secondary occupations are practised in Egypt as well. MacLeod (1996) found that men often work in one job from about eight to two and then take a second job until about eight in the evening, in order to afford a better standard of living for their families.

As Assfan is the homeland for the majority of the people in the village, and they own the land, some 27.8% of the older generation still did some farming in the village as a second occupation. Establishing a farm business in Assfan not easy, for various reasons: the drying-up of well; as a result of drought throughout the country; the high cost of production and the low return, and the competition from overseas products. Some of the people practised seasonal farming, which depends totally on rainwater growing crops such as melon or watermelon, and others depends on wells irrigation growing dates, and some type of fruit and vegetables. Land still has a social value in the tribal society, and to leave land empty or sell it is considered shameful for the tribe or the owner.

8.3.2.The Fields of Work in which Assfan's People are Engaged

Preference of Work

Preferred Jobs for Men

A large percentage (33.1%) of the study sample said the preferred job for men was teaching, due to the good pay in this sector and the long holidays, amounting to around two months per year. This was followed by clerical and administrative jobs which represented (31.1%) of the study sample, and after that, work in the military (20.4%). These three fields of work represented the main jobs which are performed by the villagers from Assfan. There were some opportunities in these fields inside the village, because of the establishment of government agencies such as schools, the post office, the *Emirate*, the police station, and the health care centre. However, these work places could not accommodate all the villagers, so others work outside Assfan, either in surrounding villages or in urban centres as Makkah or Jeddah.

As result of insufficient job openings in the village, villagers can be engaged in similar occupations, but somewhere else rather than the village.

Preferred Jobs for Women

Teaching was the preferred job for women, because it does not require them to mix with men, since the government follows a policy of the segregation in education. They are also attracted by the good pay and short working hours. Health care was also favoured, but clerical and administrative jobs were least preferred.

Many women in Assfan, having completed university or college courses leading to a teaching qualification, stayed at home, either because of domestic responsibilities or to wait until they were allocated a teaching position, which can take up to three years, as result of the long waiting list.

Of the few villagers who ran their own businesses in the village, older people tended to be engaged in agriculture, because of the availability of land in Assfan or in the surrounding areas, the help of the government for farmers by giving them interest-free loans, and the availability of labourers. However, younger people tended to set up in commercial businesses for which Assfan is favourably situated; it has come to be considered as a commercial centre for the area. There was, however, a marked decline in interest in keeping livestock, which does not bring much profit, since it is very costly to buy water and forage for livestock and employ a herder. Young people especially like to invest where they can find a high income and quick return, which can be found in commercial business. This situation contrasts with earlier findings, such as Antoun's (1972) study. He found 39 per cent of population of Kufr al-Ma village were working in agriculture.

A similar trend away from a pastoral economy was recorded by Lancaster (1997) in his study of the Rwala Bedouin. He found that the Rwala economy had originally been based on camels, but after the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia and the drought in the country, the situation changed. Some people found work in the oil companies, and some of them in the National Guard. The opportunities in industry in the early 1960s would have been greater, but the majority of the Rwala were illiterate. This confined them to seeking jobs as unskilled labourers, drivers or guards in the oil companies or the lower non-commissioned ranks in the armed services.

Al-Yubi in this respect said, *"The men used to work in agriculture, herding livestock and a few in business, and some worked with companies which built up the roads in the area and Jeddah airport. Some of them in Ramadan and Hajj seasons set up business on Assfan's main road. Women used to herd livestock, tailor clothes, prepare ghee and sell eggs. Children helped their parents in the field and in the Ramadan and Hajj seasons, sold drinks to the pilgrims.*

However, in the current time the men work in the governmental or private sector. Some of them do not work as a result of the unavailability of suitable work or because they do not have a qualification. Women work in teaching and a few of them in nursing and some do not work because there are no available positions in the education sector and some of them prefer to be housewives to take care of their family. Moreover, children do not work these days."

A Sager said, "Men used to work in agriculture and in the handcraft jobs, and the women used to herd the livestock and bring water from nearby wells for daily use. A few people used to work in companies. People's aspirations towards work have changed from the past. Nowadays they hope to be employed with the government. Moreover, education has helped them to achieve their desires."

The majority (71.4% and 66%) of younger and older generations in this study did not employ any labourers in their businesses, relying on their own efforts, albeit sometimes part-time. Of those who did employ others, the majority employed 1 to 4 workers, reflecting the small scale of these businesses. Older people tended to employ more workers, perhaps because their businesses were more established. Also, more of them were involved in agriculture and fewer in commerce, compared with younger respondents, so their business was more labour-intensive. A few employers employed 9 workers or more, as a basis for a business which could extend from Assfan to other villages or the nearby cities. For example, owners had water tanks, and made daily deliveries of water from Assfan or nearby villages to Jeddah, where there was heavy demand for it.

As Assfan becomes more urbanised people have started to establish commercial or industrial business to meet local demand. There are more than sixty restaurants and food shops, and more than one hundred and forty service shops. However, most of these type of businesses are run by employees, mainly from outside.

The progress of education in the villages has clearly influenced the trend of off-farm employment. Eben Saleh (1999), describing this trend in Southwest Saudi Arabia, reports that in the past, employment for young people was available by obtaining some education. All young adults who had obtained at least six years of schooling were able to find full employment in the government bureaucracy and the military as clerks, officers, and soldiers. Those who obtained more education, 9-12 years of schooling or higher, however, were able to land even better paying jobs as teachers and administrative officials. As it became apparent that formal education paid dividends for families who invested in it, villagers become more committed to their children's education (Eben Saleh ,1999).

This effect has been heightened by the success of state efforts to build up its apparatus. Its bureaucracy and military forces have been attractive for young-adult rural males (Al-Awaji, 1989).

Although the trend to off-farm employment began in the Saudi villages in the late 1950s, its full impact was not felt until after national oil revenues surged in 1973. This was when the Saudi government began to pursue a full range of growth strategies at the national and regional levels. Among other activities, it expanded its bureaucracy and engaged in wide-scale infrastructure construction. It also attempted to institute a policy of full employment for Saudi males in the service sector, both in urban and rural areas, regardless of education credentials (Eben Saleh, 1999).

Another important factor in the shift to off-farm employment has been the decline in female participation in out-of-home economic activities. Only adult females in the most marginal of households work outside the house. Those are generally older females working as doorwomen and servants in local girls' schools and the health dispensary. They also include the female elementary schools teachers. There is no further female participation in farming activities.

8.3.3. Whether Women Work in the Village or Outside

Islam is the religion of Saudi Arabia, and since most of the characteristics of the Saudi society reflect it, Islam has more influence on the lives of the people in Saudi Arabia than in any of the other Islamic countries (Walpole et al., 1971).

Islam for Saudi people is not only a religion but also a complete way of life, so Islamic teachings direct all activities and relationships, social, economic and political (Berger, 1964).

Women in Islam have the right, to learn, work, or have their own business, so long as this does not compromise their femininity or clash with their duties at home and towards their husbands and children (Al-Munajjed, 1997). If work will lead to a woman neglecting her family, she must stay home and take care of her family, because in Islam, it is the husband who is responsible for supporting the family. He is obligated to support his family economically, whereas for the wife, it is optional.

This division of gender roles is observed throughout the Islamic world. For example, Singerman and Hoodfar (1996), in their study about development, change and gender in Cairo, found that the husband is the primary breadwinner for the family, responsible for paying the rent and household expenses. Traditional married women manage the household, care for the children, and budget the allowance that their husbands provide

to meet all the household needs, including household supplies, food clothing, and children's school supplies.

When Islam allows women to work, it emphasises that the workplace should be suitable for them, in the sense that they should work in places separated from men (Al-Munajjed, 1997), and in occupations which are considered suitable, such as teaching or nursing, and not in jobs that need physical strength, such as construction (Jamal, 1981). The participation of women in the labour market marks a major change in the traditional role of women in Saudi Arabia. The need for self-recognition and a desire for personal and financial independence has arisen among educated Saudi women and paved the way for their participation in the labour force. The evolution of the economic situation, including the continuous process of urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation in the country, has also introduced new employment opportunities for Saudi women. Women's participation in the economy is increased by the government policy of reducing reliance on foreign workers and developing a Saudi workforce by encouraging the participation of Saudi nationals in all sectors of the economy. The 'Saudisation' of the public and private sectors involves a higher level of participation by female as well as male Saudis.

These changes were reflected in the findings from Assfans related to both attitudes and practice. For example, it was found that more than half (54%) of the respondents had positive attitudes regarding women working outside the home. However, this can be attributed to more than one reason; to the qualification which they have got, to the need to supplement the family' income, and to mixing with different people from different cultures as a result of the influence of foreign workers. Similar trends towards acceptance of women's participation in the workforce have been reported in other societies.

In this respect Faraj said, _"Woman used to work outside the house, herding livestock, gathering firewood and bringing water for daily use, and their work outside the house was acceptable in society as a necessity of life. However, women now work outside the house only in certain jobs, such as teaching in girls' schools, where there is no mixing."_

Muzoon said, _"Women used to work outside the house in suitable jobs such as herding animals, making bayt al-sha'ar and khaima (tents woven of wool) and selling them, but now women work in teaching, medical care, completing higher education."_

M.Al-Asmi said on this subject, _"Women used to work outside the house in their husband and children's company; they worked on their farm and took care of their livestock. However, a few of them now work in teaching."_

In Egypt, according to Singerman and Hoodfar (1996), while traditionally men considered it shameful for their wives to work outside, nowadays this is less true, since educated women are considered desirable candidates for marriage, and are needed to work and support their families.

In Kweminyasa, a mountain village in eastern Tanzania, Sender and Smith (1990) observed that during the mid-1980s male interests were directed at protecting women from having to work outside the home. Ten years or more later, women were encouraged by their husbands to earn income (Jambiya, 1998).

The majority (57.1% and 69.3%) of younger and older respondents, respectively, indicated that it was common for women to work outside the home. Women, besides their roles as housewives, used to help in the field by harvesting or by taking care of the livestock. Nowadays women are engaged in some professional occupations as in

teaching, health care, or clerical occupations beside their main role at the home. Nevertheless, the term "common" is relative; participation of women is still low by comparison with Western countries.

According to the Fifth Year Development Plan, from 1989-90 the Saudi female participation rate in the civilian sectors reached 5.3 per cent, compared with 54.4 per cent for males.

In contrast, Vogler and Pahl (1993), in their article about the participation of women in the labour market in Britain, found that between 1971 and 1986, the proportion of women in the employed labour force rose from 38 per cent to 45 per cent.

One reason for the low participation of Saudi women could be the lack of work opportunities sufficiently close to their homes. According to 65% of the study sample, no jobs were available for women in Assfan village, which means they had to choose whether to stay at home or to find a job outside the village. The latter option would present practical difficulties, as they would have to be chauffeured to work. Moreover, the extension of the working day as a result of time spent travelling would make it more difficult to observe the requirement that work should not interfere with household responsibilities.

For those Assfan women who found work outside the village, most worked in teaching and the rest in health care. This is consistent with Islamic ideas on women's role, and a similar domination of the education and health sectors has been reported by other Saudi researchers. About this Khdijah[12], a 52 year old, married housewife said, *"Women used to work outside the house, in jobs that did not conflict with their modesty and went out well dressed; that was acceptable in the society as the family needs required it at that time. At present women go to work outside the house as well; but in*

---

[12] Interview with Khdijah, on June 2003, in Assfan.

paid governmental jobs such as teaching in girls' schools, which is acceptable in society as well."

According to Al-Munajjed (1997), the field of education presents a large number of job opportunities for Saudi women. It is estimated that more than 62 per cent of working women in Saudi Arabia are in teaching. Women's universities in additional present another opportunities for educated women to be employed, either as teachers or in the administration. The Ministry of Health is another sector that employs women. However, the percentage of Saudi women entering the health professions, as doctors, nurses, midwives and hospital administrators, is relatively low compared to education.

In a study by Hamdi and Al-Hidar (1996) concerning the factors that influence Saudi girls in choosing the nursing profession, it was found that only a very small percentage (8.2%) of nurses are Saudis. However, the writers mentioned some factors which they considered as an obstacles to Saudi girls becoming nurses: transportation, long working hours, and the negative attitude of society, as this job may result in contact between males and females. However, the study also revealed changing attitudes toward the nursing profession in the Saudi society, since 58.18% of the study sample - in Jeddah city- said they wished to study nursing in the future. (Hamdi and Al-Hidar, 1996).

Al-Torki and Cole (1991) found about that the majority of women in the city of Unayzah worked in teaching, then in health care.

Thus, despite Roy's (1992) claim that educated Saudi women are demanding a wider range of occupational choice, the jobs favoured by Assfan women, like those reported elsewhere in the Kingdom, reflect traditional conceptions of femininity. The preservation of such values distinguishes Saudi Arabia from non-Islamic societies. In Vietnam, for example, it is reported (Quy, 1996) that 72.8% of women work in agriculture, forestry, and fishery; most of them do arduous manual labour.

The traditional priority of family and home in the values of Saudi women was also reflected in the responses obtained regarding the motivation for women in Assfan to work outside the home. The main reasons given for women working outside the home, were to help their husbands by supplementing the family income, or to help their parents.

8.3.4.The Presence of Foreign Workers in the Village, their Places of Origin, the Main Kinds of Jobs which they Perform, and their Perceived Level of Skill

The majority (77.1%) of respondents reported that outsiders came to work in Assfan in various types of jobs. Moreover, the majority (61.8%) said that people who came to work in the village were foreign workers, who were attracted to Saudi Arabia because they could earn higher wages than in their home countries. They were engaged in some activities where there was a shortage of the Saudi manpower or in jobs which were not taken up by Saudis because they did not find them acceptable.

Much of the human migratory flow in the Middle East has been stimulated by economic considerations, the primary motivation being the opportunity to work and to earn better wages. (Halliday, 1984). For this reason, the oil-rich states in the Arabian Gulf have become leading sources of employment in the past 40 years. As the fastest growing economy in the area, Saudi Arabia becomes the magnet for much of the migration of labour in the region. The economy of Saudi Arabia was staffed almost exclusively by immigrants. This reliance on migrant labour continued into the 1980s, when an estimated three million workers, or seventy-five per cent of the total of Saudi Arabia workforce, were from outside the country. (Sassen, 1988)

Yemeni participation in the Saudi Arabian economy, for example, expanded dramatically as a result of the enormous wealth generated by the oil revenues, and the government's import of labour to fill numerous positions in construction and services. Before 1970, 240,000 Yemeni workers had migrated to Saudi Arabia. By 1986, the figure had soared to at least 1.2 million. In 1990, the estimated number of Yemeni migrants had dropped to around one million workers (Graz, 1991).

As Assfan saw opportunities to establish some types of businesses, people were needed to run them and many are operated by foreign workers. Local people do not want to do so because of the low pay for such work, and the negative attitude toward vocational education, since it is considered shameful in a tribal society to work in "low-class" jobs. This negative attitude towards vocational work is mentioned by Al-Asmari (2001), who found that industrial and vocational work in Saudi society is still considered undesirable, as a result of socio-cultural and economic factors. Consistent with this view, interviews reported the contribution of foreign workers, predominantly in manual work.

Abduallah Al-Bishri[13], a 62 years old shopkeeper said, *"In the past, there were few foreigners in Assfan. Most of them performed services and maintenance for trucks and machinery. Moreover, they are still in the village and they perform more different types of jobs such as selling and buying, blacksmith, carpentry, or sales."*

However, others seemed to think that foreign workers are more visible in society nowadays and, moreover, indicated their involvement in a wider range of occupations. For example, M. Al-Homrani[14], a 63 years old and retired, said, *"There were no*

---

[13] Interview with Abduallah Al-Bishr, on December 1998, in Assfan.
[14] Interview with M. Al-Homrani, on June 2003, in Assfan.

foreigners in Assfan but there are at the current time and they are engaged in different types of work such as in garages or as builders."

Fatimah Al-Bishri said, *"There are foreign workers in Assfan nowadays, of various nationalities, and they work in agriculture, livestock herding, in garages, in petrol stations, electricians, and some in pharmacies."*

Regarding the skills of the foreign workers, there were different opinions between the two generations. The majority (65.3%) of the elderly said that foreign workers are skilled while the majority (54.5%) of the younger group said that the foreign workers are not skilled. These differences can be attributed to the greater need for those workers 30 years ago than in the current time. In the past, when workers were needed in some areas such as mechanics, construction and so on, they could not be judged by the Saudis themselves because of their lack of experience and qualifications, but at the present time it can be said that the Saudis have more experience and are more qualified than before. Thus, there may be less need to import skilled workers from abroad. At the same time, fewer skilled workers may be imported to undertake jobs that are disdained by local people.

These undesirable jobs are occupied by foreign workers, who will accept such jobs for less money, as result of their background, since most of them came from poor countries with low education standards.

The findings of this study, in this respect, are consistent with Hoodfar's (1996) report of a massive international migration of the semiskilled and unskilled and less-educated labour to the Arab oil-producing countries.

Nevertheless, it is clearly unsatisfactory to rely on expatriates while Saudis are unemployed or underemployed, and the policy of Saudisation is proceeding with

renewed vigour, given the economic slowdown and despite any inimical effect it may be having on the ability to maintain production and performance standards. (Roy, 1992)

8.3.5.Businesses Run by Assfan's People

When activities in the village were ranked according to importance for people in Assfan, commercial activity came first (38.2%) from the respondents' answers, Assfan's near to urban centres, the high road between Makkah and Madinah, provides favourable opportunities for such activity. Moreover, the government gives much support to such activities. Agricultural activity was ranked second, as Assfan village is located as valley which is suitable for agriculture, attracting some businessmen who come to invest in this sector in the village. Light industry ranked in third place. The village has started to move in line government policy by shifting to the commercial and industrial sectors. In the last position came pastoral activity. This low ranking can be attributed to the change in the lifestyle of villagers toward urbanisation, and to the high cost of keeping livestock.

Interviewees described the changing trend in business in Assfan, from agriculture and small scale of local produce, to an increasingly varied and sophisticated range of commercial activities.

A. Al-Homrani[15], a 58 years old and unemployed said, *"The businesses in Assfan used to be selling dates, water supply, and selling and buying livestock. However, in the present time, the businesses are in the form of commercial businesses such as grocery business and barber shops. "*

Al-Yubi in this respect said, *"Businesses in Assfan used to be things like herding, agriculture, and selling foodstuffs. However, businesses have changed to investment in*

---

[15] Interview with A.Al-Homrani, on June 2003, in Assfan.

property, petrol station, spare parts shops, restaurants and cafes, clothes shops, building materials shops."

Atteat allah[16], a 62 years old, unemployed and married with 8 children said, *"Businesses used to be very small and simple businesses such as selling foodstuffs which people brought from local farms, and selling firewood, which used to be a source of income for a lot of people from Assfan and the surrounding villages".*

However, businesses in Assfan nowadays are various, such as selling foodstuffs, green grocery shops, garages, spare parts shops, and repairing electrical appliances."

8.3.6. The Emigration of the Villagers

There was a difference between the two generations in opinions regarding emigration from the village. In the past, not many people emigrated from villages to nearby cities, because it was considered shameful to leave the family or the tribes' homeland and because rural and tribal people disliked urban life.

However, as villagers become more educated and have more contact with others, especially in nearby cities, and with less availability of local work opportunities, the trend to migrate from the village has increased.

It was found that the younger people are the most likely to want to seek jobs outside the village, because of lack of jobs for them in the village and the better standard of living they will be able to afford with a well paid and secure job. In the meantime the elderly are more likely to want to remain settled in the village, close to their relatives, families and property.

---

[16] Interview with Atteat allah, on June 2003, in Assfan.

These findings are consistent with a trend noted by Eben Saleh (1999), who argued that one of the most telling aspects of the transformation of the village community in the last 30 years has been the alteration of migration patterns. At one time, it was the pattern for each household to send one or more of its adult male members to the towns of *Hijaz* (Western Region of Saudi Arabia) to earn enough in wages to buy production and subsistence essentials.

Now, however, as household providers are able to obtain full employment with the state in national urban and regional centres, the old pattern of temporary male labour migration has been abandoned for long-term and semi-permanent migration by whole families (Eben Saleh, 1999).

While some migrants still return, using migration as a means of supplementing household subsistence, many never return. For them migration is viewed as a way to realise better life chances elsewhere (Eben Saleh, 1999).

Similar trends have been reported in other rural communities. As Helmut Weber (1994) found in the study in Minahasa, Indonesia, that there was a level of out-migration to the city life from the village. There was a rapidly decline in the attraction of village life among the younger people, who have increasingly urban oriented aspirations, as a result of encounters with the external world, either in the form of personal experiences such as visits or long-term stays in the urban centres to continue school or college education or by the imported images of an alternative life-style brought by the mass-media.

In Nigeria, the oil boom was a vital factor in the acceleration of rural-urban migration. Rising urban wages, cheap food policies, and a boom in urban investment were accompanied by a serious neglect of peasant agriculture (Meagher,1997).

The government in the Gambia put some strategies for preventing unemployment and stemming rural-urban migration by improving the socio-economic conditions and

opportunities for the rural people, and improvement of the economic conditions of the poorest segment of the population by providing income generating activities (Akinboade, 1994).

The policymakers in the Saudi government recognised the problem of migration of younger people from rural to urban areas. Therefore, some governmental and service institutions have been introduced to Assfan village to provide a good standard of living for rural people. Electricity, health services, the postal service, educational institutions, and opportunities for employment, have all helped people to stay in the village.

8.4. Observance of Religious Duties

Islam is the religion of Saudi Arabia and no other religion is formally practised in the country. With development in the country, religion has not been changed. The people still adhere to Islam and apply its teachings to all aspects of their lives. In the Saudi society, all systems, economic, social, educational, and political, operate according to the teachings of Islam. It is the force that controls people's actions and transactions in the society. Everything in the country must be adapted to Islam, and the government exerts every effort to protect Islamic values. Furthermore, because of these strong feelings, all development plans in the country are designed to be in congruence with the religion as much as possible, as indicated in the government's Five-Year Development Plan. (Ministry of Planning, 1995.)

Islam does not contradict or oppose social change and development as long as human improvement will be achieved and equality and justice will be assured. So the objective of development in Islam, as Qutb (1977) mentioned, must be the achievement and growth of the people in several directions. Development in Islam must be intended to increase and improve the well-being of all sectors in the society within the framework of Islam.

(1979) mentioned economic improvement according to the Islamic values of equality and justice when distributing income, and assuring good social welfare and freedom. In addition, within any kind of development, human rights must be preserved in the first place so people can enjoy the outcome of development.

In view of the Islamic perspective on development and the determination of the government that modernisation in the country should not be at the expense of Islamic values, it was of interest to observe whether the observance of religious duties had changed in Assfan, in parallel with other changes.

The perpetuation or otherwise of religious values was explored in terms of:

1-The continuity of performance of religious duties, such as prayers in the village mosques;

2-Celebration of religious festivals;

3-What help is provided by Assfan's people to the needy in society.

8.4.1. The Continuity of Performance of Religious Duties, such as Prayers in the Village Mosques

The majority (75.5% and 52.7%) respectively of younger and elderly groups said that people still practise and perform religious duties such as prayers in the mosques, and this can be attributed to the devotion to following the Islamic religion by villagers in Assfan.

Islam encourages people to perform their prayers at the mosque, in a congregation. Such performance benefits the villagers, in several spheres of life. People meet five times a day and this creates mutual love, understanding and unity, as they look after each other. Moreover, congregation is emphasised in Friday prayer, the two *Eid* prayers, the *Tarawih* prayer in *Ramadan*, the funeral prayer, the prayer for rain, and the eclipse

prayer. Thus, there is contact between people in the village throughout the year (Alwaye, 1985).

It is interesting that the younger generation were more likely than the elderly, to report performing and observing prayers and attending religious performance in mosques. This may be attributed to the wide spread of mosques all over the country and in Assfan in particular, increased education and Islamic teachings in schools, and encouragement through mass media sermons for people to attend.

M. Al-Homrani in this respect said, *"People used to perform the religious duties such as prayers but individually in their homes or businesses, because there were few mosques in the village, but now people perform such religious duties in mosques and in big numbers."*

Saleh[17], a 50 year old married farmer with 6 children said, *"People performed the religious duties such as the prayers in mosques, but in mosques marked out with stones at a very low level on the ground, just the shape of a mosque. Now people do perform prayers in mosques and a few of them they do not, because they stay up at night and sleep in the daytime."* Mozoon made a similar point.

The majority of the elderly group thought that mosques are the best source of religious consciousness for the people. This is linked to the role of mosques as the first schools for the older generation. Not only were they the place for performing religious activities, but reading and writing were taught, before the existence of formal education and the mass media. The family was the second main source of religious consciousness, for this generation.

---

[17] Interview with Saleh, on June 2003, in Assfan.

According to Islam, the family is the base of the entire sociocultural structure and a self-sustaining institution which ensure ideological and cultural stability over the entire spectrum of society. It is the most fundamental element of Muslim society because it is the cradle of the individual and the vital source of societal reinforcement (Eben Saleh, 1998b).

The importance of the family has also been attested in other Islamic countries. For example, it is reported that for most Egyptians, the family remains a central and valuable institution in their everyday lives (Singerman and Hoodfar, 1996).

In the present study, however, the younger respondents attached less importance than older ones to the role of the family in religious teaching. Among this group, education in school was considered as the first (44.9%) source of religious consciousness, then mosques (25.3%), then the mass media (17.5%) and the family came last (12.3%). Mosques and schools gained this importance in educating people and are considered the best two sources of religious consciousness, because the Saudi government has paid strong attention to the religious teachings in the school curriculum and to the wide spread of mosques in the community, led by qualified people.

From this, it can be seen that there are differences between the generations in their views on the importance of various sources of religious consciousness for people in Assfan, as a result of the spread of education, the establishment of mosques with better facilities in modern design, and availability of different types of mass media sources.

Whilst there may be a difference in the media used for disseminating religious values, clearly, the importance of religion itself remains unchanged. Accordingly, people in Assfan still observe religious duties. The majority (80.7%) of the younger generation and (76.6%) of the older generation, are still gaining and seeking Islamic teachings and knowledge. This can be considered as a result of the community identity

as a Muslim community and the proximity of the holy mosques in Makkah which many people in the village visit regularly to perform an *Umrah* (little pilgrimage) at least once a year in *Ramadan*. The spread of education, meanwhile, gives them access to a wide range of books or different materials, from which they can acquaint themselves with religious teachings. Moreover, the easy access nowadays to T.V, video or audio tapes, means it is possible to hear or watch a lecture or a sermon in one's car or while having a cup of tea.

The findings are consistent with Bowen and Early's (2002) view that the family and the mosque are traditional institutions, which teach values, preserve the cultural heritage and ensure social stability, while at the same time, the society is adapting to new institutions, such as education.

Whereas there was only one mosque in the village in the past, at the present time there are thirteen mosques all around the village, which gives the people of the village a good opportunity of performing religious duties as expected. It can be noticed that a series of lectures and speeches is held in these mosques to raise the awareness of the villagers about the teachings of Islam. The mosque and mass media play a major role in people's religious life; in the case of difficulty of attending such programmes, they can be recorded and listened to at a convenient time.

Moreover, these awareness programmes are attended by both young and old people to give them good chance to keep aware of and practise the Islamic teachings according to the Holy Quran and the Prophet Mohammad's tradition.

Regarding that, Fahad[18], a 40 year old mosque Imam, married with 7 children said, *"Religious duties used to be performed by few of the people, but now with the spread of*

---

[18] Interview with Fahad, on June 2003, in Assfan.

234

knowledge and increased number of mosques in each harah there is more than one

mosque attended by a lot of young and old people. People who do not perform prayers

in mosques are few. "

8.4.2. Celebration of Religious Festivals

Two important festivals are celebrated every year in the Muslim world as a whole and

in Assfan village in particular: *Eid al-Fitr* (Breaking of the Fast Festival) and *Eid al-*

Adha (Pilgrimage Festival).

The Festival of *Eid al-Fitr*

The ceremonies at the beginning of the *Ramadan* symbolise rejoicing at the arrival of a

sacred month, which indicates devotion to *Allah* and His worship, generosity in offering

charity to the poor, and generous behaviour towards others. Those at the end are a

demonstration of pleasure and gratification at having completed the fast during that

sacred month and that *Allah* has absolved the sinners and rewarded the good, each

according to his acts. The villagers do not conceive the Festival ceremonies (*Eid al-Fitr*)

as demonstrating pleasure that the month is over, but rather, happiness at having obeyed

Allah's orders and the recommendations of the Prophet Mohammed.

Since Muslims follow lunar months, *Ramadan* may be twenty-nine or thirty days,

according to the lunar cycle. As such, its beginning and end are determined in

accordance with the knowledge of those conversant with such matters. If someone

claims that he has seen the new moon, his assertion has to be checked by his local judge

in order to know whether he is trustworthy or otherwise, and his competence must be

guaranteed by two character witnesses, known for their good reputation, who can

testify that the man who has seen the crescent is reliable.

Then the *Eid* begins the following day, which is a day of rejoicing for everyone in the

village. The children enjoy themselves on this occasion more than the adults. They are

bought toys, let off fireworks, and are given new clothes. Both sexes wear new clothes (*malabis al-eid*) bought for the occasion, or, if they cannot afford new clothes, the best ones they possess.

Men and boys go to perform the *Eid* prayer in the *Wadi* because it is considered better to perform it outdoors, as the Prophet Mohammed did (Al-Jibali, 1996). When the villagers gather in the *Wadi*, men sit in parallel lines and women desirous of attending the prayer sit about two hundred yards behind them. The Imam takes the lead. Everyone stands up as the Imam starts the prayer and follows him.

The researcher observed when the prayer's rites are finished, the villagers embrace each other saying, "Every year may you be well" (*kull am wa antum bi khair, min al-aidin al-faizin*). The other party replies, "May *Allah* make this occasion return while we and you are well" (*Allah yueyduh alaina wa alaikm be khhair*).

Afterwards everyone heads for the district where he lives, greeting everyone he meets on the way, to eat with his neighbours. After the meal, the villagers disperse to congratulate their relatives and friends in their houses, where coffee and tea are constantly served. Women and girls have the *Eid* breakfast meal separately from the men, in one house in each *harah*.

During the festival of *Eid al-Fitr*, the villagers share the responsibility for feeding each other for a period of eight days (more or less). The method is based on dividing the village into districts called *Harah*, each of which, may consist of a number of houses, which is based on how many villagers plan to kill animals for the celebrations.

Accordingly, on the first day, the right number of houses from each *harah* would sacrifice an appropriate number of sheep, cook the meat, as part of the meal, and feed the entire population of the *harah*. The following day, another group of houses would take on the responsibility, and so it would continue until the end of the festival.

When A. Al-Homrani was asked about the festivals, he said, *"Celebrations of religious festivals used to be marked by slaughtering sheep every day for three days, performing some traditional plays and listen to poets and visiting relatives. However, nowadays nothing is left of the religious festival traditions except family visits and the food. "*

Ateat allah in this respect said, *"People used to welcome the festivals with happiness, performing traditional plays (folklore), and slaughtering animals to eat in both Eids. Also, people prepared a traditional breakfast on Eid day. Each householder brought with him a traditional dish, either rice with lentils or cooked millet, and they would sit and have it together, and in the afternoon they had the big traditional dish, which is of meat and rice. "*

The Festival of Hajj

The sacrificial feast (*Eid al-Adha-* Pilgrimage Festival) is celebrated on the day the pilgrims complete the final ritual of the pilgrimage. It is a gesture of religious sympathetic participation on the part of those who have not gone on the pilgrimage. This *Eid* is celebrated on the day the pilgrims return from *Arafah* to *Mina* on the tenth of the month of *Dhul Hijjah*, the last month of the Islamic Calendar.

Such religious sympathy is not limited to the day of the *Eid*, but is demonstrated in the actions and behaviour of the villagers from the first of the month of *Dhul Hijjah*. From that day they worship Allah and request His forgiveness, just as the pilgrims do while performing the pilgrimage rites. During the nine days of the month of *Dhul Hijjah*, before the *Eid*, the villagers, especially the elderly people, repeat loudly the phrases of *Takbier* that the pilgrims repeat: " *Allah* is great, *Allah* is great, very great. Many thanks to *Allah*. Praise and thanks to *Allah* every morning and every evening".

The prayer at the Sacrificial Feast, *Salat Eid Al-Adha*, is the same as the one at *Eid Al-Fitr*. However, while the addresses of *Eid Al-Fitr* emphasise the virtues of the fast and charity, those of *Eid Al-Adha* emphasise the virtues of sacrifices (*odhiayah*), their rules, and the way they are distributed. The Sacrificial Feast itself differs slightly from that of *Eid Al-Fitr* in the sense that the former is dominated by its religious aspect, while the signs of pleasure and rejoicing are apparent in the latter. This difference can be attributed to the following factors: The *Eid Al-Fitr* is a licence for the lifting of restrictions on such acts as eating, drinking and sexual intercourse with their wives, of which the villagers had been deprived during the daytime throughout the month of *Ramadan*. The pleasure and rejoicing of *Eid Al-Fitr* are an individual and social expression of life returning to normal. The *Eid Al-Adha* occurs at an ordinary period of life. In reality it is an expression of religious sympathy with the pilgrims. So the villagers do not care to buy new clothes for this *Eid*, and visits of congratulation are not so frequent.

Some whole families and parts of others are away from the village on pilgrimage during the Sacrificial *Eid*, and the anxiety for them felt by their relatives, as a result of the dangers of pilgrimage, lessens the pleasure and rejoicing of this *Eid*. Then also, the villagers are busily engaged in slaughtering their sacrificial animals and arranging for their distribution immediately after the *Eid* prayer. This business occupies them until the fourth day of the *Eid*, and leaves little time for rejoicing and pleasure.

The villagers go to their houses straight after the *Eid* prayer to have the *Eid* breakfast meal in one house in each *harah*. Immediately they see to their sacrifices. Each household, unless very poor, sacrifices at least one sheep or goat on this occasion. The meat of every sacrifice has to be divided into three parts; one for the use of the family offering it, one to be distributed amongst relatives and friends, and one to be distributed

among poor people. It is forbidden to sell any part of a sacrifice or even to give its skin to the slaughterer as payment for his work.

The sacrificial *Eid* is distinguished by generosity, shown in the way the meat is distributed. The villagers, rich or poor, have the same opportunity for eating meat.

The study shows that the majority (75.3% and 60%) respectively of younger and elderly group, celebrated the religious festivals in Assfan, which is a sign of unity among the villagers.

However, in fact, there is another portion of the community such as: soldiers, doctors and other governmental employees. They cannot join their families and celebrate in the *Eid* festivals, as a result of official engagements or duties such as: in a*l-Hajj* season, when more than two million people come to Saudi Arabia to perform the fifth pillar of Islam (*al-Hajj*) in a matter of two weeks or less; therefore, these people have to stay on duty until this season is over.

It was observed in the village that the religious festivals are considered among the major events in the village, which give villagers and their relatives from all over the country a chance to be together. As people are on holiday it is quite easy for them to see each other and ask about each other, to invite their relatives to the village and to exchange gifts, which are further signs of solidarity among the villagers.

8.4.3. What Help is Provided by Assfan's People to the Needy in their Society?

A society can flourish only when its members do not spend all their wealth on the satisfaction of their own desire but reserve a portion of it for parents, relatives, neighbours, the poor and the incapacitated (Khan, 2000).

As Assfan is a small Muslim community, in which all the villagers know each other and they know each other's situation, they are aware of their relatives' and neighbours' economic and social situations. Therefore, in this study the majority (69.5%) of the

younger generation and (48%) of the elderly said, they gave help and support to their needy in the village, and (27.3%) and (38.7%) from the younger and older generations respectively said they did so sometimes.

Such help was of two types, obligatory as *Zakah* and voluntary as charity *(Sadaqa)*. *Zakah* is the third pillar of Islam, which it should be performed by every able person in the village to provide for needy and poor people. The amount payable is 2.5% of the donor's wealth, which can be given in different forms, such as clothes, food, or cash money.

The teachings of the *Quran* emphasise the responsibility of the individual to society and the society to the individual. The indigent, widows, orphans; those without a family to supply their needs, are to be watched out for by the community as a whole.

Sayyid Qutb, a twentieth century Muslim ideologue and activist, stated in his book, *Social Justice in Islam:* "Again every individual is charged with the care of society, as if he were the watchman over it, responsible for its safety. Life is like s ship at sea, whose crew are all concerned for her safety. No individual, then, can be exempt from this care for the general interest. Similarly the welfare of the community must be promoted by mutual help between individuals. Each adult Muslim is expected to pay annually one-fortieth of his property for the care and welfare of the less fortunate in the Muslim community (Bowen, 2002).

The distribution of *Zakah* in the village can be made in different forms. First, *Zakah al-Fitr*, which is type of charity that must be paid by every Muslim, young and old, male and female, free and slave, at the end of the month of fasting *(Ramadan)*. This *Zakah* should be from the basic food of the community (Sabiq, 1991); the basic food in Assfan is rice or wheat.

People in Assfan take their *Zakah*, either in the night or the early morning of the *Eid al-Fitr* day to needy and poor relatives and neighbours. It is usually distributed in the same

neighbourhood. In some cases, the villagers take their *Zakah* to foreign workers in the village, as they are considered one of the classes of people who are eligible to benefit from *Zakah*. In addition, the needy families who received this charity from the donors can benefit from it for a long time.

The second type, *Zakah* in wealth, or property which is in cash form, can be given to needy villagers either in *Ramadan* or at any time of the year when it is due.

Because Assfan is a rural community which has not many rich people in the village, such help comes from the nearby urban centres such as Makkah or Jeddah, through charitable societies.

The help from these societies comes in different forms, such as food, clothes, or money. The distribution takes place according to need and the size of the family; as the family gets bigger its share will increase.

The findings of this study are contrary to Eben Saleh's (1999) claim, that in the Southwest Saudi villages, the deterioration of subsistence production has resulted in the disappearance of communal labour and a decline in co-operation and assistance among the villagers, and the community no longer functions as an independent unit politically, socially, and economically.

Another type of help exchanged between the people of Assfan was mentioned earlier in the section on marriage customs. This help comes in the form of assistance in money, furniture or gifts, offered to the groom on his wedding.

A third type of help can be found in the village in times of emergency, as in the case of a demand for blood money (SR 100.000- per person), accident, or natural disasters. If someone has an accident as a result of which someone is killed, the one who caused the death should pay blood money to the relatives of the dead person, if they do not forgive

him. However, is very difficult for most people to pay from their own resources. In this case, help and assistance come from all the tribe members and from the village people. In addition, in the case of an accident or disaster such as hospitalisation, imprisonment, or a house or farm being damaged, the villagers will support the sufferer in his misfortune. Such help, offered to each other in the village, keep people tied into relationships in the village and in the society as a whole.

The findings of the study in this respect agree with those of Al-Johani (1996). He found that 63.9% of his study sample gave moral assistance and 36.1% gave financial assistance, to their relatives, on their weddings, if they were victims of natural disasters, or if they suffered losses.

Um Salem in this respect said, *"People used to help in the daily household tasks, collecting firewood, giving the neighbour livestock, milking, helping in establishing a new house, and giving food such as dates, millet and maize. Such help is still given by the people, with financial help as well."*

The co-operation between the community members can be attributed to the continuity of ties between villagers in the community as a whole and to the Islamic teachings which urge people to help the needy and help one another, in righteousness and piety.

Further evidence of the importance of religion to the people in Assfan and how its values remain comes from the observation that Islam urges people to care for each other and be kind and courteous in their interactions with others, whether they are their relatives, neighbours, or strangers.

The prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said that, as in Az-Zubaidi (1994):

> "Whoever believes in Allah and the last
> day should be generous to his neighbour,
> and whoever believes in Allah and the
> last day should be generous to his guest,
> and whoever believes in Allah and the
> last day should speak good things or
> keep silent" (Az-Zubaidi, 1994)

Therefore, the people in the village visit and help each other and invite each other for dinners in their homes and on different occasions such as wedding parties, parties in honour of guests, and so on.

The majority (53.8%) of the elderly group paid visits to relatives outside Assfan, which they considered a good opportunity to keep in touch with their people. Such visits keep the ties and relations between them strong. Visits were also paid to neighbours and relatives in Assfan; this was mainly during the *Eid* festivals, because it was difficult for elderly people to perform visits throughout the year, due to difficulty of transportation or engagement in their businesses, such as farming or herding.

A large minority (46.8%) of the younger group said they visited their neighbours and relatives in Assfan only, but almost a quarter visited friends. Thus, it seems the younger generation still retained strong social relations within the village community.

Such visits might be performed on a regular basis, every day, every weekend or every month, or could take place on occasions such as weddings, *Eid* festivals, illness or to offer condolences. The findings agree with Al-Johani's (1996) study, which showed that 49.4% of the respondents paid weekly visits to their relatives, 25% did so monthly, and 18.1% paid visits on festivals or special occasions.

Al-Hiryki (2001) suggested that one of the best ways to spend a holiday is to visit relatives and ask about them, since it is difficult to travel and do so during working time.

From this it can be said that the visits between the villagers in Assfan community, whether relatives, neighbours or friends, are still performed by the people in the village, which keep the ties and social relations between them strong. The frequency of visits between the people depends on distance and work commitments.

It was observed in the village, the *Eids* festivals and *Ramadan*, summer holidays, and wedding parties are the best time for visits in the village, when most people came to see each other and to be in contact with their families and relatives.

8.5. Summary

As this chapter has shown, in many respects the socio-economic changes experienced in Assfan parallel those which have taken place in many other developing countries. Key change agents have been education and communications, which have made a wider range of opportunities available to the inhabitants and facilitated contact with people and ideas beyond the boundaries of village and tribe.

The importance of increased prosperity and exposure to new ideas are clearly evident in marriage- related practices, and in economic life. In respect of marriage, there is a trend away from early, arranged, endogamous marriage, towards late marriage and self-selection of a spouse, sometimes from outside the community, similar to trends observed in other parts of the world. These trends are linked with economic changes, as well as education. Greater economic prosperity also brings greater material aspirations and expectations, placing a heavy financial strain on young people contemplating marriage. This tendency encourages delay in marriage and a greater emphasis on establishing a career.

As regards economic life, Assfan has been affected by trends reported in other rural communities, in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere, away from agriculture and pastoralism, and towards industry and commerce. In this respect, Assfan's convenient location near the major cities of the region, as well as conscious efforts by the

government to provide job opportunities, services and facilities, have meant that Assfan has faced less pressure than some villages towards urban migration. Nevertheless, many of the inhabitants seek work outside the village, in line with their aspirations towards well-paid, secure, government-sector jobs. Meanwhile, many services within the village which are for various reasons disfavoured by the local people, are supplied by low-skilled foreign workers.

Despite these changes, one aspect of village life that seems relatively unaffected is the observance of religious duties and traditional values of social reciprocity, enjoined by Islam. In a previous Saudi studies, Alomari (1993) suggested that the impact of religion and traditional life is stronger in small communities, so social change is less marked than in cities. This may be the case in Assfan. Greater prosperity, wider educational and economic opportunities, and improved communications have brought changes in many spheres of activity, but the fundamental value system, with its emphasis on kinship and neighbourhood ties, reinforced by mutual assistance, remain unchanged.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Chapter Nine
Conclusion and Suggestions

9.1. Introduction

In this chapter a conclusion for the study will be drawn. The study aimed to explore and investigate socio-economic changes in Assfan village, as perceived by two generations, young and old. Based on the many findings and opinions that emerged in the pervious chapters, this chapter presents conclusions regarding the major socio-economic aspects of life in the village: marriage, economic life and religious performance, and offers suggestions for further research.

9.2. Conclusions

The findings about socio-economic life in Assfan village show change in some aspects and continuity in others, and shed light on the factors which have contributed to or inhibited change. In the light of these findings, the following main conclusions can be drawn.

9.2.1. Marriage

The study revealed that some marriage customs have changed from what they were in the past thirty years ago. Such changes were encouraged by the improved economic situation in the country, the influence of education on the younger generation and ideas spread by the mass media.

There is a trend toward a self-selection of spouse instead of family choice, and towards choice from outside the village, from another tribe or rather from an urban community. Nevertheless, cross-cousin marriage is still practised in the village.

Pursuit of education of the younger people, both male and female, causes a delay in the age of marriage for both of them, in some cases until later than thirty years of age, which is considered late in a tribal community, which in the past encouraged very early marriage. Changing economic pressures have been another factor in delaying marriage. At one time, economic pressures favoured early marriage, as subsistence agriculture and pastoralism depended on the family. Now, however, economic considerations have the opposite effect, due to the need to become financially established in order to meat changing expectations of living standards.

The younger generation in Assfan found big amount of *Mahr* (bridal gift) being asked by the brides' family one of the obstacles which caused delay of marriage, the cost of building or renting a house and furnishing it in modern style. Another cause was found in the answers of respondents, regarding the extravagance in celebration, which imposed a heavy financial burden on young people.

Relationships between villagers in Assfan are still strong, as evidenced by the assistance given to the groom on his wedding, in the form of gifts, furniture and money. Most of it is in the later form, to meet some of his debt as a result of the high cost paying for the wedding and establishing.

The custom of adorning the bride is still practised in the village, but in somewhat differently from the past. There is a trend to adopt modern western style, which increases the cost of the wedding. However, the preparations and celebrations are still held locally rather than outside the village.

9.2.2. Economic Life

Assfan is a tribal rural community which received formal education only a few years before the first development plan, which means most of elderly people have had little education. Thus, they were not equipped for many job opportunities and confined to low paid jobs. Therefore, some of them have turned to secondary occupations to improve their income.

Many villagers do not have any type of business in the village, which has given the opportunity for other people from outside Assfan to establish businesses, either commercial or industrial. Foreign workers were found in the village, undertaking some types of jobs which are considered undesirable and unacceptable by the villagers. These workers were said to be mostly semi-skilled or less, unskilled; they came to the village to improve their standard of living and secure an income for their families.

It was found there is a trend of the younger generation toward emigration outside the village to the urban centres; looking for a better job opportunities or to continue their studies to college or university level. Another reason for migration is to seek better services and facilities in the cities. Nevertheless, migration is not the end of family ties and obligations.

Although some pastoral activity is still undertaken, either as a secondary occupation or as a hobby, industrialisation and changes in transport and communications have brought a trend away from subsistence towards wider economic relationships.

Governmental jobs were preferred for men of both generations, as they provide a secure source of income. Particularly popular is teaching, for its high salary and the long holidays. Clerical jobs or the military are also favoured.

Women now have good opportunities for education, which qualifies them for jobs after graduation from universities or colleges. In order to preserve the requirement of segregation from men, they have found the teaching field most suitable for them. Therefore, most working women are in the teaching profession, then in the health care field, which is considered suitable for women's nature.

However, these new freedoms are also accompanied by constraints. Since suitable jobs are not always available in the village, and women cannot drive, or travel unescorted, women cannot always enjoy the careers for which they have prepared. Thus, for many, the constraints are different, but not less, than in the days when women's role was confined to the home or helping in the fields.

Moreover, participation of women outside the home is still subordinate to their domestic role. A major motivation for working is to help with the family income; either before marriage, to help their parents, or after marriage, to help both their parents husbands.

9.2.3. Religious Duties and Values

The Islamic religion has kept the village community in balance. Values of mutuality and reciprocation remain unchanged, because Islam encourages them and in some respect, religious knowledge and observance have actually improved. Villagers in Assfan are more aware of Islamic teachings and able to apply them in their daily life, due to the improved standards of education, wider availability of mosques, and exposure to the mass media. These have taught people how to practice and perform religious duties correctly, in contrast to the past, when religious consciousness depended almost solely on families members who had little or no formal education.

The Islamic value of social solidarity was reflected in the continued practice of helping the needy people in the community. Poor people are looked after by richer ones, and community members help and support each other in times of crisis and difficulty.

The inhabitants continued to celebrate the *Eid* festivals, and enjoy these occasions according to the Islamic teachings. They receive each other in their homes, prepare meals and give poor and needy people the chance to celebrate with other members of the community. Exchange of visits among villagers and their relatives, including those living and working outside. The link the whole community together and strengthen the bonds between them.

Thus, in Assfan, as a small community, social change is perhaps less marked than in the cities. There have been changes in prosperity, leading to the introduction of some new practices, but there has been no fundamental change in the value system. The impact of religion and traditional life remain strong in many ways.

9.3. Suggestions for Future Research

In bringing this study to an end, based on the results of this investigation some recommendations can be made for further research, as follows:

♦   A study is needed to investigate social life on its own. Some interesting points emerged in the study about marriage and some of the related customs, which would be worth exploring in more depth.

♦   The researcher suggests further study of the cultural aspect of the village of Assfan, particularly the influence of religion in people's life.

♦   More studies are needed concerning economic life, and especially the effect on rural communities of outsider workers.

◆   Further studies should be carried out in other villages, towns and cities, to explore whether the nature and pace of change are similar to that experiences in Assfan. In particular, it would be of interest to compare communities in different regions, or on rural and on urban community, to see if they experience social change differently.

REFERENCES

Abduljabar, Ahmed A.(1983), Customs and Norms of Marriage in the Western Region of Saudi Arabia: Anthropological Fieldwork Study, 1st ed., Tihama Publication, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Abu Zyed, Ahmed (1965), *Social Structure*, The General Egyptian Commission for Books, 7th edition, Cairo, Egypt.

Ahmed, Greeb, M. S. (1984), *Rural Sociology*, Dar Al-Mareifah Al-Gamieah, Alexandria, Egypt.

Akinboade, O.A. (1994), "Agricultural Policies and Performance in the Gambia", Journal of Asian and African Studies, Vol. XXIX, No. 1-2, pp. 36-64.

Al-Asmari, M.G. (2001), Socio-cultural and Economic Factors Influencing Saudi Nationals' Involvement in the Industrial and Vocational Sectors in Saudi Arabia. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Hull University, UK.

Al-Awaji, I. (1989), "Bureaucracy and Development in Saudi Arabia: the Case of Local Administration", Journal of Asian and African Studies, Vol. XXIV, No.1-2. pp. 49-61.

Al-Biladi, A. (1980), *Makkah's Historical and Antique Sights*, Dar Makkah for Publishing and Distribution, 1st Print, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Dajany, M.K. (2000), Continuity and Change among the Utaiba Tribe in the Al-Duwadmi Province of Saudi Arabia: a Socio-anthropological Study, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Hull University, UK.

Al-Eryani, Mohammad, A. (1994), Development and Social Structure Change in Rural Saudi Arabia: A Case Study within Beleryan Rural Community. Unpublished Master Thesis, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Farsy, Fouad.(1986) *Saudi Arabia, a Case Study in Development*, 4th ed, Al Madina Printing & Publishing Co., Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Ghamdi, S.F. (1989), ' The Changing Roles of Rural Family: Anthropological Study in Al-Baha Area', Journal of King Abdulaziz University- Arts and Humanities, Vol. 2, pp 1-32, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Hageel, Suleiman A (2001), Human Rights in Islam and Their Application in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1st edition, Al-Humidi Press, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Hamowi, Y. (1981), *Mu'djam Al-Buldan*, Part IV, Dar Beyrouth, Lebanon.

Al-Hiryki, Hamad I. (2001), We and the Holiday, Riyadh Daily Newspaper, Sunday 15 July 2001, No. 12074, Year 37.

Al-Homiyri, Adulgani. A (1991), Cultural Communication and the Changing Roles within the Saudi Family: a Study in Godeyd Area, Unpublished Master Thesis, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Jibali, Muhammad (1996), _Celebrations in Islam_, Al-Qur'an Was- Sunnah Society of North America, Cincinnati, OH, USA.

Al-Jifri, Z.A. (1989), The Changing Socio-economic Conditions Among the Bedouin in Saudi Arabia. Unpublished Master Thesis, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, University of Manchester, UK.

Al-Johani, N.F(1996), Social Development and the Aspects of Change in a Bedouin Society: Fieldwork in Johainah Tribe Society- Wadi Al-Eis. Unpublished Master Thesis, King Abdulaziz University, Faculty of Art and Social Sciences, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Juwayer, Ibrahim, M (1983), Development and Family in Saudi Arabia: An Exploratory Study of the Views of University Students in Riyadh. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Florida, Gainsville, FL, USA.

Al-Kahtani, M. S (1990), Rural Complex System and Its Role in Rural Development: An Applied Study on the Rural Complex System at Al-Harjah Area – Province of Asir. Unpublished Master Thesis, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Khalifh, Abdullah (1999), _Social Facts and Variables in the Saudi Society_, Research Conference in Saudi Arabia: 100 Years, The Tenth Axis, Social Evolution, Riyadh, 24-28 January 1999, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Madinah Daily (1994), Al-Madinah Daily, 28 April, No.11350, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Almana, Muhammad (1980), _Arabia Unified_, Hutchinson Benham, London, UK.

Al-Mazrou, & et al. (1995), "Changing Marriage Age and Consanguineous Marriage in Saudi Female", Annals of Saudi Medicine, Vol.15, No.5, pp.481-485.

Almunahi M.K (1983), Effects of Change and Attitude Toward Change in Saudi Arabia. Unpublished Master Thesis, Humbolt State University, USA.

Al-Munajjed, Mona (1997), _Women in Saudi Arabia Today_, Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Al-Nawawi, Yahya S. (2002), _Riyadh Al-Saleheen_,Al-Resalah Dar Al-Qasim for Publishing, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Alnowaiser, M.A (1983), The Role of Traditional and Modern Residential Rural Settlements on the Quality of Environmental Experience: A Case Study of Unyzah and New Alkabra in Saudi Arabia. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, USA.

Al-Obidi, I and A. Al-Khleefah (1992), " Some Familial and Social Characteristics for Delaying Age of Marriage for Girls", Journal of Social Sciences, Kuwait University, Vol.,20, No. 1-2., Spring and Summer 1992.

Al-Omari, A. D. (1996), *Alsiyrah Alnabawieh Alsahiha*, Part 1, 2nd Print, Al-Obikan Bookshop, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Alomari, A.N. (1984), Between Tradition and Modernity: The Saudi Arabian Family in Transition. Unpublished thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.

Alomari, Abdullah Nasir. (1993), Housing and Social Change in Saudi Arabia: A Community Study of Hwylan Village in Al Qassim Region. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Hull, UK.

Al-Orini, Saleh M (2001), A Cross-cultural Study of Emotion/ Behavioural Problems and Moral Reasoning in Male Adolescents, Comparison Between Saudi Arabia and Britain, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Lincolnshire and Humberside, UK.

Al-Rasheed, Madawi (2002), *A History of Saudi Arabia*, Cambridge University Press, UK.

Al-Saif, Mohammad (1990), Social Change and Social Relationship in Unayzah Society. Unpublished Master Thesis. King Fahd Military College, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Seed, Samerah (1995), *Strategies of Social Research*, Alofist Publisher, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Shafiei, Al-Hasan. Ali (1552), *Kohlast Alwafa Bi'Akbarih Ara Al-Mostafa*, Manuscript, The Turkish Museum, Istanbul, Turkey.

Al-Torki, S and Cole, Donald P. (1991), *Arabian Oasis City: Transformation of Unayzah*, 1st ed., the Establishment of Arabic Researches, Beirut, Lebanon.

Alwaye, Mohiaddin (1985), *Pillars of Islam*, Centre for D'awa Affairs, Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

Al-Yassini, Ayman (1986), "Islamic Revival and National Development in the Arab World", Journal of Asian and African Studies, Vol.22, No.1-2, Pp. 104-121.

Al-Zaid, Abdullah (1982), *Education in Saudi Arabia: A Model with a Difference*, Tihamah Publication, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Antoun, R.T. (1972), *Arab Village: A Social Structural Study of a Trans-Jordanian Peasant Community*, Indiana University Press.

Asseri, Abdualrahman.(1991), Familism and the Urbanisation of Rural Villagers in the South-western Region of Saudi Arabia. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Michigan State University, USA.

Audinarayana, N & V.A. Uma (1991), "Opinions Towards Marriage Patterns: an Inter-generational Study in a Tamil Nadu Village", Man in India, Vol. 71, No. 2-3, Pp 415-423.

Az-Zubaidi, Z.A.A (1994), *Summarised of Sahih Al-Bukari*, Maktaba Dar-us Salam Publishers & Distributors, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Bagader, Abubaker (1993), "Trends of Marriage in Jeddah in the Light of Marriage Contracts Conducted in Jeddah from 1979-1990", Journal of King Abdulaziz University – Arts and Humanities, Vol.6, pp 3-35.

Bagader, A. and F. Bashtah (2000), "Choice in Marriage and Social Change", Almanhal, Jan/Feb 2000, Pp 132-149.

Bailey, Kenneth D. (1999), *Methods of Social Research*, The Free Press, New York.

Barnett, T. (1991) *Sociology and Development*, Routhedge, London.

Barricarte, Jesús J. (2001), "Changes in Marriage Patterns in the Spanish Province of Navarre from the Eighteenth to the Twintieth Century", Continuity and Change, Vol. 16, No. 1, Pp 71-93, May 2001.

Barth, Fredrik (1983), *Sohar, Culture and Society in an Omani Town*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, London, UK.

Berger, Morroe (1964), *The Arab World Today*, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, NJ, USA.

Black, C.E. (1967), *The Dynamics of Modernization*, Harper and Row, London.

Borg, W.R. and M.D. Gall (1996), *Educational Research: An Introduction*, Longman, London.

Bowen, Donna L (2002), "Abu Illay and Zakat", in *Everyday Life in the Muslim Middle East*, edited by D.L. Bowen and E.A. Early, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, USA.

Bowen, Donna L. and Early, Evelyn A. (2002), *Everyday Life in the Muslim Middle East*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, USA.

Brien, M.J. and Lee A. Lillard (1994), "Education, Marriage, and First Conception in Malaysia", the Journal of Human Resources, Vol. XXIX, No.4, Pp167-1204.

Bulmer, Martin and Warwick, Donald P. (1993), "Data Collection". *In Social Research in Developing Countries: Surveys and Censuses in The Third World*, edited by M. Bulmer and D. Warwick, 145-60, UCL Press, London.

Burckhardt, John L. (1968), *Travels In Arabia*, Frank Cass & Co Ltd, London.

Carlson, E. (1979), "Family Background, School and Early Marriage", Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol.41, May, Pp 341-353.

Chapra, M.U (1979), *Objectives of the Islamic Economic Order*, The Islamic Foundation, London, UK.

Cohen, Louis., Manion, Lawrence and Morrison, Keith (2000), *Research Methods in Education*, 5th ed. Routledge, New York.

Crane, Robert (1978), *Planning the Future of Saudi Arabia*, Praeger Publishers, London.

Dergham, Hala. (2001) "Marriage Customs in Upper Egypt", [online] Available at http://www.sogang.ac.kr/~burns/auc-cult/auc-marriageue.html[accessed on 25/10/2001]

Dexter, L. A. (1992), <u>Elite and Specialised Interviewing</u>. Evanston, III: North-western University Press. Cited from Guba, E and Lincoln, Y. *Effective Evaluation: Improving the Usefulness of Evaluation Results through Resposive and Naturalistic Approaches*. Jossey-Bass Ltd, London,1981.

Durkheim, Emile (1997), *The Division of Labour in Society*, The Free Press.

Eben Saleh, M.A (1998a), 'Transformation of the Traditional Settlements of South-West Saudi Arabia', Planning Perspectives, An International Journal of History, Planning and the Environment, Vol.30, No.2, April 1998.

Eben Saleh, M.A. (1998b), "The Impact of Islamic and Customary Laws on Urban Farm Development in South-western Saudi Arabia", <u>Habitat International</u>, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp 537-556.

Eben Saleh, M.A. (1999), "Development Versus Deterioration of Traditional Settlements of Southwest Saudi Arabia: Government Policies and Possible Courses of Action", <u>Habitat International</u>, Vol.23, No.1, pp.93-112.

El-Mallakh, Ragaei (1982), *Saudi Arabia: Rush to Development,* Croom Helm, London, UK.

Enel, C., G. Pison, and M. Lefebvre (1994), "Migration and Marriage Change: A Case Study of Mlomp, A Joola Village in Southern Senegal", in *Nuptiality in Sub-Saharan Africa*, edited by Bledsoe, Caroline and Gilles Pison, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Farsi, Z. (1992) *National Guide and Atlas of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,* Fitzsimnmons, Harf Press.

Fox, David J. (1969), *The Research Process in Education*, Holt-Rinehart, New York.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. and Nachmias, D. (1996), *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 5th ed. Arnold, London.

Geography Department-King Abdulaziz University (1980), *Geographical Fieldwork Study for Assfan Area*, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Geography Department-Umm Al- Qura' University (1989), *Geographical Study for Wadi Fatima,* Umm Al-Qura' University, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Giddens, Anthony (1973), *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*, Cambridge University Press, London, UK.

Giddens, Anthony (2001), *Sociology*, 4th edition, Polity Press, Cambridge, UK.

Graz, Liesl (1991), "Yemen Weathers the Storm", Journal of Middle East International, No. 398, April 1991.

Hall, David and Hall, Irene (1996), *Practical Social Research: Project Work in the Community*, Macmillan Press Ltd, London.

Halliday, Fred (1984), "Labour Migration in the Arab World", Middle East Report 14, No.123, May 1984.

Hamdan, Saeed. S (1990), Social Change in the Saudi Family. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. USA.

Hamdi, O.M and Al-Hidar, A.S (1996), *The Effective Factors for Saudi Girl in Choosing Nursing Profession – Fieldwork*, Research Centre, Institute of Public Administration, Saudi Arabia.

Hanley, Susan B.(1999), *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan*, University of California Press Ltd., London, England.

Helliwell, Christine (1993) Women in Asia: Anthropology and the Study of Women, in Evans, G. (ed.), *Asia's Cultural Mosaic: An Anthropological Introduction*, Prentice Hall, Singapore.

Hogarth, D. G. (1980), *Arabia*, Gibson Press, England.

Hoinville, G. and R. Jewell (1985), *Survey Research Practice*, Heinemann Educational Books, London.

Holy Quran (1990), *The Holy Quran*, King Fhad Holy Quran Printing Complex, Madinah Munawwarah, Saudi Arabia.

Hoodfar, Homa (1996),"Egyptian Male Migration and Urban Families Left Behind", in *Development, Change and Gender in Cairo: A View from the Household*, edited by Diane Singerman and Homa Hoodfar, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, USA.

Huatlee, K. (1982), "Age at First Marriage in Peninsular Malaysia", Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol.44, August, pp 785-799.

Ibn-Saeed, A.S. (1989), Some Aspects of Family Change and Property in Riyadh City. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Hull, UK.

Ireson, W.R. (1996), 'Village Identity and the Maintenance of Cooperation in Laos', Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp 219-244. September, 1996.

Iyengar, Shanto (1993), "Assessing Linguistic Equivalence in Multilingual Surveys." ". In *Social Research in Developing Countries: Surveys and Censuses in The Third World*, edited by M. Bulmer and D. Warwick, 173-82. UCL Press, London.

Jamal, Ahmed M. (1981), *Makanaki Tohmadi*, Tihamah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Jambiya, G.L.K. (1998), "The Dynamics of Population, Land Scarcity, Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Activities", Working Paper, Vol. 28, Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, Leiden, Tanzania.

Jennings, Anne, M. (1995), *The Nubians of West Aswan; Village Women in the Midst of Change*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, UK.

Jones, Gavin W (1994), *Marriage and Divorce in Islamic South-East Asia*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur.

Jones, G.W., Y. Asari, and T. Djuartika, (1994), "Divorce in West Java", Journal of Comparative Family Studies, Vol. XXV, No. 3, Autumn 1994, Pp. 395-416.

Katakura, Motoko (1977), *Bedouin Village: A Study of a Saudi Arabian People in Transition,* University of Tokyo Press, Japan.

Kendrick, Rosalyn (1991), "Islam", in *Moral Issues in Six Religions*, edited by W. Owen Cole, Heinemann Educational Publishers, UK.

Kerlinger, Fred N. and Lee, Howard (2000), *Foundations of Behavioural Research*, 4th edition, Harcourt Publishers Ltd College, Clyde.

Khan, Muhammad M. (1994), *The Translation of the Meanings of Summarized Sahih Al-Bukhari: Arabic-English*, Kazi Publications, Chicago, USA.

Khan, W (2000), "The Concept of Charity in Islam", [online] Available at, http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/insights/insight20000330a.html [Accessed on 10th August 2002]

Kim, S. & Stinner, W. (1980), "Social Origin, Educational Attainment and the Timing of Marriage and the First Birth Among Korean Women", Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol.42, August, Pp. 671-679.

King, V.T. (1999), *Anthropology and Development in South-East Asia- Theory and Practice*, Oxford University Press, Kuala Lumpur.

Kluckhohn, Clyde (1940), *An Introduction to Navaho Chant Practice*, American Anthropological Association, Menasha.

Kriyem, Bader (1987), *The Role of Radio in Changing, Customs and Values in the Saudi Society: A Study in Kholais Village*, 1st ed., Dar Al-Elm, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Kurdi, Obeid Allah, M.A. (1999), *The Holy Ka'bah and the Two Holy Mosques: Construction and History*, Alturath, Saudi Arabia.

Kutubkhanah, I, and H. Al-Kholi (1992*), Change and Social Development; A Follow up Survey Study of a Village in Wadi Fatimah Area-Saudi Arabia*, 1st ed., Dar Al-Bilad, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Lancaster, William (1997), *The Rwala Bedouin Today*, 2nd Edition, Waveland Press, Incorporated.

Lenczowski, George (1967), "Tradition and Reform in Saudi Arabia", Current History, February, pp. 98-104.

Lipsky, George A. (1959), *Saudi Arabia, its People, its Society, its Culture*, Harf Press, New Haven.

MacLeod, A.E (1996),"Transforming Women's Identity", in *Development, Change and Gender in Cairo: A View from the Household*, edited by Diane Singerman and Homa Hoodfar, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, USA.

Mair, L. (1984), *Anthropology and Development*, Macmillan, London.

Malhotra, Anju (1997), "Gender and the Timing of Marriage: Rural-Urban Differences in Java", Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol.59, No.2, Pp 434-449, May 1997.

Martindale, D. (1998) *The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory*, 2nd edition, Routledge, London, UK.

May, Tim (2001), *Social Research Issues; Methods and Process*, 3rd edition, Open University Press, USA.

Mayer, P. (1987) *Townsmen or Tribesmen: conservatism and the process of urbanisation in a South Africa city*, Oxford University Press, Capetown.

McClelland, D. (1966) "The Achievements Motive in Economic Growth in Hoselits", B.F., and Moore, W.E. (eds.) *Industrialisation and Society*, UNESCO-MOUTON.

Meagher, Kate (1997), "Shifting the Imbalance: The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Rural-Urban Population Movements in Northern Nigeria", Journal of Asian and African Studies, Vol. XXXII, No. 1-2, pp. 81-92.

Middle East Daily Newspaper (1989), Development in Saudi Arabia, No. 3800, p6.

Ministry of Defence and Aviation. (1996) Surface Annual Climatological Report, Scientific Information and Documentation Centre, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Education (1982), *Summary Statistics on Education*, Centre of Statistical Data and Documentation, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Education (1996), *Summary Statistics on Education*, Centre of Statistical Data and Documentation, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Finance and National Economy (1987), *Statistical Yearbook*, 23rd Issue, Central Department of Statistics, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Information (1993), *This our Land; Makkah Al-Mukaramah*, Insiding Information, Dar Al-Shra Al-Saudiah for Publishing and Distribution, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Information (1994), *Saudi Arabia: Landmarks of Progress*, Foreign Information, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Information (1997), *Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; The March of Nation Building*, Ministry of Information, Foreign Information, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, (1985), *Makkah Region Comprehensive Development Plans*, Project No. 208, Report No. 7, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1970), *First Five-Year Development Plan (1970-1975)*, Ministry of Planning, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1980), *Third Five-Year Development Plan (1980-1985)*, Ministry of Planning, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1991), *The Fifth development Plan*, Ministry of Planning Press, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1995), *Sixth Development Plan*, Ministry of Planning Press, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1996), *Statistical Yearbook*, 32ed Issue, Central Department of Statistical, Ministry of Planning, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Ministry of Planning (1997) Assfan Population, Document, Central Department of Statistics, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Moore, W.E. (1974), *Social Change*, Prentice Hall, New York, USA.

Moser, C.A. and Kalton, G. (1985), *Survey Methods in Social Investigation*, 2nd ed. Gower Publishing Company, London.

Mouly, George, J. (1978), *Educational Research; The Art and Science of Investigation*, 3rd ed., Allyn and Bacon, London.

Mutabbakani, S (1993), *Saudi Arabia; Modern Economy Traditional Society*, Saudi Arabia.

National Guard Magazine (1989), The Country's New Budget, Issue No. 76, The Presidency of National Guard, Saudi Arabia.

Nwana, O.C. (1982), *Introduction to Educational Research for Student Teachers*, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, Ibadan.

Nyrob, R (1985), *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study*, The American University, Washington, USA.

Ong, A. (1987) *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*, State University of New York Press, Albany.

Oppenheim, A. N. (1998), Questionnaire Design: Interviewing and Attitude Measurement, Pinter, London.

Othman, Ibraheim (1986), Change in Urban Family in Jordan, Journal of Social Sciences, Vol.14, Autumn 1986, pp 153-177.

Pak, Ki-Hyuk & Sidney D. Gamble (1975), *The Changing Korean Village*, Shin-Hung Press, Seoul, Korea.

Parsons, Talcott (1977), *Social System and the Evolution of Action Theory*, Free Press, New York.

Peil, Margaret, (1982), *Social Science Research Methods: An African Handbook*, Hodder and Stoughton, London

Philpy, John (1972), *Saudi Arabia*, Aron Press, New York, USA.

Pine, Frances (2000) "Kinship, Gender and Work in Socialist and Post-Socialist Rural Poland", in *Gender, Agency and Change-Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by Victoria A. Goddard, Routledge, London.

Pons, V. (1969) *Stanleyville*, Oxford University Press,UK.

Presidency of Girls' Education (1982), *Education for Girls in Saudi Arabia*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Qutb, S.M (1977), "The Islamic Basis in Development", in *Islam and Development*, The Association of Muslim Social Scientists, Plainfield, IN, USA.

Quy, Bui T.K. (1996) "The Vietnamese Woman in Vietnam's Process of Change" in *Vietnam's Women in Transition*, edited by Kathleen Barry, Macmillan Press Ltd, UK.

Rahimuddin, Muhammad, (1994), *Muwatta Imam Malik*, Kazi Publications, Chicago, USA.

Rao, Vijayendra (1993), "The Rising Price of Husbands: A Hedonic Analysis of Dowry Increases in Rural India", Journal of Political Economy, Vol.101, No.4, Pp 666-677.

Redfield, Robert (1962), *A Vllillage That Chose Progress: Chan Kom evisited*, The University of Chicago Press. Chicago.

Robert, B. (1982) Cities in Developing Societies in Shanin, T. and Alavi, H. (eds.), *Introduction to the Sociology of Developing Societies*, Macmillan, London.

Roy, Delwin A. (1992), "Saudi Arabian Education: Development Policy", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 28, No. 3, January 1992, pp. 477-508.

Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in London, (1996), "Saudi Communications - A Record of Achievement" A monthly newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 4, The Press Office, The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, London.

Sabiq, As-Sayyid (1991), *Fiqh us-Sunnah; Alms tax and Fasting*, American Trust Publications, Indianapolis, IN, USA.

Sachchidananda (1968), *The Tribal Village in Bihar*, Munshiram Manoharlal Oriental Publishers & Booksellers, Delhi, India.

Sassen, Saskia, (1988), *The Mobility of Labour and Capital*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England.

Saudi Arabian Embassy in the United States (1985), *Achievement of the Development Plans in Saudi Arabia*, Embassy Publication, Washington, D.C., USA.

Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Corporation (1981), *The Fifth Annual Report*, Research Department Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Corporation, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabian Embassy in the United States (1989), *The Monthly Newsletter*, Vol. 6. No.3, Embassy Publication, Washington, D.C., USA.

Saudi Arabian Information Centre, (1996), *King Fahd; The Years of Devotion*, Saudi Arabian Information Centre, London.

Schmitt, N.W. and Klimoski, R.J. (1991), *Research Methods in Human Resources Management*, South-Western Publishing, Cincinnati, OH, USA.

Sekaran, Uma (2003), *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach*, 3rd ed, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, USA.

Sender, J and S. Smith (1990), *Poverty, Class and Gender in Rural Africa: A Tanzanian Case Study*, Routledge, London.

Shokri, Alyaa (1979), *Some Aspects of Socio-cultural Changes in the Arab World: A Field Study for Local Communities's Culture in Saudi Arabia*, Dar Al-Jeel for Publishing, Cairo, Egypt.

Siddiqi, Mohammed, M (1977), *Islam and Women*, The Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, Pakistan.

Simon, R.S., M. Philip and R.W. Bulliet (1996), *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East*, Vol.3, Macmillan Reference, USA.

Sindi, A.M and I.F Alghofaily (1982), *Summary of Saudi Arabian Third Five-Year Development Plan*, Tihamah Publication, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Singerman, D. and H. Hoodfar (1996),"Introduction: The Household as Mediator", in *Development, Change and Gender in Cairo: A View from the Household*, edited by Diane Singerman and Homa Hoodfar, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, USA.

Sweet, Louise E (1960), _Tell Toqaan: A Syrian Village_, University of Michigan, USA.

Tayeb, Ehsaan S. (1987), The Effect of Social Development on Social Change among the Villages of Al-Jamum and Hada al-Sham; An Applied Study, Unpublished Master Thesis, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The Gulf Bureau for Organisation and Statistical Studies (1984), _The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its Path in Development_, Saudi Arabia.

Tönnies, Ferdinand (2001), _Community and Society: Gemeinschaft Und Gesellschaft_, Edited by José Harris, Translated by José Harris and Margaret Hollis, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Troeller, Gary (1976), _The Birth of Saudi Arabia_, Frank Cass, London, UK.

UNESCO (1976), National Science and Technology Policies in the Arab States, Science Policy Studies and Documents, No. 38, P.153, Geneva, Switzerland.

Vogler, C. and J. Pahl (1993), "Social and Economic Change and the Organisation of Money Within Marriage", Work, Employment and Society, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 71-95.

Vom Elm, B., and Hirschman, C. (1979), "Age at First Marriage in Peninsular Malaysia", Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol.41, November, pp 877-891.

Walpole, N.C, and others (1971), _Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia_, Foreign Area Studies of the American University, Washington, DC, USA.

Warwick, Donald and Lininger, C. (1993), _The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice_, McGraw-Hill Book Company, London.

Weber, Helmut (1994), "The Division of Generations", in _Continuity, Change and Aspirations: Social and Cultural Life in Minahasa, Indonesia_, edited by Helmut Buchholt and Ulrich Mai, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore.

Yahya, Hasan (1986), "Secularization and Tradition in Four Arab Countries: A Comparative Content Analysis of Reading Textbooks", The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, Vol. 3, No.2. pp 299-307.

Zhang, Weiguo (2000), "Dynamics of Marriage Change in Chinese Rural Society in Transition: A Study of a Northern Chinese Village", Population Studies, Vol.54, No.1, Pp57-69, March 2000.

APPENDIX

ONE

THE QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear citizen,

It is a great honour for me to ask for your help in doing this research for a Ph.D.

degree in the field of Social Anthropology, at Hull University (UK).

I would like to get your opinions and views about some aspects of the daily life

in Assfan village community, which will benefit the study.

Sincere thanks and appreciation for sparing some of your valuable time for

answering these questions.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Researcher/
Henydi A. Al-Bishri
Sociology Department
King Abdulaziz University-Jeddah
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

I. General Information

1- What is your age?

☐ Years

2- How many years have you been living in Assfan?

☐ Years.

3- What is your educational level?
- ☐ Illiterate.
- ☐ Able to read and write.
- ☐ Primary level.
- ☐ Intermediate level.
- ☐ Secondary level.
- ☐ Diploma.
- ☐ University.

4- Would you please describe your monthly income?
- ☐ No income.
- ☐ Less than 1,000 SR.
- ☐ Between 1,000 - 4,000 SR.
- ☐ Between 4,001 - 7,000 SR.
- ☐ More than 7,000 SR.

5- What is your main occupation?
- ☐ Government employee.
- ☐ Businessman.
- ☐ Trader.
- ☐ Farmer.
- ☐ Student.
- ☐ Other. (*Please specify*)..........................

6- How many people live in your household?
- ☐ 1-4
- ☐ 5-8
- ☐ 9-12

7- What type of dwelling do you have?
- ☐ Traditional house.
- ☐ Concrete house.
- ☐ Villa.

8- Are you planning to leave Assfan in the future?
- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No.
- ☐ Don't know.

II. Family System

9- Who chose your spouse?
- ☐ Myself.
- ☐ My parents.
- ☐ Friends.

10- What is the most important criterion for your choice?
- ☐ Personality.
- ☐ Piety.
- ☐ Family lineage.
- ☐ Age.
- ☐ Educational level.
- ☐ Other. *(please specify)*.........................

11- What do you think is the appropriate age for a son to get married?
- ☐ Less than 20 years.
- ☐ 20-25.
- ☐ 26-30.
- ☐ 31 or older.

12- What is the appropriate age for a daughter to get married?
- ☐ Less than 20 years.
- ☐ 20-25.
- ☐ 26-30.
- ☐ 31 or older.

13- Where do you hold wedding parties?
- ☐ In the family house.
- ☐ In a wedding hall in Assfan.
- ☐ In a wedding hall outside Assfan.

14- Following are some phenomena which might apply to marriage in the village. How common are they?

	Uncommon	Common
-Early age marriage.	☐	☐
-Girl's education.	☐	☐
-Women's working (outside the home).	☐	☐
-Increased bridal gift (*Mahr*).	☐	☐
-Extravagance in celebrating the wedding parties.	☐	☐
-Polygamy.	☐	☐
-Cross-cousin marriage	☐	☐

15- Is there any type of assistance for the groom on his wedding?

  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

16- If *yes*, what kind of assistance?
  ☐ Money.
  ☐ Furniture.
  ☐ Gifts.(please give examples)...............................

17- Is the custom of adorning the bride observed in Assfan?
  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

18- If *yes*, is this:
  ☐ A local custom?
  ☐ A custom brought from outside?

19- Do you think wedding customs have changed?
  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

20- Do people practise any traditional customs at weddings?
  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

21- If *yes*, do you like to do so?
  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

22- Who are most likely to practise these customs?
  ☐ Old people.
  ☐ Young people.

23- How much is the bridal gift (*Mahr*) in Assfan?
  ☐ Less than 10,000 SR.
  ☐ 10,000-20,000 SR.
  ☐ 20,001-30,000 SR.
  ☐ More than 30,000 SR.
24- Do you consider this amount is excessive for most people?
  ☐ Yes.
  ☐ No.

III. Economic System

25- Do you have a secondary occupation?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.
26- If *yes*, please specify. ……..

27- Do you have a business in Assfan?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.
28- If *yes*, what kind of business:
    ☐ Agricultural.
    ☐ Commercial.
    ☐ Pastoral.
    ☐ Governmental employee.
29- Do you employ any people?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.
30- If *yes*, how many? What nationality are they?
    i)
....
    ii)
....
    iii)
....

31- Where do most of Assfan's people work?
    ☐ In Assfan itself.
    ☐ In neighbouring villages.
    ☐ In nearby cities.

32- Where do people who are not well-qualified work?
    ☐ In their own businesses.
    ☐ In private sector .
    ☐ In the governmental sector.
    ☐ Free jobs.

33- Do girls who graduate from university find jobs in Assfan?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

34- If *yes*, what kind of job is available for them?
    ☐ Teaching.
    ☐ Health Care.
    ☐ Other. Please (specify)…………………………

35- If *no*, what do they do?
    ☐ Stay at home.
    ☐ Find a job outside Assfan.

36- Which of the following are the preferred jobs for males, and why?
    ☐ Teaching.
    ☐ Health Care.
    ☐ Military.
    ☐ Governmental Official.
    ☐ Private Sector.

37- Which of the following are the preferred jobs for females, and why?
    ☐ Health Care.
    ☐ Teaching.
    ☐ Governmental Official.
    ☐ Private Sector.
    ....
    ....

38- Do any people from outside the village come to work here?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

39- If *yes*, do you know where mostly they are from?
    ☐ From nearby urban centres.
    ☐ From neighbouring villages.
    ☐ Foreign.

40- Are the foreign workers skilled? Please give percentage?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

41- What kind of work do most of them do?

    ☐ Driver.   ☐ Labourer.
    ☐ Farmer.   ☐ Teacher.
    ☐ Medical doctor.   ☐ Herder.
    ☐ Mechanic.   ☐ Builder.
    ☐ Other. Please *(specify)*..................

42- Do people emigrate from Assfan?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

43- If *yes,* what is the most important reason, do you think?
    ☐ Seeking better services and facilities.
    ☐ To study.
    ☐ For better jobs.
    ☐ To marry someone from outside the community.

44- Do you know some people from Assfan who lived in other areas in the country and then returned to the village?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

45- If *yes,* why do you think they came back?
    ☐ Retired and preferred to live in the village.
    ☐ The village has some good services.
    ☐ To be near family.
    ☐ To look after elderly relatives.

46- Why do you think some women work outside the home?
    ☐ To earn money to help their husbands.
    ☐ To occupy their time.
    ☐ To use skills they have learned in school.
    ☐ To help their parents.

47- Do you think it is desirable for women to work outside the home?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.
    ☐ Uncertain.

48- Does your wife have a job?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

49- If *yes,* is it :
    ☐ Full-time.
    ☐ Part-time.

50- Which villagers are most likely to go to find jobs outside the village?
    ☐ Elderly people.
    ☐ Young people.

51- Are they well educated?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

52- Where do the shopkeepers in Assfan come from, in the main?
    ☐ From Assfan itself.
    ☐ From outside Assfan.

53- Do the people of Assfan like to have their own business in the village?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

54- Rank the economic activities in Assfan in order of importance (ONE for the most important activity and FOUR for the least important).
    ☐ Agricultural.
    ☐ Light industry.
    ☐ Pastoral.
    ☐ Commercial.

IV. Religious Duties and Values

55- Do you think people still observe religious duties such as the prayers in mosques, much as they did ten years ago?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

56- What are the sources of religious consciousness for the people in Assfan?
    ☐ Education in schools.
    ☐ Mosques.
    ☐ Family.
    ☐ Mass Media (Radio, Books).

57-Do you think people are still continuing religious observance? Why?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

    ....
    ....

58- Do you think there are people who do not celebrate the religious festivals?
    ☐ Yes.
    ☐ No.

    ....
    ....

59- If *yes*, why do you think that is?

....

....

....

60- Do people give their needy relatives some type of support when they need it?
☐ Yes.
☐ No.
☐ Sometimes.

61- Do the villagers prepare any special kind of food during the two festivals?
☐ Yes.
☐ No.

62- What type of visits mostly take place between the villagers in the religious festivals?

☐ Neighbours only.
☐ Neighbours and relatives in Assfan.
☐ Relatives outside Assfan.
☐ Friends.

63- Who are the most conscientious in the village in practising their religious duties ?
Why?

☐ Elderly people.
☐ Young people.

....

....

....

(Thank you for your kind co-operation)

APPENDIX

TWO

THE QUESTIONNAIRE (ARABIC)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عزيزي المواطن:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد

يشرفني أن أطلب منكم المساعدة في إنجاز هذه الدراسة والتي سوف تقدم لنيل درجة الدكتوراة في مجال الأنثروبولوجيا الاجتماعية من جامعة هل بالمملكة المتحدة.

حيث أود في الحصول على بعض آرائكم ومرئياتكم حول بعض مظاهر الحياة اليومية في مجتمع قرية عسفان، والتي سوف تساهم في إثراء الدراسة.

أتقدم لكم بجزيل الشكر والتقدير بتخصيص شيء من وقتكم في الإجابة على هذه الأسئلة.

شاكراً لكم حسن تعاونكم معي،،،،،،،،،،،،،،

الباحث/
هنيدي عطية البشري
قسم الاجتماع
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز بجدة
المملكة العربية السعودية

<div dir="rtl">

القسم الأول: معلومات عامة:

1- كم عمرك؟

☐ سنة.

2- كم سنة لك أمضيتها في عسفان؟

☐ سنة.

3- ما هو مستواك التعليمي؟

☐ أمي.

☐ قادر على القراءة والكتابة.

☐ المرحلة الابتدائية.

☐ المرحلة المتوسطة.

☐ المرحلة الثانوية.

☐ دبلوم.

☐ المرحلة الجامعية.

4- هل ممكن أن تخبرني عن مقدار دخلك الشهري؟

☐ ليس لدي دخل.

☐ اقل من 1,000 رس.

☐ ما بين 1,000 - 4,000 رس.

☐ ما بين 4,001 - 7,000 رس.

☐ أكثر من 7,000 رس.

5- ما هي وظيفتك الرئيسية؟

☐ موظف حكومي.

☐ موظف قطاع خاص.

☐ رجل أعمال.

☐ تاجر.

☐ مزارع.

☐ طالب.

☐ أخرى، (حدد من فضلك).............

6- كم عدد أفراد أسرتك الذين يعيشون معك؟

☐ 1-4 أشخاص.

☐ 5-8 أشخاص.

☐ 9-12 أشخاص.

7- ما هو نمط منزلك؟

☐ بيت شعبي.

☐ بيت مسلح.

☐ فلا.

8- هل تخطط لمغادرة عسفان في المستقبل؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

☐ لا أدري.

</div>

القسم الثاني: نظام الاسرة:

9- من اختار زوجتك؟

☐ بنفسك.

☐ الوالدين.

☐ الاصدقاء.

10- ما هو أهم مقياس في اختيارك للزوجة؟

☐ شخصي.

☐ ديني.

☐ نسب الأسرة.

☐ السن.

☐ المستوى التعليمي.

☐ اخرى (من فضلك حدد).............................

11- ما هو السن المناسب للزواج بالنسبة للشاب؟

☐ أقل من 20 سنة.

☐ 20-25.

☐ 26-30.

☐ 31 سنة أو أكبر.

12- ما هو السن المناسب للزواج بالنسبة للفتاة؟

☐ أقل من 20 سنة.

☐ 20-25 سنة

☐ 26-30سنة.

☐ 31 سنة أو أكبر.

13- أين تقيمون حفلات الزواج؟

☐ في منزل الأسرة.

☐ في قاعات الأفراح في عسفان.

☐ في قاعات الأفراح خارج عسفان.

14- فيما يلي بعض الظواهر قد تكون ذات علاقة بالزواج في القرية، ما مدى انتشارها؟

غير منتشرة	منتشرة	
☐	☐	- ظاهرة الزواج المبكر.
☐	☐	- تعليم البنات.
☐	☐	- عمل المرأة خارج البيت.
☐	☐	-ظاهرة غلاء المهور.
☐	☐	- المبالغة في حفلات الزفاف.
☐	☐	- تعدد الزوجات.
☐	☐	- زواج أبناء العمومة.

15- هل هناك اي نوع من المساعدة للعريس في زفافه؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

16- إذا الاجابة بـ نعم، ما هي أنواع المساعدة؟

☐ مال.

☐ أثاث.

☐ هدايا.

17- هل عادة تزيين العروس ملاحظة في عسفان؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

18- إذا الاجابة بـ نعم، هل هي:

☐ عادة محلية؟

☐ عادة جاءت من خارج القرية.

19- هل تعتقد أن عادات الزواج تغيرت؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

20- هل يمارس الناس اي عادات شعبية في حفلات الزواج؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

21- إذا الاجابة بـ نعم، هل ترغب أنت أن تمارس ذلك؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

22- من هو الأكثر ممارسة لهذه العادات الشعبية؟

☐ كبار السن.

☐ الشباب.

23- كم مقدار المهر في عسفان؟

☐ أقل من 10,000 رس.

☐ 10,000 - 20,000 رس.

☐ 20,001 - 30,000 رس.

☐ أكثر من 30,000 رس.

24- هل تعتبر هذا المبلغ مبالغ فيه لكثير من الناس؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

<u>القسم الثالث</u>: النظام الاقتصادي:

25- هل لديك وظيفة ثانوية؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

26- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، حدد *من فضلك* (   ).

27- هل لديك أي أعمال في عسفان؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

28- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، ما هو نوع هذا العمل؟

☐ زراعي.

☐ تجاري.

☐ رعوي.

☐ حكومي.

29- هل توظف أي عمالة عندك؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

30- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، كم عددهم، وما هي جنسياتهم؟

أ) ....

ب) ....

ج) ....

31- أين يعمل غالبية سكان عسفان؟

☐ في عسفان نفسها.

☐ في القرى المجاورة.

☐ في المدن القريبة.

32- أين يعمل سكان عسفان الغير مؤهلين؟

☐ في أعمالهم الخاصة.

☐ في القطاع الخاص.

☐ في القطاع الحكومي.

☐ أعمال حرة.

33- هل خريجات الجامعة يجدن وظائف في عسفان؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

34- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، ما هو نوع العمل المتاح لهن؟

☐ التدريس.

☐ القطاع الصحي.

☐ أخرى، حدد *من فضلك* (   ).

35- إذا الإجابة بـ لا، ماذا يفعلن؟

☐ البقاء في المنزل.

☐ البحث عن وظيفة خارج عسفان.

36- أي من الأعمال التالية مفضلة للرجال؟ ولماذا؟

☐ التدريس.

☐ القطاع الصحي.

☐ العسكرية.

☐ موظف حكومي.

☐ القطاع الخاص.

....

37- أي من الأعمال التالية مفضلة للنساء؟ ولماذا؟

☐ التدريس.

☐ القطاع الصحي.

☐ موظفة حكومية.

☐ القطاع الخاص.

....

38- هل هناك من يعمل في عسفان، وهو من خارجها؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

39- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، من أين غالبية هؤلاء؟

☐ من المدن القريبة.

☐ من القرى المجاورة.

☐ أجانب.

40- هل العمالة الأجنبية ماهرة؟ أعط نسبة (*من فضلك*)

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

41- ما هي أغلب أنواع العمل التي يقوم بها هؤلاء؟

☐ عامل.   ☐ سائق.

☐ مدرس.   ☐ مزارع.

☐ راعي.   ☐ طبيب.

☐ عامل بناء.   ☐ ميكانيكي.

☐ أخرى، حدد *من فضلك* (   ).

42- هل يهاجر الناس من عسفان؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

43- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، تعتقد ما هو السبب؟
- ☐ البحث عن خدمات أفضل.
- ☐ للدراسة.
- ☐ البحث عن عمل أفضل.
- ☐ للزواج من منطقة أخرى.

44- هل تعرف سكان من عسفان عاشوا خارجها ثم عادوا لها؟
- ☐ نعم.
- ☐ لا.

45- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، تعتقد لماذا رجعوا؟
- ☐ التقاعد ورغبة الحياة في عسفان.
- ☐ وجود خدمات جيدة في عسفان.
- ☐ القرب من الأسرة.
- ☐ للاهتمام بأقاربهم كبار السن.

46- ما هو السبب الذي يجعل بعض النساء يعملن خارج البيت؟
- ☐ للحصول على المال لمساعدة الأزواج.
- ☐ لشغل أوقات الفراغ.
- ☐ لتطبيق ما تعلمن في المدارس.
- ☐ لمساعدة آبائهن.
- ☐ لمساعدة أزواجهن في أعمالهم.

47- هل ترى انه مرغوب فيه أن تعمل المرأة خارج البيت؟
- ☐ نعم.
- ☐ لا.
- ☐ غير متأكد.

48- هل تعمل زوجتك في وظيفة؟
- ☐ نعم.
- ☐ لا.

49- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، هل هي:
- ☐ دوام كامل.
- ☐ جزئي.

50- من هم الأغلب من سكان عسفان الذين يرغبون في الحصول على عمل خارجها؟
- ☐ كبار السن.
- ☐ الشباب.

51- هل هم متعلمون؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

52- في الأساس من أين أصحاب المحلات التجارية في عسفان؟

☐ من عسفان نفسها.

☐ من خارج عسفان.

53- هل يرغب سكان عسفان أن يكون لديهم نشاطهم التجاري الخاص في عسفان؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

54- رتّب الأنشطة الإقتصادية في عسفان حسب أهميتها(رقم واحد الأكثر أهمية ورقم أربعة الأقل أهمية).

☐ الزراعي.

☐ الصناعات البسيطة.

☐ الرعوي.

☐ التجاري.

القسم الرابع: الواجبات الدينية والقيم:

55- هل تعتقد مازال الناس يؤدون الشعائر الدينية مثل الصلاة في المساجد؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

56- ما هو أهم مصادر الوعي الديني للناس في عسفان؟

☐ التعليم في المدارس.

☐ المساجد.

☐ الأسرة.

☐ وسائل الإعلام.

57- هل تعتقد لازال الناس يتعلمون الأمور الدينية؟ ولماذا؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

....

....

58- هل تعتقد أن هناك في القرية من الناس من لا يحتفل بالاعياد؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

59- إذا الإجابة بـ نعم، تعتقد لماذا ذلك؟

....

....

....

60- هل الناس يعطون أقاربهم المحتاجين بعض المساعدات والصدقات عندما يحتاجونهم؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

☐ بعض الأحيان.

61-هل يقوم الناس بإعداد أنواع خاصة من الطعام في مناسبات الأعياد؟

☐ نعم.

☐ لا.

62- ما هو الأكثر من أنواع الزيارات بين الناس في مناسبات الأعياد؟

☐ للجيران فقط.

☐ للجيران والأقارب في عسفان.

☐ للأقارب خارج عسفان.

☐ للأصدقاء.

63- من هم الأكثر تطبيقًا في القرية للامور الدينية؟ولماذا؟

☐ كبار السن.

☐ الشباب.

....

....

....

شاكرًا لكم حسن تعاونكم معي،،،،،،

APPENDIX

THREE

THE SCHEDULE OF THE

ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px; text-align:center;">

The Schedule of the

Anthropological Study

</div>

Section I:

Background Information

Interviewee's Name:

Age:

Marital Status:

Occupation:

Place and Date of Interview:

Observation:

Section II:

Traditional Marriage

1-Who chose your spouse?

2-What did people look for as a criterion for the choice of a wife?

3-What was the appropriate age for a son to get married?

4-What was the appropriate age for a daughter to get married?

5-How much was the bridal gift (*Mahr*) in Assfan? Was it considered excessive?

6-Where did people of Assfan hold their wedding parties? Was there any extravagance in celebration in the village?

7-Was any type of assistance given to the groom in his wedding? What kind of assistance was offered?

8-Was the custom of adorning the bride observed in Assfan?

9-Did people practise any traditional customs at wedding parties? Who usually did so?

Observation:

Section III:

Traditional Economic Life

1-What were the jobs or duties of household members: men, women and children? What were the preferred jobs for them in the past?

2-What kinds of businesses did people in Assfan have?

3-Did villagers employ workers?

4-Did women work outside the house? Was it acceptable?

5-Where did most of Assfan's people work?

6-Was there any chance for foreigners to work in the village? What kind of work did they do?

7-Did people emigrate from Assfan? Where did they go? What was the reason for that? When did they come back?

8-Where did the shopkeepers in Assfan come from? Did the people of Assfan have their own businesses in the village?

9-What were the economic activities in Assfan? Did you participate in any of them?

Observation:

Section IV:

Religious Duties and Values

1-Did people observe religious duties such as performing prayers in the

mosque?

2-What were the sources of religious consciousness for the people in

Assfan?

3-Who was the most conscientious in the village in practising the religious

duties ?

4-How were the *Eid* festivals celebrated? Were there people who did not

celebrate the religious festivals?

5-Did the villagers use to prepare any special kind of food during festivals?

6-What type of visits took place between the villagers in the past?

7-Did anybody give needy relatives in the village support and help? What

was the form of help?

Observation:

APPENDIX

FOUR

SOME OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Royal Embassy of
Saudi Arabia
London

SAUDI ARABIAN CULTURAL BUREAU
29 BELGRAVE SQUARE
LONDON SW1X 8QB

Telephone: 0171-245 9944/5/6/7
Cable Address: ELMIAH LONDON, S. W. 1
Telex: 299909 ELMIAII G
Fax: 0171 245 9895

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
مكتب الملحقية الثقافية في بريطانيا

الرقم: ٢٠٨٤/ خ ٤
التاريخ: ٢٦ / ٥ / ١٩
المرفقات:

الاكاديمية رقم الملف 270K

الاخ الكريم المبتعث / هنيدى بن عطية البشري   المحترم

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ،، وبعد

تسلمنا من جامعة الملك عبد العزيز القرار الاداري رقم ٤١٩/٢/٦٨ ب خ وتاريخ
١٤١٩/٤/١٦ هـ متضمنا الموافقة على قيامك برحلة علمية الى المملكة لمدة ثلاثة أشهر لجمع
المعلومات اللازمة لموضوع بحثك .
وعليه نأمل الاتصال بالمكتب لاكمال اجراءات سفرك وبعد العودة من الرحلة نأمل تزويدنا بصور
الجوازات وتقرير   مفصل عن الرحلة العلمية .

مع تمنياتنا لك بالتوفيق ،،،،

الملحق الثقافي في بريطانيا

عبد الله بن محمد الناصر

ك ع / س ز

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
Ministry of Higher Education
KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ─────────
Date : ─────────
Encl. : ─────────

مكتب العميد

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز
كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية

الــرقــم : ١٩٣٨/١/مركم
التـاريخ : ٩٩/٧/١٤٩١
المرفقات : ─────────

حفظه الله   سعادة رئيس مركز عسفان

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجية اجتماعية لقرية عسفان".

نأمل من سعادة التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لساعدتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
Ministry of Higher Education
KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ————————————

Date : ————————————

Encl. : ————————————

مكتب العميد

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز
كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية

الرقـم : ١٧١٩/ح ك ص ع
التـاريخ : ١ /٧/١٤١٩
المرفقات : ————————————

سعادة مدير عام رئاسة تعليم البنات بمنطقة مكة المكرمة   حفظه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعــــم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشـــري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنــوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجيـــة اجتماعيـــة لقريـــة عسفان".

نأمل من سعادتكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومـات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لسعادتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
Ministry of Higher Education
KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ――――――――

Date : ――――――――

Encl. : ――――――――

مكتب العميد

المَملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز
كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

الرقم : ــــــــــــ ٥٥٨١١/١١١٨٨
التاريخ : ١ / ٧ / ١٤١٩
المرفقات : ـــــــــــ

سعادة مدير عام مكتب العمل والعمال بمنطقة مكة المكرمة حفظه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعـــم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشــري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنـوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجيـــة اجتماعيـــة لقريـــة عسفان".

نأمل من سعادتكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومـــات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لسعادتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Ministry of Higher Education

KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Date : ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

Encl. : ⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯⎯

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز
كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية

الرقم : ....
التاريخ : ١/٧٧/١٤١٩م
المرفقات : ⎯⎯⎯

مكتب العميد

سعادة مدير عام إدارة التعليم بمنطقة مكة المكرمة   حفظه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعـــم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشـري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنـوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجيـة اجتماعيـة لقريـة عسقان".

نأمل من سعادتكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومـات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لسعادتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
Ministry of Higher Education
KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ——————
Date : ——————
Encl. : ——————

مكتب العميد

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم العالي
جامعة الملك عبد العزيز
كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية

الرقـــم : ١٧١٦/أ م ح ر
التــاريخ : ٨/١٧/١٤١٩
المرفقات : ————

<u>إلى من يهمه الأمر</u>

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعـــم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشـــري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنـــوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجيـــة اجتماعيـــة لقريـــة عسفان".

نأمل من سعادتكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومـــات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لسعادتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Ministry of Higher Education

KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Ref. : ----------------------

Date : ----------------------

Encl. : ----------------------

المملكة العربية السعودية

وزارة التعليم العالي

جامعة الملك عبد العزيز

كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية

الـرقـم : ....

التـاريخ : ....

المرفقات : ....

مكتب العميد

سعادة مدير عام مصلحة الإحصاءات العامة بالرياض　　حفظه الله

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،

انطلاقا من مبدأ التعاون بين قطاعات الدولة المختلفة وتأكيدا لسياسة الدولة في دعـــم حركة البحث العلمي نفيد سعادتكم بأن مبتعث قسم الاجتماع السيد/ هنيدي بن عطية البشــري يقوم الآن برحلة علمية لجمع المعلومات والإحصاءات اللازمة لبحثه لرسالة الدكتوراه بعنـوان" المظاهر الاجتماعية والاقتصادية للقرية السعودية : دراسة أنثروبولوجيـــة اجتماعيـــة لقريـــة عسفان".

نأمل من سعادتكم التكرم بتسهيل مهمته والتنسيق مع الجهات التابعة لكم لمده بالمعلومـات اللازمة .

شاكرين ومقدرين لسعادتكم حسن وكريم تعاونكم.

عميد كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية

د. إسماعيل بن خليل كتبخانة

١٠

298