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EDUCATION IN BAHRAIN - 1919-1986  
AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF  
PROBLEMS AND PROGRESS

by

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Thesis submitted for the Ph.D. Degree in  
The School of Education, University of Durham, England

November, 1987

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## DECLARATION

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## DEDICATION

To my children Ranya and Shermene, who although they never understood why their mother is still studying ... accepted the fact of having her away from home for fairly long periods of time.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to present a case study of educational development in Bahrain, a developing country with limited resources. This study attempts

- (1) to assess the development of education in Bahrain from 1919 to 1980 and to analyse the main problems; and
- (2) to give a comprehensive account of the present educational system (1980 onwards) in the context of recent economic developments and trends.

The thesis is organised into eight chapters. Chapter One describes the geography, the people, the history and the economy of the Islands. Chapter Two is concerned with the historical development of Bahraini education from 1919 until 1980. It is an analysis of the different stages, the problems at each stage and the measures taken to tackle them. Chapter Three examines the main forces that have affected the present development, both positively and negatively. Chapter Four provides a survey of the present educational system especially in the State schools. Also the reforms which have been implemented since 1980 are fully examined. Chapter Five is devoted to higher education both at countries abroad and at home colleges. There is also a discussion of teacher-training and an analysis of the current status of the teaching profession. Chapter Six examines the role of the private schools in Bahrain from pre-primary to secondary, national and foreign. Chapter Seven deals with the provision for adult literacy and for special educational needs. Chapter Eight concludes this study by evaluating both the strengths and the weaknesses in the system, as well as by analysing the problems that Bahrain education has experienced in the past and which still persist in the present. Finally there are a number of recommendations.

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In England I am grateful to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of Universities of the United Kingdom for giving me the ORS Award which was indeed an honour and an encouragement. I am indebted, too, to the Librarians of the School of Education, the School of Oriental Studies, the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, St. Aidan's College, and the Main University Library. Also I am indebted to Mrs Norma Gough for her skill and patience in typing this thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

The problem of relating education to the economy of the country has been and will always be a high priority in Bahrain as the Government's policy and interest are directed towards that goal. Bahrain, unlike the neighbouring countries in the Gulf, is a relatively oil-poor country; thus it has been forced to develop differently both in economy and in education especially in recent years. The innovative practices which have been introduced into the system since the 1980s, and in particular the class-teacher approach at the primary level, the diversification of the school curricula at secondary level and the selection of courses at university level, reflect that policy and that interest.

The intention of this thesis is to assess the development of the educational system in Bahrain from 1919 to 1986, and to present a case study in educational development.

A study of educational development and modernization in the context of limited resources has two purposes. First, it provides a testing ground for the strengths and the weaknesses in the system. And secondly, it allows the researcher to assess the validity and the applicability of a new functional model of educational reform.

This study seeks to consider two main issues in an attempt to understand the present educational system in Bahrain.

First, to trace the historical development of the educational system with particular emphasis on the various environmental forces ... social, political, religious, and economic that have shaped that development. The reason for adopting this approach was that some of the problems which the Bahraini system of education is currently facing have their origins in its history.



Secondly, to determine the benefits, problems and principles encountered in the implementation of the main reforms of the present system of education. The purpose of this approach is to analyze the role of these radical changes in developing Bahraini education.

In pursuing these aims the study seeks to answer the following questions: (1) What were the stages of development that the education system in Bahrain passed through? (2) At each stage what was the effect of the interaction between the education system and its environment? (3) What are the main forces that affect the development of education at present? (4) What are the benefits and the problems encountered in the implementation of the class-teacher system in the primary school, in the implementation of the curricula diversification system in the secondary schools, and in the selection of courses at university level? (5) What is the role of private education in Bahrain? And (6) what are the available facilities for special education needs and adult literacy in Bahrain?

This is a very broad series of topics. They cannot be discussed with any finality in prescriptive terms. In order for this study to be of general value, the following approach has been chosen:

We assumed the following: (1) This account of Bahraini education will act as a case study of a teacher-class system, a curricula diversification system, and a higher education system; (2) Other researchers on education in the Gulf region can draw from the case study those aspects which are both pertinent to current educational initiatives and culturally relevant; (3) Some aspects of higher education are clearly related to the economic changes that are prevailing in the area at present.

The Bahraini educational system provides an excellent case study for the following reasons:

As a Gulf Arab state, Bahrain exhibits certain characteristics in its social fabric, economic structure, and educational system that are basically common throughout the Gulf region.

A second factor is that the Bahraini educational system is a good example of a centralized educational system in a developing country. It exhibits typical development problems and needs. However, unlike the neighbouring countries of the Gulf, Bahrain is a relatively oil-poor country. Thus it has been forced to develop differently.

A third factor is that the development of education from the first school for boys in 1919 to the fully developed four level education system serving about half the population in 1986 can be followed accurately because of the relatively short period of time involved.

And finally the Bahraini educational system is small enough to study in depth without being overwhelmed by the available data.

This is the first study offering a detailed analysis of the changes, reforms, and innovative practices which have been introduced into the education system since 1980. For the period between 1919 and 1933, where the reports and files are incomplete, the researcher has had recourse to primary sources, i.e. people who were employed in the educational system at that time. These interviews have provided valuable information for the reconstruction of the undocumented history of the educational system in its early days.

The approach, therefore, is to take a very broad view of education and the problems of change. This has been done in order to provide a perspective which permits events to be understood within a cultural, social, and especially in an economic context. In addition an attempt is made to portray both policy and reality and the system of implementation that supposedly links the two. It is

then possible to analyse the weaknesses and strengths of that system.

The thesis is organized into eight chapters, each dealing with different but related educational topics; and each topic has been treated, whenever necessary, under a separate subheading. But the whole is considered in an integrated manner.

The study begins by providing an introductory chapter concerning the general context of education in Bahrain. First, there is an overview of the Arab World. This is followed by a description of the geography of the Islands - their location, land, and climate. The population is discussed in terms of its growth, distribution, and ethnic groups. The fourth section of this chapter deals with the history of the Islands. Here five main periods are considered in some detail: the ancient history, the coming of Islam, the Portuguese in Bahrain, Bahrain in the 18th and 19th centuries, and Bahrain in the 20th century. A fifth section is devoted to the present economy of the country; petroleum-related activities; the non petroleum sector; agriculture, livestock, poultry and fishing. It also includes banking, and telecommunications. To conclude, Chapter One provides a broad survey of the society in which the educational system operates and is assessed. It also serves as a background to the analysis of educational problems in the following chapters.

The second chapter deals with the historical development of education in Bahrain. The present educational system has developed through six main stages. The first stage was pre 1919 and was characterised by the predominance of traditional education, the only kind then available for Bahrainis and which reflected the needs, religion and beliefs of the time. Along with this type of education, private education was established on the Island by the American missionaries in 1892, by the Persians in 1910, and by other individuals and

groups. The second stage lasted from 1919 to 1933; in this, the first "Al-Hidaya School" was established. It was the first modern primary school not only in Bahrain but also in the Gulf region. This stage was marked by major difficulties - in the allocation of funds, in administration, and in the amalgamation of both Sunni and Shia schools under the direct control of the Government headed by the British advisor. The third stage lasted from 1933 to 1945; in this, primary education, for both sexes, was provided everywhere throughout the country, secondary education was established for male students, and a boarding college was opened for students coming from remote places - from the villages and from other Gulf states to pursue their education in the general and the technical schools in Bahrain. The fourth stage lasted from 1945 to 1956; in this, secondary education for both sexes was expanded in the country, and scholarships for higher education at universities abroad were provided by the Government to both male and female Bahraini students. The fifth stage lasted from 1956 to 1970; in this, the first teacher-training colleges for men and women teachers were established. Regional colleges were also founded on the Island, such as the Gulf Technical College which offered a diversified curriculum in technical studies. And the sixth stage lasted from 1970 to 1980; in this, vocational, higher, and university education were made available in the country for Bahraini and overseas students.

Chapter Three gives an analytical study of the main forces affecting the development of education in Bahrain. These include the impact of oil on education (both its discovery and its decline), the manpower problem, and the rapid rate of growth in population.

Chapter Four is a detailed analysis of the present Bahraini system of education (1980-1986). It deals with its aims and objectives,

its administration, the budget, and the organization of education. It also examines the curricula and the problems of learning at the three levels of education in the state schools. At the end of this chapter two main recent reforms, the class-teacher approach at the primary level, and the diversification of the curricula at secondary level, are fully analysed.

Chapter Five is devoted to higher education. It begins by providing an overview of universities in the Arab World. Higher education in Bahrain is discussed under five topics. These deal with stages of development, higher education at countries abroad, higher education at home colleges, factors affecting the present development, and enrolment at home colleges. The chapter also includes an account of the five institutions that offer higher education in the country. There is also a discussion of teacher training at university level for primary, intermediate and secondary teachers. The last section of the chapter is devoted to an assessment of what has been the effect of the recent reforms (automatic promotion, the new system of evaluation and testing) on the status of the teachers. The effect of the economy on higher education is shown in the limitation of grants, in the selection of courses, and in the establishment of regional colleges in the country. There is, today, in Bahrain a wide range of vocational and academic institutions with various faculties offering courses for specialisation in Arts, Sciences, Education, Hotel and Catering, Business, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Applied Health Sciences. Medicine and medical studies are offered in the regional Arabian University which was established in Bahrain in 1979.

Chapter Six is a study of private education. It begins with a general introduction to the fee paying private educational establish-

ments in Bahrain. This is followed by a discussion of the private education law which has been in force since the 1970s. The third section of this chapter is devoted to pre-primary education. This is followed by an account of the private schools at their various levels from kindergarten to secondary. The discussion also includes the systems of education adopted from the countries of origin. The last section analyses the problems and benefits arising from the existence of such schools in Bahrain.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the development of educational facilities for adult illiterates and for children with special educational needs - in particular the deaf, the blind, and the mildly mentally or physically handicapped. There is also a discussion of the Five-Year-Plan which has been implemented in recent years to eradicate illiteracy in the country by 1990.

Chapter Eight concludes this research with a general evaluation of the educational system in Bahrain. This chapter is an investigation into the strengths and weaknesses of the system and is divided into three parts. The first examines innovative practices in Bahraini education and assesses the progress made, over the years, as a result of reforms and changes. The second part analyses the weaknesses and raises the major problems that Bahraini education faces. These problems are the shortage of trained administrators, and of qualified teachers, difficulties of implementation and change, and the lack of resources. All these problems have their origins in the historical development of Bahraini education. Finally, as a case study, the third part of this chapter outlines a functional model of educational reforms that can be applied in Bahrain, in the Gulf and in the Arab World.

The principal sources for this study have been all the available

material issued by the Department of Education from 1933 to 1969; and by the Ministry of Education from 1970 to 1987, as well as materials issued by other Government agencies in Bahrain. Interviews were conducted with teachers, headmasters and headmistresses, inspectors, senior staff in the Ministry of Education headquarters and in other Government departments, as well as with other people with relevant experience.

For the period before 1933 the following people were interviewed Ahmed Umran, the former Minister of Education in Bahrain who was among the first group to graduate from Al-Hidaya School (the Sunni school in Muharraq); Mahmood Al-Alawi, the former Minister of Finance who was educated at the Al-Jaffaria School (The Shia school in Manama); Ebrahim Al-Arrayed, the former Speaker in the Constitutional Assembly who was among the first Bahraini to open a local private school; the late Ahmed Al-Shirawi, a Bahraini historian who was one of the first pioneers to permit his daughter to join the Girls' School in Muharraq; Mrs Nazeema Khudhoori, who was one of the earliest Bahraini Jews to study at the American Mission School in Bahrain; and Mrs Sakeena Al-Kahtani who was one of the first Bahraini ladies to be employed as a teacher by the Department of Education.

Three periods of field work were completed. The first, in 1985 for one month comprised visits and interviews with the principals and the headmasters of the following private schools: The Al-Raja School (formerly known as the American Mission School), Al Iltihad (the Persian School), St. Christopher's School (the British School), Sacred Heart School (the Catholic School), the Indian School, and the Bahrain School (American). Visits were also made to kindergartens established by Women's Societies, in particular by the Mother and Child Society. The second one in 1986 for another month consisted

of visits to the Arabian Gulf University, the Gulf Polytechnic, the College of Applied Health Sciences, and the University College of Sciences, Arts and Education. The third period in 1987 for three weeks was a visit to the Adult Literacy Centre in Manama; and the Hope School for handicapped children in Isa Town. Interviews held during the field work are mentioned in chapter references but are not included in the bibliography.

The transliteration in this thesis follows the method used in the School of Oriental Studies at Durham University. However, certain names are spelled as they are used in Bahrain; Al-Hidaya instead of al-Hidaya, Al-Noor instead of al-Nūr, Shaikh instead of Sheikh. The Persian Gulf as it is known by the Iranians, or the Arabian Gulf as it is known by the Arabs is referred to in this thesis as the Gulf.

One other point should be made: history in the developing countries is rarely an entirely accurate and impartial account of the past.

It is frequently altered at whim and always viewed as the property of those who rule. The result is that field research is a laborious task in which procedure is as important as substance. Experience also revealed that information about the foundation of a particular school was not often available. This is especially true of the private schools. For example, Al-Raja School, formerly known as the American Mission School, the first private school to be founded in Bahrain, has no documents or records concerning the first of its pioneers. Further, the dates of establishment of these schools differ from one source to another. For instance, according to recent sources in the Directorate of Private Education, the American Mission School was founded in 1913, the Persian School in 1923, Sacred Heart School in 1948, the Indian School in 1952 - compared with earlier records which state that the American School was founded in 1892, the Persian

School in 1910, Sacred Heart School in 1940 and the Indian School in 1950. Also the data in the annual publication "Educational Statistics" differs from that in the "Statistical Summaries of Education" for the same year - which creates more confusion and frustration for the researcher.

Such information as it has been possible to collect is largely derived from data provided in the earliest written records available. The collection of this material has been a time consuming process and the accuracy of the account is limited by the quality of the data.

Finally it is hoped that this study may contribute to a better understanding of how specific historical, social, religious and economic factors affect the way in which educators come to view the objectives of the educative process. Or, it may suggest that irrespective of difference in the cultural environment and social needs, educators striving to achieve similar goals for their children, tend to pursue similar policies and encounter similar problems.

## CHAPTER ONE

### BAHRAIN : GEOGRAPHICAL, AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

The purpose of this chapter is to give certain preliminary information about the islands of Bahrain, its geographical setting, its people, their history and economy, all of which influence either directly or indirectly the development of education.

Wherever necessary, an attempt will be made to give a comparative approach in relation to the Arab World in general. This has been done in order to provide a view which permits events to be understood within their cultural, social, and economic context.

#### 1.1 The Arab World - An Overview

The Arab World covers one-tenth of the area of the globe. It lies at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, Europe, covering an area of 5.4 million square miles.<sup>1</sup> It occupies an important position in the world's transportation, trade, communication and energy resources. This has proved to be an economic asset and a political liability. Yet only 6.8 percent of its land is arable, and only half of this area is utilized, thereby giving the area 3.4 percent of the utilized arable land of the world.<sup>2</sup> This cultivated portion varies from one country to the other. For example, the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen has the lowest percentage at 0.3 percent, while Syria has 47 percent; and Bahrain has 10 percent of its land used for agriculture.<sup>3</sup> The region, however, is endowed with 9 percent of the Savana area of the world.<sup>4</sup> The people and resources of the contemporary Arab World are widely and unevenly distributed among 21 independent states. The name, population, and area of each state in the Arab World for the

FIGURE 1

The Arab World

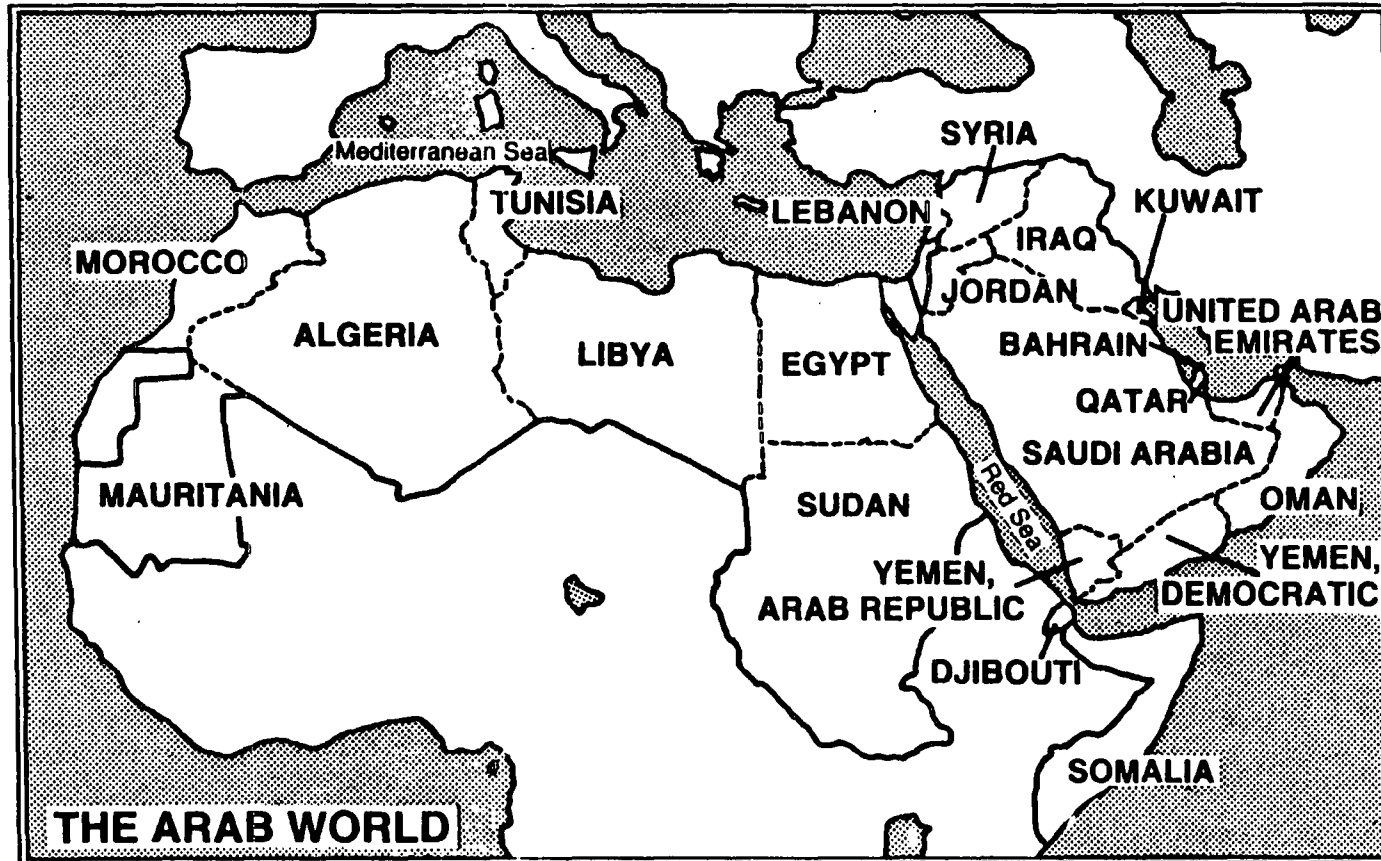
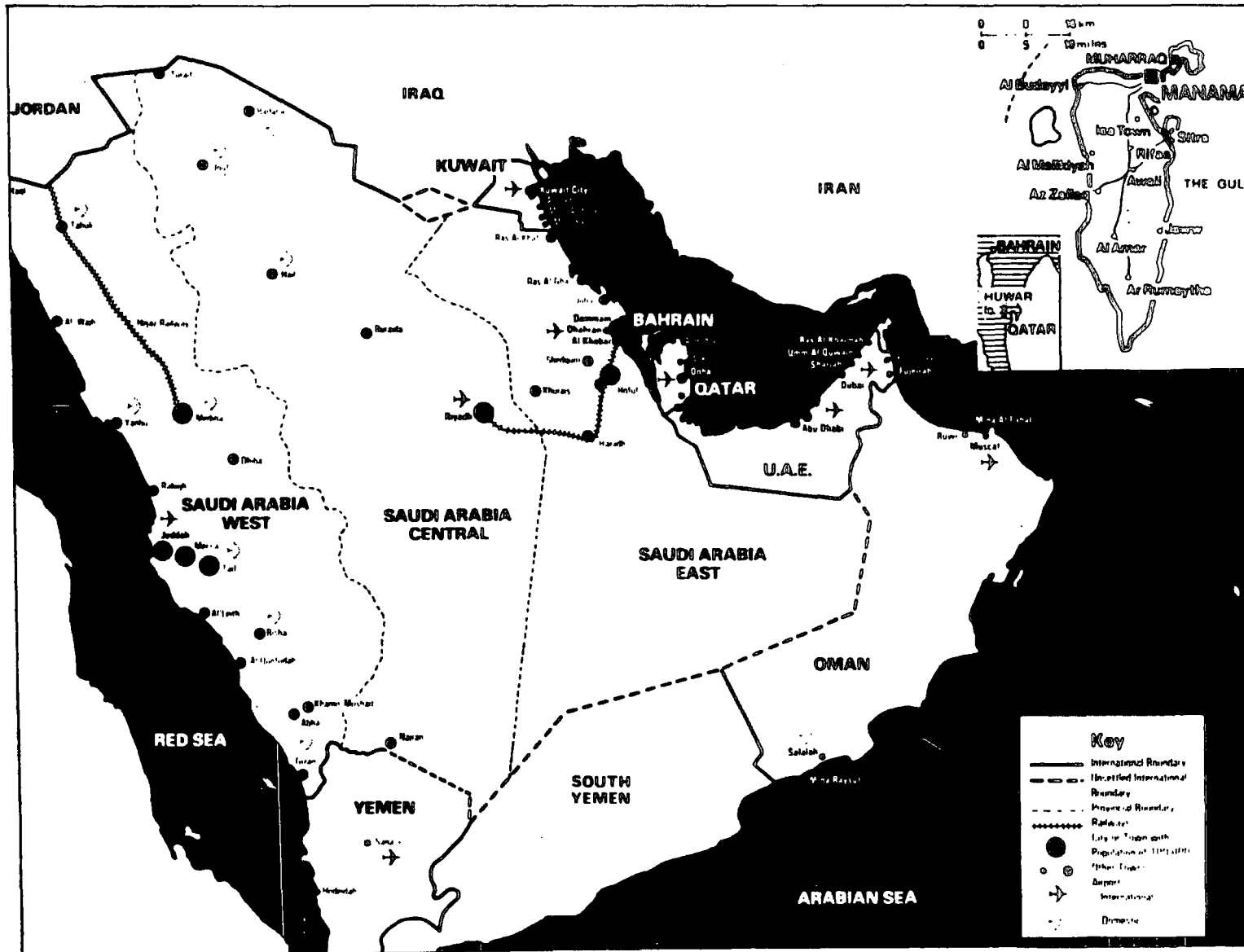


FIGURE 2

The Gulf States



year 1981 are shown in Table 1.1 (see p. 13).

The state of Bahrain is one of the smaller yet more intriguing nations. With a population of only 360,000 in 1981 and 274 square miles in total area, Bahrain is the only island state in the whole Arab World.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 The Geography of Bahrain

Located in a central position in the Gulf, the archipelago of Bahrain consists of 35 islands, totalling an area of approximately 675 square kilometres, situated just off the shore line of Saudi Arabia to the west, and Qatar to the east in the Arabian Gulf.<sup>6</sup>

The Gulf is an inland sea about 500 miles long and, on average, 100 miles wide. It lies roughly north-west and south-east between latitudes 30° and 24° North and longitudes 48° and 57° East. Until recently it was known as the Persian Gulf particularly by non-Arabs on the opposite coast; however, at present it is referred to as the Arabian Gulf.<sup>7</sup>

Out of the thirty-five islands, only six are inhabited, with most of the population being found on the two main islands: Bahrain and Muharraq.

The island of Bahrain is the largest, representing 85% of the land area. It is approximately 48 kilometres long and 16 kilometres wide at its broadest point; and is connected to Muharraq to the north-east by a 2.4 kilometre long causeway built in 1929. On this island the capital Manama is situated as are the main sea port (Mina Sulman), and the colleges for higher education.<sup>8</sup>

The second most important island is Muharraq. It forms the northern part of the island group. Here the Bahrain International Airport is found; and also the first formal school to be established

FIGURE 3

The Islands of Bahrain

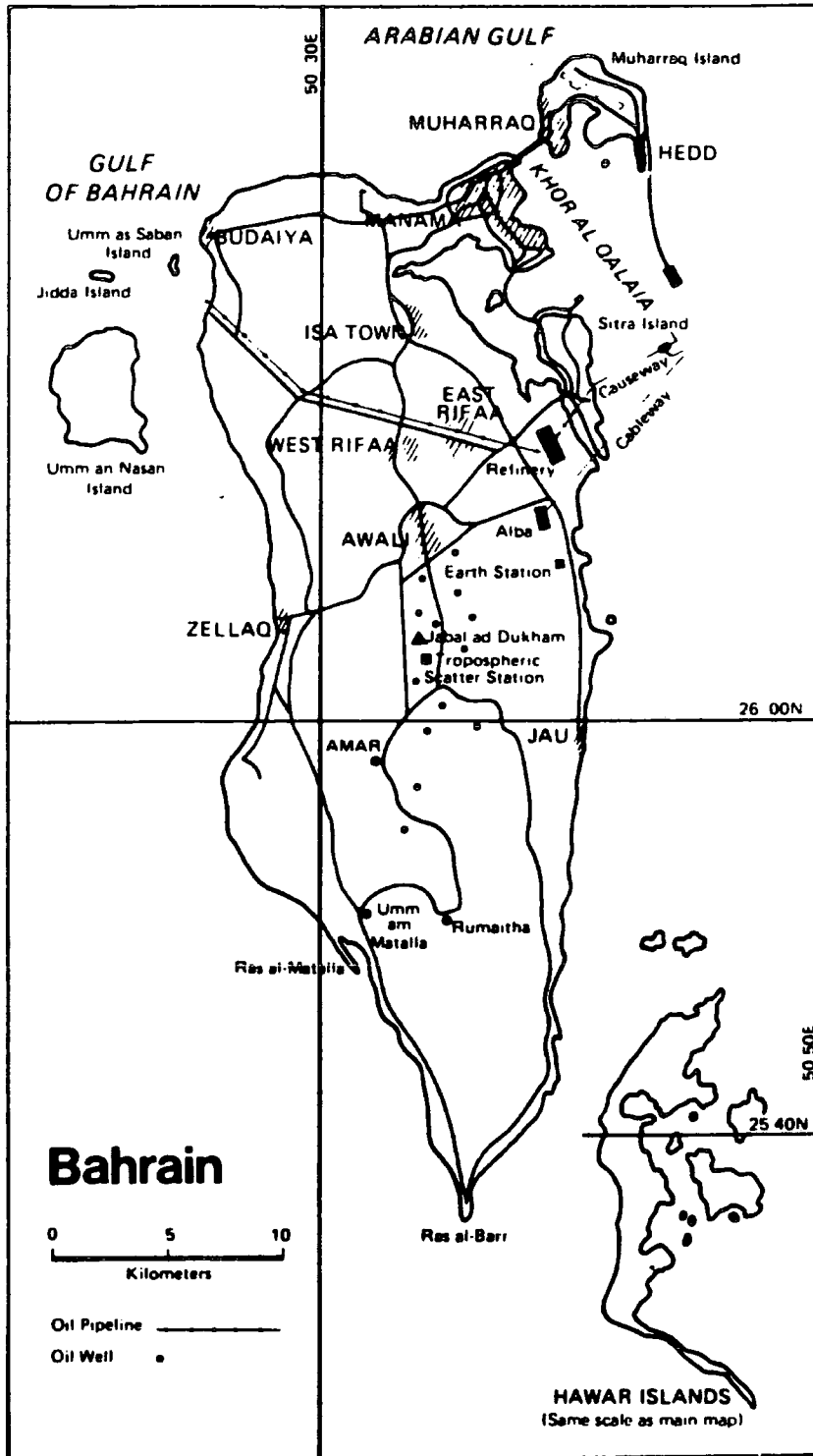


TABLE 1.1

Population and Area of the Arab World 1981

	Population (millions)		Area (Square miles)	Density per square mile	Percentage of land used for agriculture
	Mid.1981	Percent Growth Rate			
Algeria	19.30	3.2	919,951	22.0	19
Bahrain	0.42	4.5	2	1666.7	10
Djibouti	0.46	9.2	8,996	36.7	N.A.
Egypt	42.20	2.7	386,872	111.1	3
Iraq	13.80	3.4	172,000	77.9	18
Jordan	3.50	3.9	37,297	88.5	11
Kuwait	1.50	5.9	7,780	185.1	1
Lebanon	3.00	2.5	4,015	747.2	27
Libya	3.10	4.2	679,536	4.4	7
Mauritania	1.60	1.9	419,229	4.0	N.A.
Morocco	21.60	2.9	171,953	119.2	32
Oman	0.91	3.0	82,000	11.2	N.A.
Qatar	0.231	7.6	4,247	57.5	N.A.
Saudi Arabia	10.40	5.6	873,000	9.9	N.A.
Somalia	3.70	2.6	246,155	15.2	N.A.
Sudan	19.60	2.7	967,491	19.4	3
Syria	9.6	3.4	71,498	130.4	47
Tunisia	6.60	2.5	63,379	102.6	N.A.
United Arab Emirates	0.98	6.2	32,278	26.6	8
Yeman Arab Republic	5.30	2.2	75,290	81.0	42
Yemen, People's Democratic Republic	2.00	1.8	111,000	17.6	0.3

N.A. = not available

Source : Massialas, Byron, G., Education in The Arab World, p. 2.

in Bahrain in 1919.

Two smaller islands lie to the south-east of Muharraq, Um Ash-shagar and Umm Ash-shujaira - meaning the island of big trees and the island of small trees. At present a causeway links these islands to 300,000 square metres of reclaimed land, the site of Bahrain's dry-dock complex.

Nestling to the south of Muharraq's Arad peninsula are four other isles, Halat As-Sulatah, Halat Al-Khulaifat, Halat An-Naim, and Abu Mahur.

In the north-east of Bahrain island lies Khor al-Kabb, a large bay sheltering the island of Nabih Salih. Its two main springs, Ain as-Safahiyah, and Ain al-Khadra, provide natural bathing pools, as well as irrigation for intensive cultivation. As a result the land is lush with different types of trees. Since 1977 this island has been connected to the Manama-Sitia causeway by an auxiliary bridge.<sup>9</sup>

To the south-east of Nabih Salih and close to the coast of Bahrain is the island of Sitia which is also connected to the mainland by a causeway. Until 1932 its inhabitants relied for their living on its pools and gardens. But after the discovery of oil it became an industrial complex.

Jiddah is a small, rocky island about 5 kilometres to the north-west of Bahrain. Unlike the other Bahrain islands, high yellowish-grey cliffs rise steeply from the sea, except for a level strip of land to the south which has been cultivated extensively into gardens growing date-palms, cork trees, pomegranates, oleanders and jasmine. The late Sir Charles Belegrove commented in his memoirs that the island was "a great place for birds and around it there was first-rate fishing"<sup>10</sup>

Umm al-Na'asan is the second largest island of the Bahrain archipelago in terms of land area, located just south of Jiddah island.

It is sandy and flat with the exception of two small lime-stone hills towards its centre in which a number of rock tombs have been fashioned. However, according to some authors, the most striking features of the island are its date groves and a herd of black buck and gazelle.<sup>11</sup>

Since 1981, a new causeway, 25 kilometres long, has been under construction to join the west coast of the mainland, passing through the northern parts of Umm al-Na'asan, with the eastern shoreline of Saudi Arabia, which in the course of time might bring unprecedented change to this island. The new four-lane highway is expected to be officially opened in November 1986.<sup>12</sup>

Finally the Howar islands are the antithesis in many ways to the hustle of the northern group of Bahrain's islands. They comprise sixteen closely-knit islands about 20 kilometres south-east of the southernmost headland of Bahrain, Ras al-Bar. Howar itself is the largest of the group being about 18 kilometres long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres wide.

As modern maps demonstrate, the Howar group is closer to the Qatar peninsula than to the Bahrain islands, a fact which has not been ignored by raiders and pirates.

Whether Howar islands belong to Bahrain or to Qatar is a matter of great dispute. But in 1986 the Qataris invaded the islands claiming that they are part of Qatar.

Most of Bahrain's islands are flat and on average not more than 60 metres above sea level. A chain of hills runs southwards to the centre of Bahrain starting about 19 kilometres from the north coast. The highest of these, which is located in the centre of Bahrain and is called Jabal al-Dukhan, is also the highest point of the island at 122.4 metres above sea level. This slopes away gradually to the south and to the east and west covering the major parts of the island

with a rocky terrain, generally without water, that varies in altitude between 20 and 45 metres above sea level. Further south of Jabal al-Dukhan, the terrain turns into salt flats which eventually end in a sandy strip at the extreme southern tip of the island which is known as Ras al-Barr.<sup>13</sup>

Bahrain, meaning two seas (Bahr = sea, and Ain = spring), is an oval-shaped island with approximately 200 natural springs bubbling with fresh water under the sea and about 25 sweet water springs on the land like Ain Al-thra, Ain Umm-Shu'um, Ain Abu Zaydan, Ain Al-Jazirah, Ain Al Raha, Ain Al-Safaheya, and so on - a unique feature of Bahrain which is not found in other Gulf states which has, since ancient times, contributed to agricultural development, and has attracted travellers to the islands.

It is due to the presence of these springs that agriculture is found along the northern coast of Bahrain, hence the presence of a narrow strip of fertile land about 6 kilometres wide that supports palm groves and numerous vegetable gardens.

In "Written of Bahrain" by Ben Kendim Aubrey Herbert, in 1905, the author described the island of Bahrain as:

"The island is a pleasant oasis. It is friendly not hateful like the abominable coast that faces it. It is not antagonistic to life and does not breed such a missing link as the littoral Arab. ... The golden-dusted roads which cross it are broad and shaded on either side by long forests of date palms, deepening into an impenetrable greenness, cool with the sound of wind among the great leaves and the tinkle of flowing water." 14

However, the central areas and the entire southern half of the 30-mile long main island are uninhabited mainly because these areas are rocky, sandy and dry.

The coast, with few exceptions, dips into shallow waters and coral reefs, most of which are exposed at low tide, making navigation almost impossible. The shallow water and the reefs that surround

the main island are broken into two narrow channels where the relatively deep water reaches the coast. This, however, makes the island an excellent natural harbour protected from storms by those shallow coastal reefs; and makes attacks from the sea a hazardous adventure.<sup>15</sup>

Another dominant feature, in addition to the presence of numerous fresh water springs on the mainland, as well as in the sea around Bahrain, is the ancient burial mounds dating back several thousand years. Well over 100,000 tumuli, large and small, extend from the north central plain towards the north-western coast.<sup>16</sup>

It should be noted that over the last twenty or more years, significant additions have been made to the land area of Bahrain by the reclamation of land bordering the shores, particularly around the major cities of Manama and Muharraq. Most of this new land has been utilized to provide both impressive, limited-access highways which ring the densely populated cities and extend outward to the west and south to new residential and industrial development sites.

The climate is generally hot and humid. During the period between May and October, the average daily temperature reaches 30 degrees Centigrade and more. During the winter months, the temperature is usually around 20 degrees Centigrade. However, The Civil Aeronautics Weather Bureau reported that in the years 1959 and 1963 the temperature during the winter season dropped below zero.<sup>17</sup> That was caused by cold winds coming from Russia across Iran. The winter season is dominated by 10 centimetres of rainfall; and also by the moist north wind known as the Shamal. Occasionally in June the temperatures are moderated by al-Bareh, a cool north wind, but this relief is only temporary. Apart from the Shamal the other dominant wind in the summer season is al Qaws, a hot, sand-bearing wind from the south. The summer remains hot until October when the temperature begins to fall

rapidly.<sup>18</sup> Humidity throughout the year remains high with the figures for the summer being slightly lower than those of the winter.

It is due to this low rainfall that settlement and agriculture in the islands have been restricted largely to the areas where ground water is easily accessible. The fertile gardens in the north contain palm, log (Indian almonds), pomegranate, banana, grape, lime, fig, mango, and papaya trees. Round the date gardens lucerne is grown for the cattle and also various kinds of vegetables. Most European vegetables can be grown in the winter except peas and beans. In the hot season there are various eggplants, ladies fingers, pumpkins, and so on.<sup>19</sup>

The south of the island is a miniature desert and in the foot hills around the Jabal al Dukhan, there are many little wadis which after the rainy season are bright with desert flowers and shrubs. In 1973 James Belgrave, a British author and the son of Charles Belgrave, the advisor to the Bahrain Government, wrote in his book "Welcome to Bahrain":

"... Although this desert may seem bare to the eyes of a visitor accustomed to the lush greenness of Europe or the States, it is in fact covered with great variety of desert plants which were recently found to number some 200 species." 20

One of the reasons for Bahrain's past prosperity was the abundance of freshwater springs welling up into natural pools fringed with palms and oleanders. The most famous of these is Adhari or the virgin pool, which is over thirty feet deep with crystal clear water over a bottom tinged with blue as a result of sulphur content. Its temperature is constant so that it is cool in summer and warm in winter.<sup>21</sup>

The orthodox geological explanation for these springs is that they are derived from the scanty rainfall received by the hills of central Arabia. Another opinion is that the water is siphoned under

the Gulf from the Persian mountains. Such water is not liable to seasonal variations but is affected by the tides and, owing to the extent to which it has been tapped in recent years, its level is falling.

Traditionally most water was obtained from these springs (Ains), but with increased demand, these have been replaced by wells. The recently increased abstraction has led to a serious decrease in both the quality and quantity of the water available. As a result, the increased production of desalinated water has become a major priority of the government.<sup>22</sup>

### 1.3. The People

Table 1.1 reveals a wide disparity among the 21 Arab states in terms of size and population. While the population of Qatar is barely .25 million, Egypt has around 43.2 million inhabitants. Further, the disparity in population density varies tremendously. While Mauritania and Libya have 4.0 and 4.4 people per square mile respectively, Bahrain and Lebanon boast 1,666 and 747 inhabitants per square mile respectively.

Such figures indicate that Bahrain has the highest density of population per square mile in the whole Arab World.

Since the dawn of time the fact that Bahrain is an island, and the existence of two vital elements of life: water and agriculture, which other places in the area lacked in the past, have made Bahrain more open to the outside world than its neighbours. As a result it was inhabited by various races, nations, and civilizations which have had a great influence on creating and developing the country.<sup>23</sup>

The social and economic characteristics of Bahrain, formed in part by its location, have made the Arabs of Bahrain different from

the Arabs of the Arabian Gulf in so far as there is a reduced importance on tribalism and a more cosmopolitan outlook - something characteristic of commercial societies.<sup>24</sup>

On this subject, Michael Rice, a contemporary English historian stated in his book Search For The Paradise Land:

"... The essential character of the people of Bahrain has, throughout its long history, been conditioned by the fact that their home is an island. Collectively, the state of Bahrain is the principal group of islands in the Arabian Gulf; its population is by far the most numerous. Its character indeed, is unusual in the entire Arab World, since the days when the great Mediterranean islands such as Sicily ceased to be Arab lands." 25

Similarly, Jeffrey B. Nugent, a professor of Economics at the University of Southern California, in his book Bahrain And The Gulf, wrote in 1985:

"... Bahrain is not typical of the Arab countries of the Gulf; it may, however, serve as a gauge of their current position and likely future. It will, therefore, be valuable to those interested in gaining more insight into the history and politics of the Middle East during this period of rapid change." 26

The author considers that the uniqueness in the character of the Bahraini people was due to the following:

"... Because of (a) the fact that Bahrain served as the head-quarters of the protectorate in the Gulf, (b) the arrival of numerous American and British firms and technicians subsequent to the discovery and exploitation of oil in the 1930s, and (c) the Amir's hiring of a British Civil Servant (Charles Belgrave) as a personal secretary-advisor, Bahrain gradually assimilated some western values and technologies." 27

However though its location between the East and the West has affected the composition of the population and has attracted many foreigners, Bahrain has never lost its identity, the Arab language, and feeling of belonging, all of which, in fact, have remained essential features of the country. But unlike most places in the Gulf, in Bahrain, the mosque, the church - Catholic, Protestant,

or Orthodox, and the temple stand side by side. To some visitors, the open friendliness of the people and the hospitality that prevails over the islands are eloquent testimony to tolerance and understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

Many races have contributed to the making of the Bahrain people. There are the Baharna, the original inhabitants of the islands, they are the Shiite Arabs. Then there are the Sunni Arabs, most of whom came to Bahrain in the 18th century and during subsequent years; the ruling family of Bahrain, the al-Khalifa are in this group.<sup>28</sup> There are also a number of negroes who are descended from freed slaves or who were slaves themselves and escaped from other parts of the Gulf to Bahrain where they were manumitted. Persians have also settled in the islands, having left their own country to seek their fortunes in Bahrain.<sup>29</sup> And when the Indian sub-continent became an important part of the British Empire, many Indian merchants settled in the island, since Bahrain is located on the main route to India.<sup>30</sup>

The general statistics for the last census indicated that the indigenous population of Bahrain is Arab Muslim, divided relatively evenly between the Sunni and the Shiah. Of the 350,798 population in 1981, one-third were expatriate workers and their families. The largest numbers are labourers from South ~~India~~ but professional and middle management personnel are also prominent, coming from such places as Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Great Britain, other European countries, the United States, Australia, and several other Arab countries.<sup>31</sup>

Table 1.2 (see p.12) shows that the population of Bahrain has increased over the last forty years - as follows: 89,970 in 1941; 109,650 in 1950; 143,135 in 1959; 182,203 in 1965; 216,078 in 1971; and 350,798 in 1981. The population is growing rapidly with an

TABLE 1.2

Bahrain Population Census1941 - 1981

	Bahrainis	non Bahrainis	Total
1941	74,040	15,930	89,970
% of total	82.29	17.71	
1950	91,179	18,471	109,650
	83.15	16.85	
1959	118,734	24,401	143,135
	82.95	17.05	
1965	143,814	38,389	182,203
	78.93	21.07	
1971	187,193	37,885	216,078
	82.47	17.53	
1981	238,420	112,378	350,798
	67.96	32.04	

Source : State of Bahrain, Directorate of Statistics,  
Statistical Abstract, 1981 Census

annual increase of 7.9%. And though natural increase accounts for part of this, immigration of non-Bahrainis has been the largest contributing factor to such rapid growth.

Table 1.2 also shows that the population of non-Bahrainis increased from 78.93 in 1965 to 112,378 in 1981. Such growth is directly connected to economic development. Due to the decline in the Bahraini oil, the State has adopted the policy of diversifying sources of income so as not to depend totally on oil revenues as the basis for the economy. This has crystallized in the establishment of various industrial projects, aiding the services sector and making Bahrain a financial, commercial, and educational centre.

Economic development created a need to import labour. Accordingly, population growth increased, and the non-Bahraini population grew at an average rate of 11.5% during the period 1971-81. This contrasts with the decrease in this group in the period 1965-71 as seen in Table 1.3.

TABLE 1.3

Bahrain Population Yearly Growth Rate

Years	Yearly Growth Rate	
	Bahrainis	non Bahrainis
1965 - 71	+ 3.6%	- 0.2%
1971 - 81	2.95%	11.5%
TOTAL	+ 2.88%	4.96% = 7.84

Source : Statistical Abstracts, 1981 Census,  
Bahrain, Directorate of Statistics, p. 8.

As for Bahrainis, table 1.3 shows that the yearly average growth rate decreased from 3.6% in 1965-71 to 2.9% in 1971-81. This can be attributed in the first place to the decrease in the Bahraini birth-rate due to the indirect effects of the increase in the average marriage age, the tendency to small families and the greater number of working women.<sup>32</sup>

As a final point, it should be noted that the majority of the population, as the 1981 census shows, are the youth. People less than 15 years old represent 41.3% of the total population; while people in the school entry age (6 - 19) represent 36.3% - a situation which has serious effects on the education system in that country.

#### 1.4. History

Of all the states of the Arabian peninsula and Southern Gulf, Bahrain has perhaps fascinated archaeologists the most. This interest stems largely from the existence on the island of 100,000 burial mounds now considered to date mostly from between 2600 and 1800 B.C.<sup>33</sup> Such mounds attest to the pre-historic importance of Bahrain for having the biggest graveyard in the history of the world. But most of the domed graves which have been discovered belong to different periods of history.<sup>34</sup> The findings of the various Danish expeditions to the island, beginning in the 1950s have revealed valuable facts about the pre-history of Bahrain.

##### 1.4.1 Ancient History

Bahrain is a country with deep roots in the ancient world. The pre-history of Bahrain indicates that approximately one hundred thousand years ago, when Europe and North America are thought to have been in the last phases of the Ice Age, Bahrain was enjoying an

equable and temperate climate. At that time, the world sea level was one hundred metres below its present level.<sup>35</sup> It is now believed that Bahrain was connected to mainland Arabia until 6,000 B.C.; and it seems likely that any settlements in the Gulf before Bahrain was an island would have been either on the sea shore or along one of the rivers and so would subsequently have been drowned by the rise in sea level.<sup>36</sup> This is demonstrated at Al-Markh which by 3,800 B.C. was located on a small island lying off the West coast of what had become the main island of Bahrain.<sup>37</sup>

"Ubaid" pottery found at this site is among the earliest to be excavated in Bahrain and suggests trading contact with the Mesopotamian settlement of that name, located on the Euphrates river.<sup>38</sup>

Bibby and Globe, members of the Danish archaeological expedition, who discovered some tools carved out of flints in 1953-1954, claimed that until about ten million B.C. Bahrain was part of the Arabian peninsula. Prior to that time, the Gulf was largely dry; then coinciding with the end of the Ice Age in the Northern hemisphere, around 17000 B.C., the Gulf began to fill. By about 9000 B.C. the water level rose further, flooding the Arabian coastal regions and separating Bahrain from its parent.<sup>39</sup>

Bibby and Globe also claimed that a flourishing commercial centre existed in Bahrain about 5,000 years ago and that it underwent phenomenal development during the next 1,000 years. During this period it controlled the sea trade of the area and acted as a bridge between cities in the Indus valley and in Iraq.<sup>40</sup>

Before the middle of the third millennium, Bahrain's archaeological record is far from complete; but it now seems that the islands were an important commercial centre in the heart of an extensive cultural complex stretching out into mainland Arabia; and that in all

probability this was Dilmun (or Tilmun as it was called then). Prior to this it is apparent from the evidence of small encampments and flint working sites that the islands were occupied during the Palaelithic period; but little is really known about these early hunter inhabitants.<sup>41</sup>

Clay tablets found in Bahrain that date from the Third Iron Age and Larsa in Mesopotamia of 20,000 to 1,700 B.C. indicate that Bahrain, during that period, served two main roles: first, as a point of trans-shipment and trade; and second, as a religious and burial centre.<sup>42</sup> Goods that were imported into the city are described in the clay tablets as being tributes offered to the God Ninjal in gratitude for his protection of the trade of the sea merchants during their long journeys.<sup>43</sup> These goods included brass ingots, cooking ware, beads, and rare stones such as red agate, lapis lazuli, ivory, and furniture inlaid with ivory masera and pearls, in addition to dates and onions.<sup>44</sup>

The two Danish archaeologists also found that pearl diving has been carried on in Bahrain for some 4,000 years as evidenced by piles of squid that were found on the Western coast of Bahrain.<sup>45</sup>

About 2000 B.C. Dilmun's importance began to decline. At the same time, Indo European tribes called Aryans invaded present-day Pakistan and destroyed the cities of the Indus valley civilization. The impact on Bahrain was immediate. Trade from India was cut off and the islands had to fall back on their own resources.<sup>46</sup> However with the rise of the Assyrian Empire, whose capital was Nineveh on the Upper Tigris in Mesopotamia, and its conquest of Babylonia prior to 900B.C., a degree of prosperity appears to have returned to Bahrain. From 750 B.C. onwards the Assyrian kings repeatedly claimed sovereignty over the islands. About this time, trading contact was re-established between India and the Gulf.<sup>47</sup>

However, the renewed wealth of Bahrain did not escape the attention of the Babylonian Kingdom to the north and shortly after 600 B.C., Dilmun was incorporated into their new empire. A Babylonian was appointed as the provincial Governor. The Persians conquered the islands c. 540 B.C., having already sacked Nineveh in the 7th century B.C.<sup>48</sup>

Around 500 B.C. Dilmun (Bahrain) was known by the Greek and Roman geographers as Tylos, meaning the land of eye fish pearls.<sup>49</sup>

After the fall of the Mesopotamian civilization, no foreign power controlled eastern Arabia until early in the fourth century B.C. This probably accounts for Dilmun disappearing from mention in Cuneiform texts about this time.

The third century B.C. marks the entrance of the Arab tribes to Bahrain. It was then known by the name Awal who was worshipped by the Arab tribe Bani Wael who ruled Bahrain during that period.<sup>50</sup>

Between Bahrain's Seleucid period 300 B.C. and the Parthian period c. 300 A.D., the islands enjoyed commercial prosperity. For the last few centuries before the coming of Islam, it would appear that Bahrain was dominated by Arab tribes from the mainland, at least until the fourth century A.D., when Shappur II, the Sassanian King of Persia, annexed the country.<sup>51</sup>

#### 1.4.2. The coming of Islam

The Greek historian Herodotus (484 to 425 B.C.) stated that the first people to inhabit the Gulf area were the Phoenician and Canaanite tribes who were skilled sailors and navigators.

In the pre-Islamic period, Bahrain was the home of the Rabi'a tribe which has two branches called Baqr and Tamim. During this time, Bahrain was ruled for Persia by a Christian Arab, Amr bin Hind.<sup>52</sup>

Islam was brought to Bahrain in 630 A.D. by Ala' bin Abdulla

al-Hadrami, the envoy of the prophet Mohammed who called on the Rabia tribe, the people of Bahrain to submit to Islam, and from that date the history of the islands became inexorably linked with that of the emergence and spread of Islam.<sup>53</sup>

After the death of the prophet, the people of Bahrain rejected Islam. When this became known to the Caliph Abu Baqr, he sent Al-Ala bin al-Hadrami to Bahrain and the Rabia were quickly defeated by the forces of the Caliph. Al-Hadrami later became the ruler of Bahrain and remained until the reign of the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who replaced him with Othman bin Abi al-Ala Al Thaqafi.<sup>54</sup> Later a succession of governors was installed on the islands throughout the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. Afterwards, it was ruled by leaders who broke away from the Abbasid rule.<sup>55</sup>

In the following centuries Bahrain was influenced on several occasions by radical Islamic movements such as Al-Khawarij and Al-Zing; but in the 9th century a more significant change took place. The Carmathian revolt had important consequences in Bahrain as it enabled Al-Hassan bin Bahram, who was known as Abi Sa'id Al-Janabi, in reference to the village of Janabah in Persia, to declare the dynasty of the Carmathians in Bahrain. Their beliefs are related to the teachings of Al-Ismailia.<sup>56</sup>

The Abbasid Caliph, Al Muatadid, ordered one of his leaders in 890 A.D. to subdue Al-Janabi in Bahrain; but the Carmathian won and Al-Janabi continued to pacify the rest of the tribes in Bahrain until he had full control over the island and its surrounding areas.<sup>57</sup>

About 1058 Mohammed bin Yousuf Al Zujaj, known as Abi Bahaloul, defeated the Carmathians and established his rule over Bahrain.<sup>58</sup>

He was followed by Ibn Ayah from Al-Qatif on the eastern coast of Arabia who in his turn was able to unite the remaining Karamitah

in Hasa until they were defeated by Abdullah bin Ali Al-Ayouni in 1074 who then annexed Bahrain and Qatif to his principality.<sup>59</sup>

The Al-Ayouni dynasty was defeated in 1238 A.D. and was followed by the Zenkiyoun and the Mongols.

The rule of the Mongols was not direct as Bahrain was ruled by Arab leaders. Al Jabbour ruled Bahrain until 1521 when Makaran bin Ajwad was killed by the Portuguese.<sup>60</sup>

#### 1.4.3. The Portuguese in Bahrain

From the 11th to the 16th centuries Bahrain became subject to the ebb and flow of different regional power bases, sometimes retaining a quasi-independent status; and at others being under the control of the rulers of Qatif, Hasa, Hormuz or Oman. In 1478, following the Omani invasion of Bahrain, external forces from beyond the region were beginning to make themselves felt. In 1498 the Portuguese rounded the southern tip of Africa, and thus paved the way for European sea-based empires to interfere for the first time directly in the turbulent waters of the Gulf.<sup>61</sup>

Early in the 16th century Bahrain again appears to have been under the influence of the kings of Hormuz, and when Afonso de Albuquerque conquered Hormuz and installed there a puppet king, the Portuguese immediately confirmed the existing treaty relations between the shaikh of Bahrain and the erstwhile king of Hormuz. Shortly afterwards Mukarram, the king of Hasa, seized Bahrain from Hormuz and began interfering with Portuguese trading interest in the Gulf. Consequently the Portuguese under Antonio Correa attacked Bahrain in 1521 and after a brief struggle defeated Mukarram. The Portuguese then installed a succession of governors in the islands, but a number of revolts in the ensuing decades ensured that their rule was not easy and that

at least on a couple of occasions independent rulers controlled Bahrain.<sup>62</sup>

In 1602 the Portuguese rule of the islands eventually came to an end when the governor was murdered and the people placed themselves under Persian protection. Following the loss of Bahrain and then the loss of Hormuz to the English, the king of Portugal continued to attempt to recapture his possessions in the region. This culminated in the sending of a fleet from India in 1645 with orders to capture both Hormuz and Bahrain. But before the fleet could even reach the Gulf, it was attacked and destroyed by a hostile Omani fleet, thus ending one and a half centuries of direct Portuguese involvement in the Gulf.<sup>63</sup>

#### 1.4.4 Bahrain in the 18th and 19th Centuries

The Persians dominated Bahrain from the beginning of the 17th century to the arrival there of the British. But their hold on the islands was always insecure. In 1718 the islands were conquered by Oman, and the Persians could only win them back several years later. A second Omani invasion occurred in 1738 and it seems that as a result of these two incursions many of the traditional Shi'ah population of the islands fled to the neighbouring mainland of Arabia. During this period of unrest in the Gulf another tribal movement, later to be of greater significance to Bahrain, was emerging.<sup>64</sup>

The modern history of Bahrain may be said to have started during the early part of the 18th century, when a group of Arab tribes called "Utub" emigrated from the southern part of mainland Arabia and settled in Zuburah town in the north-western part of Qatar. According to Abu-Hakima, the Utub tribes were aware of the strategic importance

of the coastal towns of Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait in the conveyance of trade from the Arabian Gulf to mainland Arabia. Because of internal political unrest and weakening of power in Central Arabia, as well as throughout the Ottoman Empire and Persia, Utub settlements in these coastal towns went almost unnoticed.<sup>65</sup> Utub tribes were thus given an opportunity to live relatively independently in these towns. After their temporary halt at Zubarah, some Utub tribes, namely Al-Sabah, Al-Khalifa and Al-Jalahima, moved north and occupied Kuwait in 1716. Around 1750, the Al-Sabah tribe successfully established their Shakhdom in Kuwait and in 1766 Al-Khalifa and other tribes moved out of Kuwait and went back to Zubarah in the north-west of Qatar.<sup>66</sup> Zubarah rapidly grew into an important trading centre and the competition that it posed for Bahrain gradually drew the Persians there into conflict with the Al-Khalifa. After several unsuccessful skirmishes the Al-Khalifa under Shaikh Ahmed Al-Khalifa, later known as Al-Fatih, the conqueror, then captured Bahrain in 1773 and established the dynasty which continues to rule the islands to this day.<sup>67</sup>

The Al-Khalifa's control over Bahrain in the early years was not without its problems. In 1799 the Imam of Muscat occupied Bahrain and Shaikh Sulman bin Ahmed, together with his brother Abdullah who had succeeded their father as joint rulers in 1796, were forced to flee to Zubarah.<sup>68</sup> By this date the Wahhabi movement on mainland Arabia had gained considerable strength, and Shaikh Sulman bin Ahmed in 1809 turned to the Wahhabi's ruler Abd al-Aziz to help him to regain Bahrain. The Wahhabis willingly agreed, driving the Omanis out of Bahrain, but instead of restoring the Al-Khalifa they installed their own governor on the islands.<sup>69</sup> The Al-Khalifa eventually managed to regain control of the islands, and by the second decade of the

19th century, when the British first began to play a significant role in that part of the Gulf, the Al-Khalifa Shaikhs had fully established their power.<sup>70</sup>

In 1816 the British Resident in Bushire, apparently without the authority of the Indian Government, signed a draft treaty of friendship with the Al-Khalifa Shaikhs. This paved the way for the signing in 1820, of a General Treaty of peace which followed the British defeat of the so-called Qawsim 'Pirates of Ras al-Khaimah'. By this treaty the ruler of Bahrain undertook not to allow into his country produce obtained by piracy and not to be party to the treaty signed with the Qawasim.<sup>71</sup> In 1825 Sulman bin Ahmed died, and was succeeded by his son Khalifah, who continued as joint ruler with his uncle Abdullah bin Ahmed. On the death of Khalifah bin Sulman in 1834 internal conflicts within the Al-Khalifa led to a period of instability. In 1842 Abdullah bin Ahmed expelled Khalifa's son Muhammed with whom he had jointly ruled for eight years. Muhammed then returned to Bahrain in 1843 and in his turn deposed his great uncle Abdullah.<sup>72</sup>

In 1856 a further agreement aimed at the reduction of slavery was signed between the ruler of Bahrain, Muhammed bin Khalifa, and the British; and in 1881 the ruler of Bahrain agreed to the cessation of all maritime warfare in return for British protection. Soon after this, further rivalries in the Al-Khalifa family again came to the fore, and the British, fearing growing interest by Turkey and Persia in the islands, took increased military and diplomatic action. Thus, when in 1867 Muhammad bin Khalifa, who had solicited aid from both Turkey and Persia, attacked Qatar, the British denounced him as a pirate and deposed him as a punishment for contravening the 1861 convention.<sup>73</sup> In his place they installed his brother Ali as ruler. Later in 1869, Muhammed bin Khalifa returned to Bahrain, killed his

brother, and again took over the reins of power. During this period both Turkey and Persia continued to involve themselves in the internal conflicts of the island in attempts to reassert their territorial power. The British soon captured Muhammed bin Khalifa, and in his place declared Isa bin Ali, the son of the killed ruler, who was at that time living in Qatar, as Shaikh.<sup>74</sup>

In 1880 and 1892 two more agreements were signed between Bahrain and the British government whereby the Bahranian ruler undertook not to enter into negotiations or make any kind of treaty with any state or government other than the British without the consent of the British government. The Shaikh also agreed not to part with any of his territory save to the British government.<sup>75</sup>

In 1890 Shaikh Isa gave refuge to Ibn Saud and his family when they fled from Riyadh following the capture of that city by the Rashidis. As a result of this hospitality, close ties between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia were established. In 1900 a British Political Assistant was stationed at Bahrain for the first time, to be replaced in 1904 by the first British Political Agent, Capt. F.B. Prideaux. Bahrain therefore grew in political importance, and its central administrative role also lead to increased commercial and economic benefits.<sup>76</sup>

In 1904 the British Political Residency in the Gulf was transferred from Bushire to Bahrain and this further centralisation of Bahrain meant that its political and economic importance grew relative to the other states of the region.<sup>77</sup>

Finally, in 1913 the British and Ottoman governments signed a convention by which the Turks recognised Bahrain's independence, and in 1916 Ibn Saud signed a treaty agreeing to refrain from aggression towards Bahrain. By these agreements all claims other than those by Persia and Britain itself to Bahrain's territorial integrity were removed.<sup>78</sup>

#### 1.4.5 Bahrain in the 20th Century

In 1923 internal troubles within Bahrain led to the abdication of Shaikh Isa and the succession of his son, Shaikh Hamad, who ruled for twelve years as a deputy ruler and then on the death of his father in 1936 for a further seven years as Shaikh of Bahrain.<sup>79</sup>

In 1926 Charles Belgrave took up the position of Advisor to Shaikh Hamad. At this time there was little formal government administration, and for the next three decades the advisor played an important role in moulding the shape of the government. The oil discoveries in 1932 provided the means by which the government was able to expand its activities.<sup>80</sup>

In 1927 the Persian government argued that Bahrain was a Persian possession; and in 1928 a further exchange took place with Persia reasserting its claims to the islands but Bahrain rejected them. This dispute remained unsettled until 1970. With the help of the United Nations, the 1970 agreement with Iran brought to an end the international territorial claims to Bahrain.<sup>81</sup>

In 1936 Bahrain posted a military garrison on the Hawar islands, and this gave rise to a complaint by the Qataris to the British Political Resident. After evidence had been presented from both sides, the British Political Resident argued that Bahrain possessed a prima facie claim to the islands through the presence of its garrison, and consequently in 1939 he awarded the islands to Bahrain. Qatar has not accepted this verdict, and the dispute remains unsettled.<sup>82</sup>

Following the discovery of oil in 1932 increased revenues enabled the Shaikh and his advisors to develop the government administration and to expand the provision of social services. In 1931, a Department of Education was established, and during the 1930s considerable infra-structural developments, in the form of roads, telephones, and

electricity installations, were set in progress. In addition government departments for public health, medicine, public works, labour affairs, and minors' estates were established. In association with these a number of committees relating to such matters as trade, disputes, diving regulations, agriculture, and religious endowments were created.<sup>83</sup>

In 1942 Shaikh Hamad died, and was succeeded by his son Shaikh Sulman. The developments begun by his father were continued and by the early 1950s the growth of the country's administration and commercial facilities had made Bahrain possibly the "most modern" of the states of the Southern Gulf.<sup>84</sup> In 1955 the partially elected Councils of Health and Education were formed. In 1956 at the time of the Suez crisis considerable rioting occurred and a state of emergency was declared. This was partly directed against the British, and in particular against the visit of the British Foreign Secretary. One result was the "retirement" of Sir Charles Belgrave.<sup>85</sup>

In 1961 Shaikh Sulman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa died; and was succeeded by his son Shaikh Isa bin Sulman Al-Khalifa. The British withdrew from the Gulf in 1970 and in 1971 Bahrain declared its independence; and soon afterwards was admitted to the Arab League and the United Nations.<sup>86</sup>

The Council of State was then replaced by a Council of Ministers, with a Cabinet composed of ministers from the following ministries:

- (1) the Bahrain Defence Force (established in 1968),
- (2) Interior,
- (3) Foreign Affairs,
- (4) Finance and National Economy,
- (5) Education,
- (6) Labour and Social Affairs,
- (7) Municipalities and Agriculture,
- (8) Health,
- (9) Information,
- (10) Justice,
- (11) Development and Engineering Services,
- and (12) a Ministry of State.

Further political changes were made in 1972, when Shaikh Isa issued

a decree permitting elections for a Constitutional Assembly which would establish a new draft constitution. Elections for the 22 Constitutional Assembly seats took place in December 1972 and 88.5 percent of the electorate participated. The new constitution was eventually promulgated in June 1973. It stipulated that a National Assembly of 30 delegates should be created, which together with the 12 members of the Council of Ministers, would form the main legislative assembly of the country. Elections took place in December 1973, and although over 100 meetings of the Assembly were held, its activities came to a halt in May 1975 following growing confrontations between the government and the Assembly. In August 1975 the Assembly was dissolved.<sup>87</sup>

The most recent changes in Bahrain's external political relationships came when in 1981, together with Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, it was involved in the founding of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). The main aims of the six states involved in the GCC are initially to achieve economic integration through the abolition of customs, tariffs, the promotion of the exchange of goods and services, and the erection of taxation barriers to protect local industries. It is also concerned with maintaining stability among its member states, and therefore it is of considerable political significance.<sup>88</sup>

It seems that religious fanatics as a result of the Khomeini revolution in Iran and the claims of Qatar to Howar islands are likely to be the most important issues for Bahrain in 1986-1987. These two issues can be seen as potential sources of conflict which may well give rise to problems for the government of Bahrain as it tries to strengthen internal stability and external relationships. Similarly, at the present time, the Iran-Iraq conflict generates a sense

of insecurity in Bahrain and in the Gulf region as a whole.

#### 1.5. The Economy

Prior to the 20th century Bahrain was inhabited by peasants of the Shia Muslim faith living in small villages practising agriculture and fishing. Prawns and fish were and still are available throughout the year. The land was also inhabited by Sunni Muslim tribal groups who controlled the land in feudal estates and operated the pearling industry.<sup>89</sup>

In the 19th century Bahrain's economy was dominated by pearl fishing and trade. The mainstay of the economy remained as it had done for millennia in the collection and selling of pearls, with Bahrain's offshore banks reported to be the best in the region. However, at the end of the 19th century the pearl industry declined, with estimates of the numbers of boats involved falling from 1,500 in 1833 to 900 in 1896 and 509 in 1930.<sup>90</sup> During the 1930s first the "world recession" and then the Japanese development of cultured pearls hit the pearling economy, and in 1948 following the second World War it was estimated that only 83 boats were still involved in pearl fishing.<sup>91</sup> Traditionally agriculture was dominated by the production of dates along the north coast of the main island, with irrigation water being provided by springs and wells. Several underground canal systems also took water to parts of the island where it was difficult to obtain other water sources for irrigation. Ship-building, pottery and handicrafts made up the remainder of the traditional industrial structure of the islands.

At the same time as pearling declined, Bahrain began to reap the advantages of the developing exploitation of its oil resources. Undoubtedly the extra income available to those working in the oil

industry when compared with the wages to be obtained from pearl diving led to the further decline of pearling.

The discovery of oil in Bahrain in 1932 is described by James Belgrave:

"The man who was chiefly responsible for the discovery of Bahrain's oil reserves was a New Zealander, Major Frank Holmes, who came to Bahrain on behalf of the Eastern and General Syndicate, a British prospecting company.

Major Holmes after drilling a number of artesian wells and thus discovering something about the composition of the ground below the surface of Bahrain, believed that oil was present in the islands in commercial quantities and so obtained from the Ruler, on December 2nd, 1925, a prospecting concession which was to run for two years.

During this period Holmes tried to interest British oil companies in the petroleum possibilities of Bahrain, but their experts declared that there was no oil in Bahrain and that it would be a poor gamble to start operations in the company. Finally Major Holmes went to the States and on November 30th 1927, an American Corporation, the Eastern Gulf Company, acquired a two-years' option.

After negotiations which involved the Foreign Office and the State Department, for Bahrain was a protected State, and after discussions between various important oil interests, the Eastern Gulf Company assigned its option over the Bahrain concession to the Standard Oil Company of California.

On August 1st, 1930, the concession was assigned by Standard Oil to its fully owned subsidiary, the Bahrain Petroleum Company Ltd. (BAPCo), which was registered in Canada in order to give it the status of a British Company. Such are the politics of oil that it had taken five years for an oil company to be formed to develop Bahrain oil, and had it not been for the enterprise of an American company, which took up the concession after it had been refused by the British, the oil of Bahrain might never have been exploited." 92

In 1932 the first oil came on stream. By 1935 there were 16 producing wells, and in order to process the oil it was decided to set up a small refinery near Sitra Island. This began production in 1936; and by 1937 its capacity had been increased to 25,000 barrels per day (b/d), with plans to increase its capacity further so that Saudi oil could also be refined there.<sup>93</sup>

The increase in the oil output up to the 1970s and the changes in the participation agreements meant that the state revenue from oil production had increased dramatically. In 1952 an agreement between

Shaikh Sulman and BAPCO provided for a half-and-half profit sharing arrangement, greatly increasing government revenue, but unlike other Gulf states Bahrain was relatively slow to take its hydrocarbon industry fully into its own hands.<sup>94</sup> In November 1974 the government signed an agreement to acquire a 60 percent share in BAPCO's oil and gas exploration and production activities, excluding the refinery, and this became effective in July 1975. In March 1976 the Bahrain National Oil Company (BANOCO) was established; and in 1978 BANOCO took over the marketing and distribution of oil products in Bahrain. At the end of 1979 BANOCO eventually took over full ownership of BAPCO's exploration and production rights; and in 1980 it acquired a 60 percent share in the Sitra refinery.<sup>95</sup> In the mid 1970s, this refinery had a rated capacity of 250,000 b/d with Bahrain providing only about one quarter of the crude oil output. The recent slump in oil demand has meant that output of the refinery was running at only about 150,000 b/d in mid 1982.<sup>96</sup>

Although Bahrain was the first state on the Arab side of the Gulf to produce oil, its resources are among the smallest of the region. Between 1940 and 1965 Bahrain's crude oil production rose from 19,300 b/d to 57,000 b/d and then to 76,639 b/d in 1970. Since then, output has declined steadily to a level of only 46,411 b/d in 1980.<sup>97</sup> Current estimates as to how long the oil revenues will last at present extraction rates, vary between twelve and twenty-five years. This fact has stimulated the government of Bahrain to implement plans to diversify the economy's base and to reduce the country's dependence on oil.

Table 1.4 (see p. 40) shows that for the year 1987, among the GCC countries, the estimated reserves/production ratio for Saudi Arabia was 55 years, for Kuwait 97 years, for Qatar 23 years, for

TABLE 1.4

Basic data on oil producers

Saudi Arabia	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$37 billion Oil reserves : 166 billion barrels Production 1978 : 8.3 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 55 years Start of production : 1939, restarted 1946 Population : 6.5 million (2 million immigrants)
Kuwait	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$9.5 billion Oil reserves : 66 billion barrels Production 1978 : 1.9 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 97 years Start of oil production : 1946 Population : 1.5 million (0.8 million immigrants)
Bahrain	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$0.4 billion Oil reserves : 0.25 billion barrels Production 1978 : 0.06 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 12 years Start of oil production : mid 1930s Population : 300,000 (100,000 immigrants)
Qatar	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$2.2 billion Oil reserves : 4 billion barrels Production : 0.48 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 23 years Start of oil production : 1949 Population : 170,000 (120,000 immigrants)
Abu Dhabi	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$7 billion Oil reserves : 30 billion barrels Production 1978 : 1.45 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 57 years Start of oil production : 1962 (development began in 1966) Population : 280,000 (230,000 immigrants)
Dubai	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$1.7 billion Oil reserves : 1.3 billion barrels Production 1978 : 0.36 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 10 years Start of oil production : 1969 Population : 280,000 (220,000 immigrants)
Oman	: Oil revenues 1978 : \$1.7 billion Oil Reserves : 2.5 billion barrels Production 1978 : 0.32 million barrels a day Reserves/production ratio : 22 years Start of oil production : 1958 Population : 1 million (200,000 immigrants)

Source : Chubin, Shahram, Security In The Gulf, (Gower Publishing Company Limited, England, 1982), pp. 56 & 57.

Abu Dhabi 57 years, for Dubai 10 years, for Oman 22 years, and for Bahrain 12 years.

Table 1.5 (below) shows that for the year 1983, Qatar had the highest barrels per capita of 408 while Bahrain had the lowest of only 92. It also shows that while Qatar had a revenue of US\$ 11,424 per capita, Bahrain had one of \$2,076 for the same year.

TABLE 1.5

G.C.C. Statistics

1.	<u>Petroleum production</u>	<u>Barrels/Capita</u> (1,000 barrels daily)
	Saudia Arabia	184
	Kuwait	289
	Bahrain	92
	U.A.E.	306
	Oman	146
	Qatar	408
2.	<u>Revenue/Capita (U.S. dollars) 1983</u>	
	<u>G.C.C. Countries</u>	<u>U.S.\$/Capita</u>
	Saudi Arabia	5152
	Kuwait	8092
	Bahrain	2076
	U.A.E.	8568
	Oman	4088
	Qatar	11424

Source : Oapic - Yearly Report, 1983

### 1.5.1 The Present Economic Development

As stated earlier, since the 1970s, Bahrain's oil production has been generally declining at the rate of 4% - 5% a year. At current rates of production, the island's estimated reserves of 200 million

barrels of recoverable oil will have run out by 1996.<sup>97</sup> Whilst non-oil sectors are being developed to replace oil revenues, the government is simultaneously endeavouring to arrest the decline in oil production.

Spearheading the diversification of the economy has been the expansion of the services sector, including banking and trade, along with manufacturing. Expansion of these sectors has more than offset the substantial decline in petroleum output in recent years, with the result that growth of the real gross domestic product (GDP) in Bahrain has averaged around 7% annually. At the same time, the domestic rate of inflation has slowed down, in line with declining world inflation; prices in Bahrain rose by about 3% in both 1983 and 1984.<sup>98</sup>

Notwithstanding the growing importance of the non-oil sector in the Bahrain economy, petroleum remains the principal earner of foreign exchange and the major contributor to budget receipts. As a result the fall in world oil prices in recent years has weakened Bahrain's fiscal and external accounts. The Government has responded to the deterioration in its fiscal position primarily by restraining current expenditures and by delaying the growth of overall demand. These measures are expected to contribute to an improvement in the current account position over the medium term.

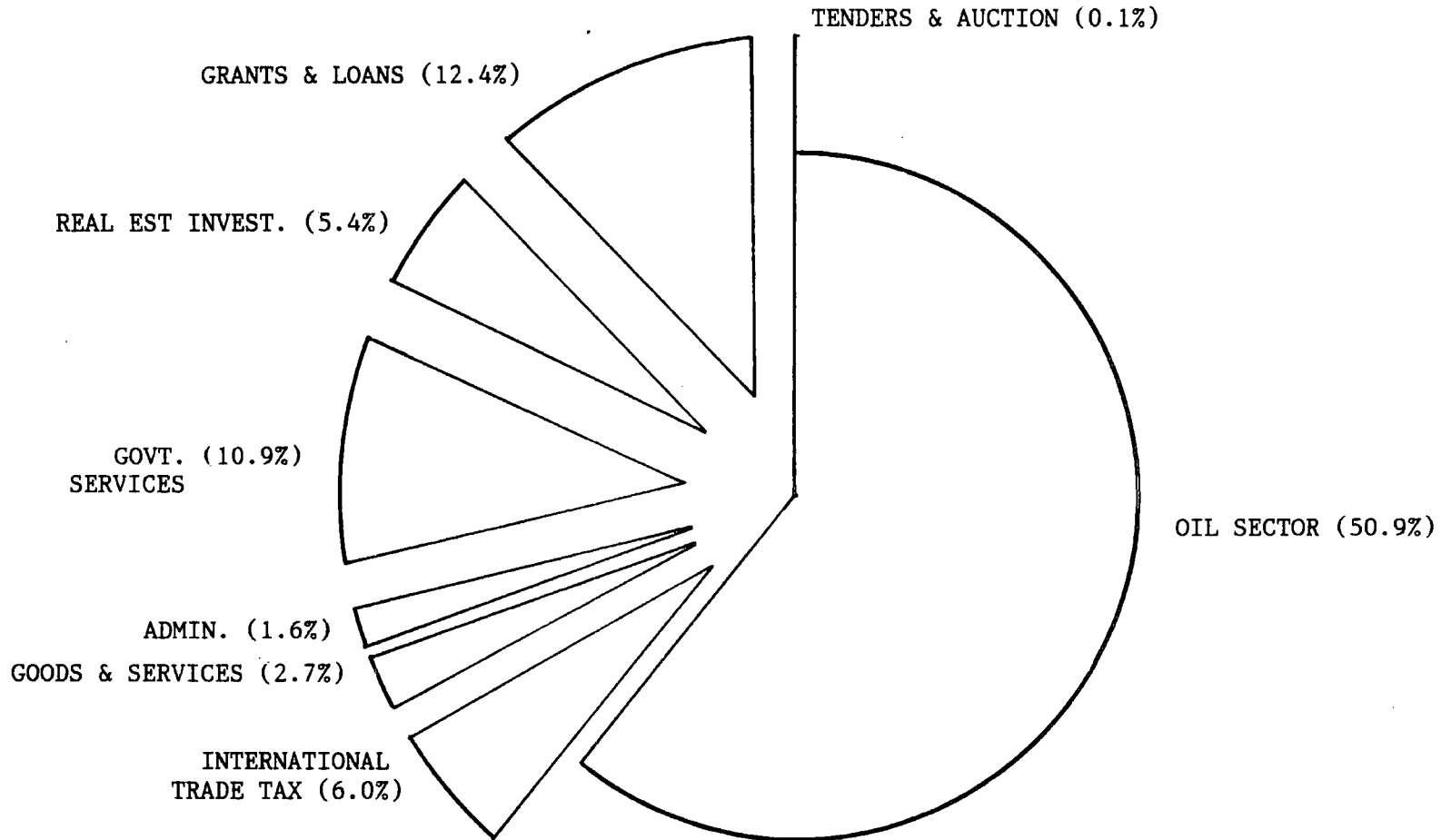
The State Revenues for the year 1986/87 are shown in Table 1.6 (see p. 33). This Table shows that the oil sector contributes 60.9% of the total revenue, Grants and loans 12%, Real estate investment 5.4%, Government services 10.9%, Administration, Goods & Serv. 4.3% and International trade 6.0%.

The opening of a causeway linking Bahrain and Saudi Arabia in late 1986 is expected to enhance Bahrain's future economic performance by providing new growth opportunities for Bahrain's services sector, especially in the areas of transportation, tourism, and real estate.<sup>99</sup>

TABLE 1.6

1986/87

State Revenue - By Chapters



Source : Ministry of Finance & National Economy, Bahrain, 1986/87.

### 1.5.2 Petroleum - Related Activities

Bahrain is a member of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). Although it is not a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), its oil pricing policies are generally in accord with OPEC decisions.

Crude oil production accounted for about 14 percent of Bahrain's GDP in 1983, compared with 23 percent just five years earlier. Partly responsible for this contraction was a decline in output of the Jebel al-Dukhan on-shore field, which accounts for just under half of Bahrain's oil production. Output of this field has been falling steadily since 1970, when it reached its peak of 76,000 barrels per day (b/d). After stabilizing in 1983 and 1984 at about 41,800 b/d, output from the Jebel al-Dukhan field is expected to resume its downward trend in 1985. About 54% of Bahrain's oil output comes from the Abu Saafa off-shore field, whose production is shared equally by Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.<sup>100</sup>

All of the country's oil output is refined domestically at the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) refinery, which processes crude oil into (principally) gas oils, fuel oil, naphtha, jet fuel, gasoline, and kerosene. The refinery also processes crude oil imports from Saudi Arabia and, in recent years from India.<sup>101</sup> In the face of declining demands for its products, the BAPCO refinery's output fell sharply in 1982, and in 1983 contracted further to a record low of 175,000 b/d. While the production level recovered in 1984 to an average of 209,000 b/d, output was still below the refinery's rated capacity of 260,000 b/d.<sup>102</sup>

Bahrain has substantial natural gas resources, which are expected to last another 50 years at the 1983 extraction rate of 504 million cubic feet per day (mmcf). Production rose to an average of

537 mmcf/d in the first nine months of 1984, with a further increase to 670 mmcf/d expected by 1986 as a result of a four-year plan to intensify extraction of natural gas from the Khuff Zone. This field currently accounts for 75% of Bahrain's gas output, with natural gas associated with petroleum production accounting for the remainder.<sup>103</sup>

Gas processing is an important activity in Bahrain's economy. Much of Bahrain's gas output is processed at the gas liquidizing plant operated by the Bahrain National Gas Company (BANAGAS). In 1983 this plant produced about 3.1 million U.S. barrels of natural gas liquids - propane, butane and naphtha - primarily for export. By far the largest development project in the gas sector is an export-oriented ammonia and methanol plant owned jointly by Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The plant is expected to have a rated capacity of 1,000 metric tons daily for each of the two products.<sup>104</sup>

### 1.5.3 The Non-Petroleum Sector

One of the first countries in the Gulf to begin oil exploration and production, Bahrain was also among the first to experience output declines and to embark on diversification of the economy. While the initial aim of the authorities was to establish oil-based industries, the emphasis during the past decade has been on the services sector. At the same time the Government has fostered the expansion of industries, with particular emphasis on aluminium, iron and steel products.<sup>105</sup>

The country's industrial policy has focused on the development of both large-scale facilities for the manufacture of export-oriented goods and small-scale projects specializing in items intended for domestic consumption. The growth of non-oil manufacturing has been led to a large extent, by the aluminium sector. Output of the country's

aluminium smelter, Aluminium Bahrain (ALBA), has expanded rapidly since it began operations in 1971. ALBA's output accelerated after 1981, when the productive capacity of the facility was expanded by over 40%. In 1983, ALBA's operations accounted for more than half of the real value added in the non-oil manufacturing sector.<sup>106</sup>

The aluminium industry also includes a number of "downstream" operations, including an aluminium powder plant, a company producing overhead transmission cables, and a firm that makes aluminium products for construction and general engineering purposes.

Bahrain's manufacturing diversification efforts have also included new projects in the iron and steel sector. The Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard owned jointly by the seven OAPEC members, started operation in 1977. Faced with weak demand for its services as a result of unfavourable market conditions, competition from abroad, and the strength of the U.S. dollar, the yard has recently begun to use its spare capacity for steel fabrication.<sup>107</sup>

Another project in the iron and steel sector is the iron ore pelletizing plant of the Arab Iron and Steel Company, which began operation in 1984. All of its output, which was expected to reach the full capacity level of 4 million tons by 1986 is to be exported.<sup>108</sup>

Another activity that contributed to the rapid growth of the non-oil sector has been construction. With strong demand by the private sector for housing and office facilities, and with public sector construction projects expanding at relatively high rates, real value added by this sector grew substantially in the 1970s. Following setbacks from 1979 through 1981, construction has experienced a recovery, which was especially pronounced in 1983.<sup>109</sup>

#### 1.5.4 Agriculture, Livestock, Poultry and Fishing

Despite the fact that natural conditions are adverse for agriculture, the government has adopted an agricultural development plan to reduce dependence on imported food. Under the present plan covering the period from 1982 to 1987, food production is targeted to increase from 6% to 16% of domestic requirements, self sufficiency in eggs is expected and so is a doubling of milk production from 15% to 30% of domestic requirements.<sup>110</sup>

The plan offers several incentives to farmers to adopt new techniques for irrigation and cultivation. The Adrip irrigation system has been introduced and a programme of loans to farmers for purchase of machinery is under consideration. Farmers receive a 50% subsidy from the government to keep prices down. A workshop to service agro-machinery has also been completed. A B.D. 700,000 plan to improve the drainage system in agricultural areas has been launched. A new B.D. 650,000 date processing plant, with a production capacity of 1,200 tonnes of dried and frozen dates per annum has been established at Mina Sulman. A large dairy farm is expected to be completed by 1987 so as to boost annual milk production from 300,000 litres per annum to 900,000 litres per annum.<sup>111</sup>

A research unit and a fish farm station have been built at Ras Hayan. An experimental fish farm, assisted by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), is expected to operate at a site near the ALBA smelter.

It is worth noting that the value of the contribution of agriculture and fisheries sector to the economy's GDP has increased from B.D. 7.3 million in 1975 to B.D. 18.9 million in 1982, though it has remained unchanged as a percentage of the G.N.P. at 1.1%<sup>112</sup>

#### 1.5.5 Banking

A key factor in Bahrain's economic diversification process is the rapid development of the island as an off-shore banking centre. Almost all the prominent banks in the world are represented in Bahrain. Despite absence of taxes, Bahrain benefits from the off-shore banking units by way of annual fees and employment of Bahraini staff. A measure of the off-shore banking sector's usefulness to the economy is provided by the fact that its contribution to the GDP (gross domestic product) has increased from B.D. 21.3 million in 1976 to B.D. 106.5 million in 1982.<sup>113</sup> The growth of off-shore banking units slowed significantly in 1983 however, signalling the beginning of a consolidation phase.

#### 1.5.6 Telecommunications

In 1968, Bahrain was chosen as the site for one of the first two public service satellite earth stations, and in 1980, a second satellite earth station was inaugurated.

The two giant antennae provide Bahrain with direct telephone, telegraph, telex, television and other related services connecting it to 21 global centres over the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. A multi million dollar Arab Satellite programme which will provide telecommunication links throughout the entire Arab world is also under way - all of which add to the importance of Bahrain as a trade and business centre.

The services sector also encompasses trade, tourism, and transport activities. These sub-sectors have grown steadily over most of the past decade, and they are expected to expand further with the opening of the causeway between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

## 1.6 Summary and Conclusion

Located in a central position in the Gulf, the Islands of Bahrain have played an important commercial role in the region since pre-historic times. For the last five thousand years Bahrain has been known to the western world, firstly as Dilmun, then Tylos, thereafter Awal and finally Bahrain. As has been shown, the name of Bahrain is derived from the Land of Freshwater Springs or the Land of Life owing to the existence of two vital elements of life, water and agriculture. Traditionally, the economy was dominated by pearling and trade.

Throughout history, the Islands came under the impact of numerous waves of invaders and rulers such as Sumerian, Greeks, Romans, Portuguese, Turks, Persians, Omanis, and British. Each wave brought with it distinctive aspects of its civilization such as bureaucracy, administration, architecture, religion, and education. Today, in modern Bahrain, one can still witness varying evidence of these impacts.

Before the oil era, Bahrain boasted a strong tradition in fishing and dhow building, both of which suffered as the oil wealth drew people from villages and shores to towns.

The discovery of oil in 1932 is one of Bahrain's silent revolutions. Its impact was a rapid economic transformation. The pace of this change increased appreciably following independence from Britain in 1971 and the 1974 rises in oil prices. Bahrain today still retains parts of its rich cultural heritage, and old and new are to be found together in striking juxtaposition.

The most salient feature of the demographic situation of Bahrain is its relatively high growth rate which is affecting the age structure of the population. The age pyramid in the country is extremely broad at the base, with around 42% of the population under the age of 15.

Such a population structure constitutes a heavy burden on the development of education.

Another feature in the economy is the decline of oil. Bahrain is already encountering problems from the fall in its oil supply.

A further source of possible difficulty is the large immigrant labour force caused by the diversification of the economy. Spearheading the diversification has been the expansion of the services sector including banking, manufacturing, trade, hotel, and tourism.

Bahrain is passing into rough seas now. It remains to be seen whether it can accommodate the impact of western ideas and technology.

The realities of population dynamics, the decline of the country's natural resources, and the diversification of the economy point to the necessity for rapid increase in the education system to accommodate large numbers of newcomers, to have well planned opportunities in higher education, while at the same time combatting illiteracy at the non-formal level.

All through their long history, the development of the Islands has been influenced by the geography, the economy, and the people. Even so, at present they have influenced directly or indirectly the development of its education.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### The Historical Development of Education in Bahrain

The current organization of education in Bahrain reflects its historical roots in the country. In this chapter an attempt will be made to trace the development of education in Bahrain from its origin prior to 1919 to 1980. This development was divided into several stages; and each stage had its own trends, initiatives and problems. However, despite the differences, some of the difficulties for education were passed from one stage to the next. As a result some of the problems which Bahraini education is currently facing are the results of past experiences.

#### 2.1 Education prior to 1919

Prior to 1919, education of children began at home. When seven years old the child was held responsible for ritual prayer. It was then that his formal education began. His first elementary school was one of the many kuttabs available on the Islands.

The kuttab was an adjunct of the mosque, if not the mosque itself. Its curriculum centred upon the Koran and the teaching of Islam.

Islam was not just a system of belief and culture, it was also a system of state, society, law, thought and art.<sup>1</sup> Islam placed a very high value on education.<sup>2</sup> In fact the first verse that was revealed to the prophet was "Read in the name of thy Lord ... who taught the use of the pen".<sup>3</sup> From that time on, education and the pursuit of knowledge was a theme that was stressed in the faith, through verses in the Koran and through the sayings of the prophet. The latter urged Moslems to "Seek knowledge from cradle to grave;

for the pursuit of knowledge is obligatory for every Moslem, men and women." These sayings of the prophet reveal two essential principals of modern education. First, the concept of life-long education and second that of the democratization of education by making it available to men and women equally. The compulsory factor creates a responsibility for the State, which has an obligation to help the people and guide them to a successful achievement of the requirements of faith. So from the very beginning the mosque became both the place of worship and the first school in Islam.<sup>4</sup>

It is important to note that these two concepts of (1) life-long education, and (2) the democratization of education form today, the backbone of the educational system in Bahrain. In fact the old Islamic theme "Seek knowledge from cradle to grave" has been adopted, in recent years, by the Bahraini Ministry of Education to encourage all teachers in the State schools, young or old, male or female, to join the in service teacher-training scheme.

Along with the adult educational system that was taking place in the mosque, a parallel educational system developed when the need for educating the young people emerged; so the kuttabs were established.<sup>5</sup>

Islam was introduced into Bahrain in the 7th century, subsequently mosques were built and kuttabs were established. Prior to 1919 the kuttab schools were run by local Mullas at their homes, where the Mulla would sit with a mixed age and ability group of children to teach them the Koran, as a reading text book. With reading went writing and simple arithmetic.<sup>6</sup> The more "learned" of the Mullas, or Mutawás, as they were also called, were given the title of "Shaikh" by the people, as a sign of respect.

Girls were welcome to all the religious instruction in the lower grades; but there were separate kuttabs for female students. In

addition to the usual curricula, cooking, cleaning and housekeeping were taught to the girls.<sup>7</sup>

The kuttabs existed on what they collected in fees. Each pupil would pay according to his/her family's means and social status. A certain amount was paid when the pupil first joined the kuttab, and other sums were paid every Thursday, before the weekend, or when part of the Koran was learned, as well as on different feasts and special occasions.<sup>8</sup> The largest contribution was made when a pupil learned to read the whole Koran. When this happened, the family held a big celebration for the graduate. He was taken in his best clothes round the town to make this achievement known to everyone.<sup>9</sup> He was paraded through the streets, and was taken to every friend's house in the neighbourhood, carols were sung at the doorway, whilst almonds, sweets and coins were thrown at him. This celebration was known as "Al-Khatmah", meaning "The Completion", and the carols were called "Al-Tahmedeh", meaning "Grace to God or Thankfulness".<sup>10</sup>

In certain cases the scholars were granted a whole or half-day holiday whenever one of them had finally mastered a section of the Koran.<sup>11</sup> Students who attended the kuttab were self-paced; and they could stay in school as long as they needed to achieve what their teacher thought they were capable of achieving.<sup>12</sup>

Although the religious aspect of education has always been important, there was a second motive for the development of education in Bahrain. This was the practical need for knowledge of reading, writing and calculation in conducting trade transactions with other Arab countries, India and East Africa.<sup>13</sup>

Beside the kuttab schools, there were other types of education that were available to Bahraini youth prior to 1919. The first was the Traditional Training in skills, such as dhow building, fishing,

coffee-pot making, pottery, embroidery, mat making, basket work, fabric weaving, and so on. Usually these skills were passed from fathers to sons.

The relationship between livelihood and education was manifested prior to 1919 in another type of learning. As trade expanded, when pearl-diving was at its peak, some wealthy merchants felt that religious education was not enough and therefore they hired private tutors to teach their children in addition to the kuttab's curricula, mathematics, especially calculations related to diving, and trading expeditions and later the English language was also taught.<sup>14</sup>

A further type of education was provided by the private schools. The development of modern education in Bahrain can be divided into two distinct sectors: first, the private schools which were established by foreign nationals to serve specific interests, either religious or national. And secondly there were the public schools which were established by the Bahrainis themselves, which were later incorporated into the government sector.

The first modern school was founded in Bahrain in 1892 when the American Dutch Reformed Church established a missionary elementary school where Arabic, English, Mathematics and Christianity were taught.<sup>15</sup> The Mission School started in a small way, and gradually developed into a valuable institution. Some of the leading merchants in Bahrain owe their education to this school.<sup>16</sup> However the school was closed in 1933 for lack of funds, but by then the Government education had advanced to such an extent that the need for it was not so great as it had been.<sup>17</sup> The school was reopened some years later under a different administration.

Occasionally, parents who could afford to do so sent their sons to be educated in Bombay or Baghdad and some young men, from families

which had a tradition for producing religious leaders, were trained in religion in Mecca, or in Hasa in Saudi Arabia or, if they were Shias, they went to the school of the Holy Cities of Iraq.<sup>18</sup> In Bahrain, especially among the Shias, certain families have produced religious leaders and teachers for many generations.<sup>19</sup> A few parents, however, who were bold enough to defy public opinion, had their children taught in the American Mission School which in those days performed a very valuable service for Bahrain.<sup>20</sup> The Mission School has continued until the present time and claims to be the first and the oldest modern foreign private school in Bahrain and in the Gulf region.<sup>21</sup>

Another foreign private school which was founded in Bahrain prior to 1919 was Al-Ittihad, established by the Persian minority in Manama in 1910.<sup>22</sup> In the same year a well-known pearl merchant from Hijaz founded Al-Falah School, mainly for the teaching of Islamic religion.<sup>23</sup> In Muharraq there were similar schools such as Dar al'ilm, meaning "the House of Knowledge", teaching practical subjects, particularly mathematics.<sup>24</sup>

The second type of school is the places for public gathering. It is important to note that the Bahraini community is divided into two major sects: (1) the Shia, who are known as the Baharna, are the original inhabitants of the Islands;<sup>25</sup> and (2) the Sunni, who are the various tribes who came from Arabia in search of wealth, among them were the Al-Khalifa who conquered to Islands in 1782. Prior to 1919, there was very little contact between the two groups. It was only after the First World War, when a modern educational system was introduced, that the two sects were brought together.<sup>26</sup> In theory a Matum to the Shia is a place for worship and for practising religious ceremonies. But in practice, it is a shelter for the passing

traveller, a club for meeting and discussion, a school for reading and listening. It still plays an important role among the Shia community. A Matum at that time was equivalent to the Salon or the Majlis for the Sunni.

A Majlis is usually a gathering place for men of the family and their friends. It is usually an annex to the house of the most elderly and respected member of the family. In the Majlis, news is exchanged, especially news about trade and the price of goods, as well as social news. Visits are made to the men or the women of the family in their Majlises once or twice a week. Prior to 1919 scholars were occasionally invited to join the host and his close friends to discuss topics of interest, or to participate in a discussion about an issue that was of special current interest. Some scholars and poets were regular members of certain Majlises, others were companions to the ruler or tutors to his children. Debates were started in these gatherings, which acquired something of the character of an academic seminar. The recognition of the Majlis as a school was explained by one of the ruling family in Bahrain who said "Majalisna Madarisna", which literally translated means, "our Salons are our Schools".<sup>27</sup>

Neither the Matum nor the Majlis was officially regarded as a school; never-the-less their impact on educating, directing and guiding those who attended them should not be underestimated.

It was in one of these Majlises that the proposal for establishing a "modern school" was announced. Shaikh Abdulla bin Isa, a member of the ruling family,<sup>28</sup> visited England to attend the peace celebrations after the 1914-1918 war and on his return to Bahrain he took an active part in starting a school for boys in Muharraq.<sup>29</sup> Immediately a campaign was started to raise funds to build the proposed school.

The selection of Muharraq as the location for the school rather

than Manama, the capital of the state and a larger town, was made because most of the Al-Khalifa family and the leading Sunni merchants lived there.<sup>30</sup> Merchants and notables contributed about Rs. 2,000,000 towards the cost of the school. The land where the school and its playground were built, on the northern edge of Muharraq, was donated by the ruler Shaikh Isa bin Ali; and a solid stone house was built which is still used as the Muharraq Primary School. The school was named "Al-Hidaya", meaning the "Enlightenment". In the same year, a public educational committee was formed to administer public schools.<sup>31</sup> On this subject Sir Charles Belgrave reported:

"Merchants and notables contributed to the founding of the school ... When public subscriptions are raised in Bahrain for local objects the response is usually generous ... The management of the school was vested in the hands of a committee of leading Sunni chosen for their wealth, not because of their learning or their experience."

32

According to G.D. van Peurse in the book Neglected Arabia, some schooling existed on the Islands before 1919. A few students are said to have completed primary studies with a speciality in either language, literature, or religion. Mathematics and Astronomy were also pursued for commercial and nautical purposes respectively. In fact, the country is said never to have been without educated men.<sup>33</sup> But with the opening of the Al-Hidaya school for boys in 1919, a new era in the history of education in Bahrain had begun.

## 2.2 Education from 1919 to 1933

The opening of the Al-Hidaya school was significant not only because it was the first organised school with a planned scheme and curriculum, but also because it was initiated and administered by the people. While the school was being built on land donated in the northern part of Muharraq town, the teaching took place in the

Majlis (Salon) of Ali bin Ebrahim Zayyani, a Bahraini merchant. This building was used for three years until the school was ready. Shaikh Hafiz Wahbah, a notable Egyptian, was appointed as the first headmaster of the school; and was assisted by a Syrian, Mohammed Al-Yamani. An Educational Committee under the chairmanship of Shaikh Abdulla bin Isa was formed of six well-known and prosperous Sunni merchants.<sup>34</sup> The fees collected from the pupils were nominal and paid only once at admission. Pupils coming from poorer families were exempted from fees. When the school was short of funds, and no contributions from the people were forthcoming, the members of the committee made up the deficit out of their own resources.<sup>35</sup>

As with the kuttabs, the school was open all year round, except for the summer months, when people went to live along the sea shores. It was closed on feast days, and on special occasions, such as the return of the pearl-diving dhows after more than four months at sea.

The curriculum of the school was mainly religious apart from some elementary reading, writing and arithmetic adapted from the syllabi of other Arab countries.<sup>36</sup> Teachers were brought from Syria and Egypt to work in the school under the direction of Shaikh Hafiz Wahbah.<sup>37</sup> A year or two after the first school was built, another school was opened in Manama, in a large house which had once been the headquarters of the Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of America.<sup>38</sup>

From the beginning, the progress of education in Bahrain was hampered by difficulties and disturbances. These were partly due to the division of the population into two sects, Shias and Sunnis, and the refusal of the Shias for several years to support schools in which there were Sunni teachers.<sup>39</sup> For some time the results of the first two schools were disappointing and for several years only

the Sunni Arabs and the Sunni Persians sent their children to school. There were frequent quarrels among the staff and between the teachers and the committee; and the school masters were constantly coming and going.<sup>40</sup>

The Government from 1925/26 paid a monthly subsidy to the schools, which varied in different years, before this date no records exist; and it was considered politic to allow the committee a free hand in running the schools. In 1925 the committee received Rs. 24,000, the following year Rs. 20,000, and in 1927/28 Rs. 46,000.<sup>41</sup>

In 1928/29 the payment was increased to Rs. 57,000, but by this year there were more than two schools and out of the Rs. 57,000 about Rs. 25,000 was spent upon building the first four classrooms of a new school in Manama intended for the Shias. The school was named the Jaffaria School; and the Shia Baharna of Manama contributed Rs. 5,000 towards the cost of the building.<sup>41</sup>

Another committee, consisting of Shia notables, was formed to assist in the management of the new school.<sup>43</sup> In contrast to the Sunni committee who recruited their teachers mainly from Syria, the Shia recruited their teachers mainly from Iraq. Government Reports on Education point to the fact that:

"Committees have always been popular in Bahrain, at times they have been of real value though perhaps more often they have been a hindrance. Some of the teachers in the new school were Shia Iraqis, remotely connected with the Shias of Katif and Bahrain. Unfortunately they developed strong political leanings which occupied them more than the work for which they were paid. The progress of the school was also seriously hampered by dissensions among the committee members who invariably disagreed about the employment and payment of the local teachers." 44

The first School for Girls was opened in Muharraq in 1928 in response to a demand for female education by a few of the more progressive Bahrainis and with the support of certain Bahraini ladies. But the

conservative Sunnis, especially the religious leaders, strongly opposed this innovation. One of their chief objections to educating girls was that if their daughters were taught to read and write it would be possible for them to correspond surreptitiously with men outside their homes. Girls' schools were denounced in sermons in the mosques and there were petitions to the Government protesting against so dangerous an experiment. However, the school was opened and it soon attracted pupils, and by the time another girls' school had been opened in Manama, about a year later, most of the opposition had died down. In a very few years the people who had opposed female education most strongly were sending their daughters to school.<sup>45</sup>

In 1929/30 there were serious disturbances among the schools, which originated in a quarrel between the teachers and the Sunni committee. The foreign teachers organized a strike which they persuaded the boys to take part in. The Government closed all schools for some weeks, dismissed several foreign teachers and enlisted an Inspector of Schools from Syria, who was recommended by the American University in Beirut. When the schools reopened, conditions were normal.<sup>46</sup>

The Jaffaria, the Shia school, was completed in 1929/30. The new school had places for about 400 boys and was then one of the Manama primary schools. During that year an attempt was made by the Government to combine the two school committees into one Education Council, but though the Sunnis welcomed the proposals the Shias refused to cooperate and for a little while longer the two committees continued to exist, directing most of their energy towards opposing any greater control by the Government over the schools.<sup>47</sup> However certain reforms were put through affecting the conditions and terms of teachers. However, the disagreements among the members of the Shia committee caused most of the parents to withdraw their boys from the school; and the Sunni

committee having lost financial control and the authority to make appointments, gave up any active interest in educational affairs. From then onwards, education became the direct concern of the Government. Though progress was uneven, hence forward educational affairs advanced with less dissension.<sup>48</sup>

The first important act of the Government in 1932/33 was the amalgamation of the Sunni and the Shia schools. This change was resented by most of the Shias who boycotted all schools.<sup>49</sup> Owing to the serious decline in revenue, only Rs. 34,000 was spent on education that year; but in spite of less money being spent on education, progress was satisfactory. At the time another school was opened by a young educated Shia, Ibrahim Al-Arayed. The school was financed by some of the wealthy Shia families in Manama, and for a year or two it served a useful purpose.<sup>50</sup>

Despite all the difficulties it is worth noting that almost all local Bahraini schools that existed on the Islands before 1933 were initiated by the people and the idea of establishing them came from the people themselves.

However the earlier policy of leaving responsibility for education to the private sector had disadvantages. One was the slow development and resistance to reform. Another was that the existence of the eight schools depended, to a great extent, on the financial well-being of the members of the two committees and other supporters. This was illustrated in the early thirties when Bahrain suffered two major financial crises. The first was the great world economic depression; and the second was the development of cultured pearls in Japan which left Bahrain with almost no market for its natural pearls. As a result the year 1932/33 was a year of financial difficulties. The salaries of all Government servants, including the staff of the education

department were subject to a cut, and all possible economies were made. Moreover, the founding of the national Education Committees on a religious basis had disadvantages. For the existence of the two separate committees, the Sunni and the Shia, created two different streams of educational provision within the small nation of Bahrain.

The central Government made several attempts to combine the schools of the Sunnis and the Shias into one educational unit under the direction of one educational council. After several meetings, disputes, and quarrels, the Government convinced the two committees that for education to achieve stability, progress, and development, it had to have one educational policy, and have permanent and growing funds beyond the help that private bodies could provide. Those interested in education agreed in 1933 that the amalgamation of the separate Sunni and Shia schools was necessary.

This direct intervention by the Government in 1933 was a landmark in the progress of the country. It marked the beginning of official formal education in Bahrain.

### 2.3 Education from 1933 to 1945

The foundation stage came to an end in 1933 when all the schools were amalgamated and put under the direct authority of the Government. This amalgamation was at first resented by the opposing religious factions, but eventually it proved to be one of the most important steps towards the integration of the two communities.

In the year 1933/34, expenditure was reduced to Rs. 22,000 by means of combining classes under one teacher and various other economies. At the same time attendance at all schools increased.<sup>51</sup> During the following year there was a further increase in students; and a number of Shia boys returned to the Manama school. Towards the end of 1935

a new school was opened in Sitra Island which was the first village school to be established in Bahrain.<sup>52</sup> In the next two years, schools were opened at Suk-el-Khamis, Budaya, and Hedd. There was no reluctance on the part of the village Shias to send their children to school. Budaya catered for Shias from several neighbouring villages and Sunnis from Budaya. Suk-el-Khamis provided a school for children from Bilad-al-Qadim, Senabis and other villages. The school at Hedd, the third largest town in Bahrain, with a population of about 4,000, soon developed from a village school into a town school.

The difference between a town school and a village school lies mainly in the curricula - a manifestation of the relationship between the livelihood of the people and education. According to the British Advisor, Sir Charles Belgrave, differences in curricula were justified because:

"A knowledge of reading, writing, and simple arithmetic is all that is needed by boys from the villages. Most of them will eventually become divers, cultivators, and fishermen. In these occupations school education is unnecessary though for divers and fishermen, a knowledge of figures is some insurance against being swindled."

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He also said:

"The problem of finding teachers for the village was not easy, no educated young men would consent to live outside Manama and it was difficult to arrange transport to and from distant scattered villages. The standard of education in the village schools was low and some of the local teachers were only a little better educated than the Mullas."

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In the town school the subjects taught were those that the people felt that their children ought to learn. Studies of Islam, Arabic language and literature, and history of Arab civilization received special emphasis. Next came their interest in arithmetic and geometry, with particular attention given to skills related to the division of shares. The school curriculum included, also, the study of geography with special focus on the countries with which Bahrain had trade

relationships as well as the rest of the Arab world.

It is important to note that in 1936 two Technical classes were formed. One was attached to the Muharraq Boys' School and the other to Manama Boys' School. Two skilled carpenters and a mechanic were obtained from Syria through the American University in Beirut. About a dozen pupils joined these classes.<sup>55</sup> These two classes gradually through the years grew to a technical college; and in spite of their simplicity they provided the nucleus of technical education not only in Bahrain but also in the whole Gulf region. The following year a separate technical school was established in Manama and the existing courses were transferred to the new school. In addition to the existing courses, two others were added, Blacksmithing and Turning. The Technical school was, then, open only to male pupils; and was the responsibility of the Electricity Supply Department.

By the end of the academic year 1938/39 there were 1,589 students in all schools - almost three times the 1930 number.<sup>56</sup> Sports were encouraged at all schools particularly football. There was also a company of Boy Scouts in the town schools; and at the end of each term, a play was produced and acted by the older pupils.

During the year 1939 important changes were made in the Education Department. In the first month of that year, the Lebanese Inspector, Mr. Faik Adham, and his wife, who was the headmistress of Manama Girls' School, were dismissed. The dismissal of the Supervisor gave the Government an opportunity to improve the performance and the reputation of the schools.<sup>57</sup>

The reforms started with an invitation to a British expert to study the Bahraini schools and submit a detailed report to the Government.<sup>58</sup>

Mr. Adrian Vallance, the British expert, produced a comprehensive

report in which he described the state of schools as he found them and made detailed suggestions for their improvement.

He found one outstanding feature, the comparative neglect of village schools compared with large schools in towns. Among the reasons for lack of progress among the pupils he noted (1) bad health, especially diseases of the eye, (2) irregular attendance, (3) premature leaving, (4) overcrowded classes, (5) lack of modern methods of teaching, and (6) absence of sound grounding.<sup>59</sup>

His suggestions for improvements included a scheme for dividing the educational life of a pupil into three stages; (1) Infant stage, (2) Intermediate stage and (3) Final stage. This proposal entailed founding separate infant schools in Manama and Muharraq; and a new final school open only to able boys who would qualify by examination and who, unless given a scholarship, would pay school fees.<sup>60</sup>

This scheme meant that less able children would not attend school for more than four years (age 6-10); but an intelligent child would be able to stay in school for nine years until the age of 15.

In November 1939, Mr. Vallance was appointed, through the British Council, which paid the greater part of his salary, as Director of Education to the Bahrain Government. He took over the administration of the schools and immediately made various improvements, especially in the village schools.<sup>61</sup> His appointment was almost universally popular and resulted in a steady increase in boys attending all schools so that by the end of the year it had become difficult to accommodate the number of pupils.<sup>62</sup>

The following year further changes were made such as separating infants and primary pupils in different buildings. By 1940 most of the recommendations of the British expert had been implemented. The year 1940 was characterised by a number of changes and reforms

that can be summarized as follows: (1) The working hours of both masters and pupils were rationalised; the pay and conditions of teachers were also regulated; grades of teachers were defined; rates of pay were fixed, and annual increments were introduced. (2) A central store for books, stationery, and equipment was established at the Education Office; payments by the pupils themselves for books and stationery were abolished thus removing the previous bar to proper education for poor pupils. (3) The age of admission to the lowest classes of the schools was raised from 4,5 or 6 to nearer 8 than 7; rules for removal of very slow learners from the educational system were devised. (4) The use of the Koran as a means of teaching infants to read was forbidden, and appropriate infants' reading books were introduced: corporal punishment in the schools was administered only in case of bad conduct, never for lack of ability. (5) The four village schools of Budaya, Riffa, Sitra, and Suk-el-Khamis were transformed by the introduction of appropriate books for reading, writing, and arithmetic; and the mullas were retained only for the teaching of religion.<sup>63</sup> All government schools on the Islands were brought into a thorough state of repair.

But the most vital step in 1940 was the opening of a secondary school in Manama. It was named Al-Kulliyah and was designed to accommodate the most able of all the boys leaving the primary school at the age of 13 or 14 and not enrolling in the Technical School. Its purpose was to provide secondary education and character training for Bahraini students. The course was to be for three years, English was emphasized, and the instruction was in Arabic. As the British expert recommended, all the boys at the Al-Kulliyah, except those who had state scholarships, paid fees for their education.<sup>64</sup>

The first group of 30 pupils was personally selected by the British

expert, Mr. Vallance, who also directed the school. At that time a small boarding department was attached to the Al-Kulliyah to accommodate students who came from remote areas of the Islands. A decade later, the boarding department moved into separate quarters; and it served Bahraini students as well as students from the neighbouring countries. In the academic year 1941-42, five students from Kuwait and three from Hedd, who were studying at the Technical School, were accommodated in this hostel.<sup>65</sup> By 1944 the hostel had become the hub of Bahrain's educational life. It was used for meetings, lectures, cinema shows and parties. It had been a major factor in bringing about the sense of unity which had developed both among the boys and leaders of the different schools.

From 1940 to 1943 the policy was to restrict the number of pupils at all levels of education and at the same time to increase the number of teachers and of classes. The increase in the number of classes had meant the engagement of more teachers locally and from abroad. However, after 1943, various visits had been made to Jerusalem and Beirut in search of teaching staff but they were unsuccessful because the salaries offered in Bahrain were substantially lower than those which were obtained in their own countries.<sup>66</sup> Local teachers were, by then, receiving regular instruction in teaching methods and were showing steady improvement. And in October 1944, three of the best local teachers were sent to Egypt to study for a year at the Abdul Aziz Training College for primary school teachers where a special course had been arranged in order to give them the maximum experience.<sup>67</sup>

The period between 1933 to 1945 could be characterised as a time of reform and change at all levels of education. It is important to note that in 1945, Mr. Ahmed Omran, a Bahraini, was appointed Acting Director of Education. His appointment ended the era of foreign

direction of the Bahraini educational system; and his long administration from 1945 to 1973 brought with it an element of stability and continuity greatly needed by the system.

### The Education of Girls

Girls had little opportunity or need for education in old Bahrain. Before the turn of the century, the girl was not allowed to leave the house once she was ten years old, and took no part in work outside the house. The men in the family used to teach the girls how to recite a few short "Suras" of the Koran to enable them to say their prayers. A few girls, however, learned how to read and write Arabic with the help of their brothers who attended one of the private schools that existed before 1919.

As a result of their travels abroad, Bahraini families recognised the need to educate their daughters. The idea of opening separate girls' schools was first initiated by Lady Majorie C.D. Belgrave, the wife of the British Advisor to the Government. The school was opened in 1928 in Murraq; and several of the girls who joined the school were older than the normal starting age and knew some reading and writing which they learned at the kuttab. Upon enrolment, they were tested and assigned to the different grades according to their level of achievement. The curriculum of the girls' schools did not differ much from that of the boys' Al-Hidayah school, except that the girls were given some elementary teaching in nursing, first aid and hygiene. They were also taught sewing, knitting and embroidery. In fact a needlework exhibition became an annual feature of girls' education from 1934.<sup>68</sup> During the war years, when most boys left school to take up employment, girls continued to be in schools as they were not expected to leave until the age of marriage. A kinder-

garten school for girls was opened at Murraq in 1942. At the end of 1940 there were three girls' schools in Manama, Muharraq and Hedd where the attendances respectively were 190, 150 and 85 pupils.<sup>69</sup>

The chief object of the girls' school during that period was not, as in the case of the boys' school, to train the pupils to earn their own living, because at that time, except in the Education and Medical Departments, there was no employment for women. The aim of the girls' school was to teach the girls better methods of managing their homes and bringing up their children.<sup>70</sup>

The education of girls had been, since 1933 and until 1956, under the direction of Lady Belgrave. Although enrolment of girls in schools continued to make headway, the education of girls, starting later, continued to lag behind that of boys. The standard of education at the girls' schools was reported to fall far below that of the boys' schools mainly because of the inadequacy of the teaching.

#### Technical Education

Technical education started in Bahrain in 1936 with two classes of carpentry and mechanics; and a year later a separate technical school was established in Manama. Although this school was part of the Education Department, it had continued until 1939 to be under the supervision of the Electricity Department; and for some years it was run by a British principal. From its earliest stages, this school attained a good reputation and attracted overseas students, in particular from Kuwait.<sup>71</sup> In an attempt to reform the school, the Director of the Baghdad Technical School, Mr. Hutchings, was asked in 1940 to visit Bahrain and advise the Government on the expansion of technical education.

The re-organisation of the Technical School, on lines suggested

in the Report of March 1940, was initiated in the early part of 1941. Up to this time, the Technical School had provided a two-years course of simple trade training in either woodwork or metalwork for a small number of students, never more than 25 in all, together with some instruction in English and drawing. There had been no standard of qualification for admission to the school and students were admitted at irregular intervals. Some had entered the school with little or no previous education, and most of the pupils came from poor families, attracted partly by the payment of a small wage as apprentice workers. In spite of these disadvantages the school had turned out a number of skilled workmen. Some of these later made good progress in the service of the oil company and in the Public Works Department.<sup>72</sup>

At the beginning of 1941, 20 students remained in the school from the previous session. Five of these were scholarship holders from Kuwait. Some 75 new applicants were examined and 50 of them were admitted to the school on probation.<sup>73</sup> In 1942 the school numbered 65 students; and from the beginning of 1942, the wage paid to students was reduced from Rs. 15 to Rs. 5 per month. It is worth noting that most of the new students entering the school in that year had been attracted more by the prospect of training than by considerations of immediate remuneration.<sup>74</sup>

The general standard at the Technical School had, by then, improved considerably due partly to the elimination of backward boys unable to keep up with the courses of instruction; and also to the more selective recruitment. It was reported that the majority of those who had survived the first year were keen, physically fit, well balanced young men, deriving much benefit from every aspect of their training.<sup>75</sup> This was largely due to the rigorous selection in regard to age, ability and physical fitness of the applicants.

Despite this gain in the selection of students, it was reported that in 1944-45, a considerable proportion of the Technical School students valued their training as a possible means of establishing themselves in independent business rather than a qualification for employment in existing firms<sup>76</sup> - an attitude which deserved every encouragement. What was unfortunate was that the boys who left the school before finishing their course of study were unable to afford even the most essential tools for the exercise of their crafts. This factor had favoured employment in places where the equipment was all provided, or more often, the adoption of occupations not connected at all with the boys' handicraft training.<sup>77</sup> As a result of this situation, the number of the students in the Technical School, during war-time dropped considerably; and it was mainly due to the increased opportunities for employment for local workers on military and other development schemes in Bahrain.

This drop-out problem could be justified during war-time; but what is important to note is that the problem has persisted in technical education down to the present.

#### 2.4 Education from 1945 to 1956

The appointment of Mr. Omran was significant not only because he was the first Bahraini education administrator so that other capable young men of Bahrain could anticipate filling the senior posts in the Government, but also, having served as a deputy director for a period of three years, he was fully aware of the problems and the need for the development of education. In his long administration from 1945 to 1973, he was faced with several major educational problems:

- In 1945 there was a decline at all levels of learning: in the secondary school there were about 50 boys in the three classes

and the average age was between 15 and 16. Instead of the school expanding it was reduced from three grades to two grades.<sup>78</sup> For various reasons, many of the boys had left school before completing the course. There were the same problems in all the schools. As soon as boys were old enough to earn money they left school and easily found well-paid employment. Boys from poor homes were taken away from school by their parents, whether they wanted to stay on at school or not. The parents, who were usually illiterate, did not appreciate that a son with an education had eventually a higher earning value. The problem was tied up with the labour situation. As long as there was a demand for labour few boys who could work would stay at school unless they belonged to wealthy families. Another tendency was for parents to send younger children to school, infants 5 years old were brought by older brothers or sisters. This in most cases did not arise from the parents' desire that their children should learn but from a desire to keep the children out of the way and out of mischief; the school was regarded as a creche.<sup>79</sup>

- The standard in the village schools was lower than in the town schools. Where possible teachers from towns went daily to work in the villages but lack of transport made this arrangement difficult to implement. It was found that town teachers would not consent to live in the country, even in such places as Rafaa, and local village teachers were too old to have benefited from the new improved educational facilities.<sup>80</sup>

- The end of war did not make the import of supplies easier than before and it was only by rigorous economy that books, stationery and other school materials were made to meet the requirements. Books printed during the war were made of inferior paper with inadequate binding which did not last long in the hands of pupils.

- Although the Technical School had a teaching staff that could cater for about 100 students, the number of boys at the school was only 27.<sup>81</sup> This was because as soon as the boys had acquired a small amount of training and experience they left school and began earning either as bazaar carpenters or working in the garages or at Awali with the Oil Company. Technical training was regarded by the Sunnis as a humble way of earning a living and only the sons of poor parents entered the Technical School; work of the type that was taught in the school was regarded as being on a par with agriculture and in Bahrain the farmers were entirely Shia Baharna, the original people of the Islands. The course at the Technical School lasted three years, and few parents were willing to allow their sons to spend three years at school when there was money to be earned.

- The major problem, however, was the shortage of qualified Bahraini teachers. The problem of continuous service by local women teachers was complicated by the fact they almost invariably married and very often their husbands did not wish them to continue teaching or the advent of a family made it impossible.<sup>82</sup> It was also reported that though the local girls in many cases made good teachers, their lack of training made it difficult for them to assume responsibility for organising and supervising a whole school.<sup>83</sup>

By the end of 1946 there were 13 boys' schools containing 1,750 boys staffed by 82 teachers; and 5 girls' schools, with 1,288 girls, staffed by 65 teachers.<sup>84</sup> Expansion in the schools continued; both town and village schools were enlarged to admit more pupils but the difficulty in obtaining suitable teachers was great. A Teacher Training Class was formed for training boys who passed out the Secondary School, but the number of entrants was small. More boys were sent abroad for advanced education but few of these had any

ambition to become school teachers.

By 1950 there were 3,282 boys and 1,763 girls attending Government schools. All education was, then, free except for a small fee which was charged for secondary education. In both boys' and girls' schools the accommodation and the staff were insufficient to allow the authorities to accept all the children who applied for admission. As usual the lower classes were extremely crowded and the higher classes were comparatively empty.<sup>85</sup>

In 1953 three new village schools were opened. They were built by the Bahrain Petroleum Company, which has always taken a keen interest in the Government's educational policy. The teaching staff in the boys' schools consisted of 22 Syrians, Lebanese and Palestinians, 10 Egyptians and 136 Bahrainis.<sup>86</sup>

During this stage (1945-1956) various solutions to the problem of teacher shortage were considered. The immediate solution was to import teachers. The second was to train native students to become teachers. And the third was to improve the standards of the existing teachers.

The first solution created problems. As more teachers were imported from different Arab countries, ideas, practices, and habits, which were alien to Bahraini culture were also imported. The Annual Report on Education for 1948 by the Director of Education, Mr. Omran, made the following comment:

"The members of the teaching staff consisting of Bahrainis, Egyptians, Syrians, and Indians worked well during the year. There were very few cases of failure to conform to school regulations. Only one serious case occurred in which a fanatical foreign teacher, belonging to Akhwan-al-Muslimin, was found to be spreading political propaganda among the schoolboys and members of the clubs. He was sent back to Egypt."

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Problems with overseas teachers continued. In 1949 two foreign

teachers were discharged for unsuitable behaviour; and in 1950 it was stated that the Government did not approve of the attitude of the Palestinian teachers. On the whole, teachers recruited from Egypt were more experienced than those from other Arab states.

This was one reason why Bahraini educationalists began to consider the training of native born teachers. The Department of Education initiated several programmes to train and to liaise teaching standards:

1 - Evening classes were organized for older teachers who were already in service but who had no special teaching qualifications apart from experience. This programme started in 1951 and included courses in Arabic, English, Mathematics, and the fundamentals of education.<sup>88</sup>

2 - Weekly evening classes in English for teachers holding a secondary school certificate were organized by the British Council in Basrah. The aim of the course was to teach masters and student-teachers the correct use of the Oxford University English course books.<sup>89</sup>

3 - Summer visits by teachers and principals to more advanced neighbouring countries were instituted. Thus in the summers of 1951, 1953, and subsequent years, the American University in Beirut arranged a refresher course at the University for primary school teachers from Bahrain and Kuwait. The syllabus of the course was prepared in collaboration with the British Council authorities in Iraq and Lebanon.<sup>90</sup>

4 - Qualified Bahraini teachers were sent to British or other universities for further specialised study - in particular to Nottingham University - to learn new methods of teaching English.<sup>91</sup>

5 - Since 1948-49 the British Council personnel stationed in Basra, Iraq have come on invitation to Bahrain to conduct a week's course on the teaching of English.<sup>92</sup>

6 - To improve the teaching of religion, the Department of Education organized lectures on recitation and methods of teaching the Koran.

By 1955 there were 7,500 boys in 24 schools, staffed by 314 teachers; and 3,386 girls in 11 schools with 125 teachers; but the supply of locally trained teachers failed to keep up with the school requirements. Consequently, the proportion of foreign teachers was increased.<sup>93</sup>

The decade of the 1950s saw the expansion of girls' schools, both in towns and villages. Secondary schools for girls started in 1951-52; and in October 1956 the first batch of secondary graduates left for the American College in Beirut for higher education.<sup>94</sup>

With regard to Technical Education, the school started a new section for electricity in addition to the machine shop, carpentry and blacksmithing. However until 1955 the Technical School continued to have about 75 pupils.<sup>95</sup>

A major achievement that took place in 1956 was the forming of the Council of Education. The Council established cultural contacts with other Arab countries. It also gave early consideration to possible economies in the administration of the Department of Education. By then a new stage of development had begun.

## 2.5 Education from 1956 to 1970

The second half of the fifties was one of rapid change compared to the period that preceded it. But expansion in the education services created problems. As more teachers were imported from different countries, the methods and the quality of teaching differed from one school to another, depending on the teachers' training and experience. Curriculum and textbooks also varied: the Infant school,

for example, followed the Lebanese or the Syrian programmes; the Boys' schools followed the Egyptian programme; Girls' schools followed mostly the Lebanese programme; and the Technical School was experimenting with a special syllabus of its own - a combination of British and Egyptian programmes, modified in response to the local economic needs. This had a deleterious effect on the development of education. For this reason, the first thing the newly established Council of Education did was to consider possible economies in educational administration. To make this clear, an explanation is necessary:

Until 1956 there were three different managements for education in Bahrain. First, Boys Education was headed by a British director during the Second World War. Later, beginning in 1945, it was headed by a Bahraini Administrator, Mr. Omran. Second, Girls' Education was headed by a British Directress, Lady Belgrave. Third, the Technical School was run by a British principal for some years, who was succeeded by a Lebanese, Mr. Sa'id Tabbara in 1945. This school remained, until 1956, under the jurisdiction and control of the Department of Electricity. However, due to the efforts of the Council of Education, integration between the boys' and girls' systems of education was officially announced in 1958; and the Technical School was put under the authority of the Education Department in 1956.

Other major problems during this time were the shortage of qualified teachers, the need for proper school buildings, the task of establishing post-secondary institutions, and the need for more funds to finance such expansion.<sup>96</sup>

To solve the problem of wastage and repeaters, two reforms were implemented in 1960: (1) the elimination of all re-sit examinations, and (2) the adoption of the system of automatic promotion in the first three grades of the primary schools.<sup>97</sup> By then, the primary stage

consisted of 6 years.

Theoretically, the adoption of automatic promotion should have contributed to the improvement of learning. But when this method of promotion was first put into practice in 1961 the majority of the teachers then working in the primary schools were neither ready nor properly trained to implement such an innovation. These teachers associated automatic promotion with the abolition of written tests and therefore, it led to their giving smaller amounts of written work. The results of such an innovation were felt only by 1966 as the cycle of the first group of primary pupils went through the whole new scheme. Many pupils, who had been promoted to the next stage, had simply carried their weaknesses from one grade to the next. Needless to say the plan of "automatic promotion" was and still is a subject of lively debate among teachers.<sup>98</sup>

Beginning with the year 1960 the pattern of the educational ladder was changed from 2-4-4, namely 2 years pre-elementary, 4 years primary, and 4 years secondary, to 6-2-3 pattern, which included a unified 6 years primary stage, 2 years intermediate and 3 years secondary schooling modelled on the Egyptian system. In 1962 the intermediate schools were separated from the secondary schools. Thus from 1965 the primary, the intermediate, and the secondary schools have operated separately.<sup>99</sup>

Expansion of secondary education was the main educational development of the 1960s. Practically all pupils who finished their primary education joined the intermediate schools. Approximately 86% of those completing intermediate school continued their education in the secondary school; and 85% of them preferred the General Academic Education.<sup>100</sup> By then secondary education had been streamed into (1) general, (2) commercial, (3) technical, and (4) teacher training.

In addition to academic secondary schools there were two Industrial Secondary Schools. The first started in 1936-37 and the second in 1967. As the number of male students gradually increased in these schools, new divisions were added; and in 1972-73 a third technical school was opened. This was done in response to the then current policy of making the technical schools on the Islands the institutes which would produce skilled labour and technicians for the local community. Further, two commercial secondary sections attached to the academic secondary schools were opened in 1969 and 1970.<sup>101</sup>

To solve the problem of shortage of qualified teachers, a Men's Teacher Training College was established in 1966, followed by a Women's Teacher Training College in 1967. Both colleges offered a two-year course preparing students to teach in upper primary and intermediate schools. Holders of Secondary General Certificates, scientific or literary, could enrol in these colleges on a selective basis. Their curriculum included Islamic culture, Arabic and English languages, Arab history, arts, physical education, hygiene and social development, educational and developmental psychology, school curriculum, methods of teaching, and a field of specialization.<sup>102</sup>

Another development during this stage (1956-1970) was the establishment in 1968 of the Gulf Technical College. It was designed to provide technical training for nationals of the Gulf States. It prepared all grades of technicians; and trained students in business practices and public administration. This College was then under the supervision of a joint committee consisting of representatives from the Bahrain Department of Education, the Abu Dhabi Ministry of Education and the British Ministry of Overseas Development.<sup>103</sup>

The decade of the 1970s, witnessed major changes in the politics and the economy of the country. In 1971, the British withdrew from

the Gulf. Oil prices were increased from 2 to 35 American dollars per barrel. This had a great impact on the development of the country and in particular on the development of education. This is discussed in the next section.

## 2.6. Education from 1970 to 1980

The post-independence period forms the most crucial phase in the development of modern Bahrain. It was an era of unprecedented economic, social and educational expansion. During the 15 years since independence, Bahrain has become the regional services and educational centre of the Arabian Gulf as discussed earlier (Chapter 1).

At the level of the central government, the government organisation as a whole underwent major transformation in anticipation of, and later in adjustment to, independence. New major policies were energetically enforced. The first was Bahrainization of manpower where ever possible and at all levels. The second was decentralization of government bureaucracies. Many new government agencies were created to carry out some of the functions of the older, heavily burdened agencies. Spheres of authority and responsibility were clarified.<sup>104</sup>

Until 1968 the various government agencies and offices were referred to as "Departments". In 1969 their status was raised to "Directorates". And in 1971, the year of Independence, they were again promoted to the level of "Ministries". Henceforth the Department of Education became the Ministry of Education. The Minister of Education, and other ministers, became a member of the National Council - the Cabinet of Ministers.

In 1972-73 the then Minister of Education was promoted to another position in the Government outside the educational field; and as a result a new era in educational administration began.

Mr. Omran, the former Minister of Education, was replaced by Shaikh Abdul Aziz Al-Khalifa. The new minister was born at Muharraq in 1932. He obtained a diploma in Arabic from Cairo University in 1956, and pursued higher education in African and Oriental Languages at London University.<sup>105</sup>

Under the new administration, the ministry took more positive steps towards the integration of the boys' and girls' schools in both the administrative and the technical system. In the mid-1970s, the ministry's policy stressed the continuation of educational expansion to embrace all children of school-going age, updating the curricula-keeping in view of the society's development needs, improving the efficiency of teachers, building more modern schools to move away from rented houses, and to strengthen technical education. Meetings and discussions with the different Arab states were formalized and organized with the help of the League of Arab States and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, and later with that of the Arab League Educational Cultural and Scientific Organization - ALECSO.

The first major law on education in Bahrain was passed in 1975 raising the intermediate stage of education from 2 to 3 years and making attendance compulsory. It also developed a programme to include subjects like civic education and more advanced handicraft and artisan courses. It took a close look at private education, school administration and the examination system. The anti-illiteracy law aimed at eradicating illiteracy was passed in 1974. This law provided that education must be free and compulsory for all Bahraini children during the elementary and preparatory stages. By 1980 the secondary stage had included for the first time, technical and vocational specializations such as nursing and hotel training. And an inset

teacher-training programme went into effect.<sup>106</sup>

But the most significant achievement of this period, 1970 to 1981, was the upgrading of post secondary institutions and the establishment of higher and university education on the Islands.

Early in October 1976 the College of Health Sciences was opened to the first intake of students. It was established by the Ministry of Health. The college has been since its establishment co-educational; and the language of instruction has been in English. In the same year a Catering and Hotel Training Centre was established with the objective of training the man-power needed for the hotels and catering services. Further, in 1978 it had been decided to upgrade the curricula of teacher preparation and training. As a result the Training Colleges for men and women were amalgamated, upgraded and integrated to form a University College of Sciences, Arts and Education. Since then the teaching in this College has been co-educational.

The introduction of co-education into Bahrain in colleges and universities for higher education was a major departure from the usual Gulf practice. The fact that young men and women sat side by side in classrooms, at the cafeteria, or worked together in laboratories made the development highly controversial. The interest shown by Shaikh Abdul Aziz was an important factor in this development. He joined the Department of Education in 1959, became the Director General of Education in 1971 and was appointed Minister of Education in 1972. As Chairman of the University College Board of Trustees, he presided over a long meeting which started on the 12th of May 1981. He left that meeting for Algeria to attend the Conference on Arab Higher Education. It was from there that the news reached Bahrain that the Minister had had a heart attack and died on Monday the 18th of May 1981.

Dr. Ali Fakhro, M.D. is the present Bahraini Minister of Education. He was born in 1932. In 1954 he took his B.Sc. degree from the American University in Beirut (A.U.B.); and in 1958 his M.D. from the School of Medicine of the same university. Specialising in Cardiology and Gastroenterology, he served as Fellow at various hospitals in the U.S.A.; and later as a consultant for internal medicine in Bahrain. From 1971 till 1982, he served Bahrain as its Health Minister; and became the Minister of Education in 1982.<sup>109</sup> But by then other major forces had begun to exert an influence on the economy of the country such as the steady decline in the production of Bahraini oil and the world decrease in the price of oil. These forces and many others marked the beginning of the present stage of educational development in Bahrain.

## 2.7 Summary and Conclusion

Observation shows that through all its vicissitudes, education in the Islands of Bahrain reflects the historical roots of the economy in the country. During the pioneering years, education was initiated within each community - Sunni and Shia, reflecting the religious values and the livelihood of each locality. These values in addition to basic literacy formed a very simple curriculum of the pupils. Though the country is said never to have been without learned men, the first modern public local school was founded in 1919; and it was named Al-Hidaya, meaning the "Enlightenment". It was followed by another school for girls in 1928. Gradually through the years as population and towns grew, and through the process of urbanization, one Hidaya school with one level of elementary education in 1919 became many schools where classes could be divided according to grade. Local Sunni and Shia boards amalgamated to form larger school jurisdictions

though it was not until years later that there was a government department of education. By 1980 the Islands had provided nursery, kindergarten, primary, intermediate, secondary, and higher education.

A study of the historical development of education in Bahrain shows that for the last eight decades or so, education has gone through several difficult stages of development. Each stage had its own initiatives, problems and reforms; but some of the weaknesses that prevailed in one stage were also passed to the next stage. As a result the problems, which Bahrain education is currently facing, are the results of past experiences. To make this clear some explanation is necessary:

1 - During the pioneering years between the twenties and the thirties, education was initiated, controlled, and staffed by lay people. The values of hard work, perseverance, and withstanding of hardships and suffering in making a successful life, pervaded all schools on the Islands. When this was combined with the fact that most teachers were untrained, that sophisticated pedagogical strategies were not yet evolved, that each teacher taught many different subjects and grade levels, that educational resources consisted of the wit of the teacher and perhaps one "text", that the local economy could only support the barest of physical resources - it is possible to understand the prominence of learning by rote and memorization. Early examples of this approach to teaching include the rigorous religious kuttab schools. What is surprising is that, in spite of the innovative approach to methods of teaching, some teachers in the state schools still rely on memorization, and in particular the teaching of Islamic religion - a problem facing the present education system which has its roots in past experiences.

2 - Another obstacle to progress is the drop-out problem. This

could be understood during wartime when the majority of the older boys left schools in increasingly large numbers, often before completing their primary education to fill well-paid posts which were open to anybody with a modicum of education and a smattering of English. At the end of 1944 about 400 boys left school, most of them between 12 and 15, and almost all of them obtained work in the country. The same problem prevailed among the girls; and there were various reasons for this. Some girls left because they found that they could make substantial sums of money by sewing and knitting. Usually only the daughters of well-to-do parents completed their schooling and reached the top classes. For this reason the number of graduates was small in comparison to the number of students in schools. But this tendency of leaving school before the completion of the course still persists at the present time. In fact the drop-out problem, particularly in adult education, is a matter of concern to educational authorities in the country.

3 - When funds were low and the debts were high, the development of education was hindered in various ways. During the Second World War, for example, the difficulty of obtaining books and equipment became severe and when some of the foreign teachers left, it was not possible to replace them as teachers from abroad demanded salaries compatible with the cost of living in their own countries which was higher than in Bahrain. No building could be done owing to lack of materials, work was hampered by the shortage of paper, books, slates and all the equipment necessary for teaching. In fact since the pioneering times the question of finding funds to develop education has always been a matter of concern to both the people and the Government of Bahrain. Though Bahrain was the first state in the Gulf to start modern schools, to introduce female education, and technical

education ; it has never been possible to build luxurious schools or to employ large numbers of highly paid foreign teachers; but this has not been a serious disadvantage. In the beginning the development was gradual but as time passed the speed of development increased and lately the rapidity of development has at times outrun the capability of the Ministry of Education.

The late sixties and the seventies witnessed the development of Higher Education. But as the number of schools and colleges increased, Bahrain needed more teachers and instructors. In fact the problem of finding the qualified teachers with the limited funds available to education is a major problem facing the development of the educational system in the 1980s.

4 - A study of the historical development of education in Bahrain also shows that over the past sixty-seven years various attempts have been made to relate education to the economy of the country. In the past when pearl-diving and trade were at their peak the study of mathematics, especially calculations related to diving and trading expeditions, was included among the most important subjects in the Sunni schools in towns. Subjects related to agriculture and farming were emphasized in the Shia schools in the villages. Girls were given, in addition to basic education, some elementary teaching in first aid, hygiene, sewing and embroidery. These three separate kinds of curricula persisted for a while reflecting the economy of the Islands at that time.

Today, attempts are being made to relate education to a more diversified economy. It is a propitious time to reflect more goals for economic survival through education. In fact linking education with the world of work is a major government policy in the 1980s.

By 1981 problems had arisen in relation to the school population,

in the differentiation of secondary education, in pedagogy and methods of teaching, in Bahrainization, in the allocating of funds to develop higher education, and in the provision of special education facilities for the illiterates and the handicapped. One may notice that most of these problems had existed in the past.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN BAHRAIN

In his first public speech, the newly appointed Acting Minister of Education, Dr. Ali Fakhro, announced in 1981 that there were going to be important changes in education in Bahrain, particularly in the school curricula. This had been done he explained, "to prepare the teachers to enable them to respond to the changes in schools and society".<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary to recall at this point that over the past sixty-seven years, since the first school in Bahrain was established, the educational system passed through several stages of development. At each stage external forces, social, political, religious, and economic influenced the development of education.

At present there are many forces affecting the development of education in the country. Some are positive and have their roots in the thirties. Others more recent, create strain in the education system.

To understand fully the development of the Bahraini education system in the 1980s, an explanation of the dominant forces is necessary.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to deal with three related major factors: (1) the role of oil on the development of education, (2) the impact of manpower problems, and (3) pressures caused by the rapid growth in the population.

#### 3.1 The Role of Oil on Education

According to Byron G. Massialas and Semir Ahmed Jarrar, oil and

the movement of human resources and money across frontiers is one of the Arab World's silent revolutions. Its consequence is the birth of a new social order.<sup>2</sup> This order consequently has influenced the economic, political, and social life of the Arab states, both within each state and within the region as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

Revenue from oil has had a positive impact, not only on the economic welfare of the oil-producing countries, but also on the labour-exporting countries. The latter group comprising of such countries as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia benefited from the money which their nationals working abroad sent home.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the new wealth from oil created a hierarchal society both in the oil-producing countries as well as the labour-exporting countries of the region.<sup>5</sup>

These authors also claim that while in the oil producing countries, the wealth of the new upper class was derived from oil revenues, in the latter, the wealth of the new class came from the relatively high income earned abroad.<sup>6</sup> In such a class society, wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few. This kind of society is also called the "rentier" society, because the economic stratification of the society is less of a pyramid shape and more of a diamond shape, where the rich and the poor represent nearly equal portions of the area, while the majority of the well-to-do constitute the largest portion.<sup>7</sup>

The discovery of oil in Bahrain at the end of May 1932 gave an impetus to the oil companies, who hurried to obtain concessions in the Gulf States. In 1935 the Shaikh of Qatar granted a concession to the Iraq Petroleum Company whose first successful well was drilled in 1938.<sup>8</sup> In the same year the Standard Oil Company of California obtained a concession over the eastern part of Saudi Arabia and found oil three years later.<sup>9</sup> In Kuwait, after long and complicated negotiations, a concession was granted to the Kuwait Oil Company.<sup>10</sup> But Bahrain, where

oil was first found, became the poor relation among the oil states; its oil field was very small and only with careful control could it produce two and a quarter million tons a year, an insignificant output when compared with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia which each produce about sixty million tons.<sup>11</sup>

On this Charles Belgrave commented:

"The saving grace for Bahrain has been the gradual increase in oil revenue which allowed time to build up a competent administration capable of planning ahead. There was no sudden transformation, as in Kuwait and Qatar, from extreme poverty to unimaginable wealth. I knew every year approximately how much revenue to expect."

12

He also added:

"In later years the budget was published in full in the Government Gazette, but it was a long time before any of the other states in the Gulf published even a semblance of a budget."

13

It was at that time that the arrangement was made whereby the Ruler received one-third of the oil revenue for the privy purse, part of which he used for paying the allowances of his innumerable relations. One third of the revenue was invested in the Reserve Fund and in productive schemes. And one third was spent on administration and development.<sup>14</sup>

The Bahraini oil revenue was small compared to other Gulf states, and it was only through careful planning that the country derived the maximum benefit from the revenue.

In 1981 the Ministry of Education announced that it was necessary to link education with the economic needs of the country. The gradual decrease from 1971 onwards has required well planned and sometimes rigid financial policies.

Oil has affected the development of education in Bahrain in two distinct way, directly and indirectly.



### 3.1.1 The Indirect Effects

These have been achieved by the steady and planned progress which has been implemented throughout the Islands since the first oil revenue was paid into the Bahraini treasury in 1933, when the Government received 29,000 rupees (£2,000) as oil royalties.<sup>15</sup> During the twenty years between 1936 and 1956 the total revenues of the State amounted to 297½ million rupees (about £20 million) of which 151 million rupees (£11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> million) were derived from oil payments.<sup>16</sup>

A rigid financial policy was followed in dealing with State revenues and expenditure by which half of the oil royalties were invested in a reserve fund. By the end of 1956 this fund had produced an interest of 12 million rupees (£900,000). The other half of the royalties was utilised for capital investment in schools, hospitals, and other public works and items of capital equipment.<sup>17</sup>

It should be noted at this point that the running expenses of the State were and are still financed by other sources of revenue, particularly customs dues. This system provided sufficient funds for capital and recurrent expenditure as well as for investment but only if extravagance was carefully avoided. In 1973 James Belgrave stated:

"It is thanks to this policy that Bahrain today enjoys the benefits of so many schools, hospitals, clinics, and other public services which have given the people a higher standard of health and education than the other States of the Gulf." 18

There is no taxation in Bahrain as yet and therefore the revenue of Government is the only source for the support of public education. The two main items of the Government income are (1) customs duties, and (2) oil royalties. The former is still important (even after the discovery of oil) in providing a regular revenue which has increased along with the growth of commercial activities on the Islands.<sup>19</sup> Table 3.1 (see page 103) shows the State revenue for the years 1980 to 1986. It is apparent that revenue from the oil sector still forms a significant

TABLE 3.1

State Revenue for the Years 1980 to 1986in Million Dinars

<u>Year</u>	<u>Oil Sector</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Oil Sector</u>
1980	228,600	100,400	329,000	69%
1981	245,050	105,950	351,000	69.8%
1982	416,500	143,500	560,000	74%
1983	498,000	148,000	646,000	77%
1984	370,390	174,610	545,000	68%
1985	361,435	213,565	575,000	63%
1986	335,000	215,000	550,000	61%

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, 1987.

percentage in spite of the decline in oil production. It was 69% in 1980; it became 74% in 1982; it reached 77% in 1983; it decreased to 63% in 1985; and became 61% in 1986.

The great impetus to education in Bahrain came after the first oil shipment in 1933. With the increase in national income, the Department of Education was allotted a bigger budget. But as Chapter Two shows, the greatest increase in growth and expansion of schools occurred after the fifties.

The oil industry was important not only in providing the funds but also in changing the occupational pattern, and in raising the level of individual aspiration. Before the Second World War, religious affiliation determined the individual's type of occupation.<sup>20</sup> Commencing with the post-war years, however, the oil industry, by providing the people with new opportunities, helped to eliminate some of the traditional class differences. By the middle of the 1930s, the construction of surfaced roads made it possible to transport teachers, and to provide education for youngsters in relatively distant villages.<sup>21</sup>

Cornelia Dalenberg, a member of the Reformed Church in America, who came to Bahrain at the turn of the century, recalled her impressions of that time:

"Was the coming of oil good for Bahrain? I would have to say 'yes', the giant of oil companies behaved well, as far as I could see. The Rulers of the countries I saw seemed to have the good of their people in mind as they amassed their great fortunes. And in Bahrain, the experience of working with the foreigners and their businesses enabled them to step onto the international stage in later years with grace and self-assurance."

22

With the increase of oil revenue, Bahrain made progress each year in various fields of activity. In 1945, for example, when the revenue of the State from all sources was B.D. 600,000, the Government Medical Services included general hospitals and special establishments for mental and infectious diseases as well as dispensaries for men and women at

Manama, Muharraq, Hedd, Sitra, Suq-el-Khamis and Budaya as well as the Manama Secondary and Technical Schools.<sup>23</sup> Girls' schools were established in Manama, Muharraq, Hedd and Rifa. And with the increase of oil revenues, between 1950 and 1955 from Rs. 9,383,000 to Rs. 42,555,000, the school population also increased from 4,562 to 9,184 pupils for the same period.<sup>24</sup>

Progress continued in the 1950s, in the 1960s and in the 1970s.

It was, then, stated that:

"This is particularly remarkable when one remembers that Bahrain has received in oil royalties during the past 20 years an amount that equals Kuwait's royalties for 4 months."

25

To appreciate the role of oil on education, it should be borne in mind that the technical education in Bahrain, which was established in 1936, and was supported through the years by BAPCO (Bahrain Petroleum Company), has provided education not only for many of Bahrain's leaders of today but also for their counterparts in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere in the Gulf. Also the scarcity of resources before and during the 1930s had its effect on the health of the pupils. As early as 1939, a school doctor was requested by the Educational Advisor, Adrian Vallance, to improve the low standard of health of the boys. A few years later the situation changed with the establishment of the 'School Health Centre'. Similarly because of the shortage of resources, no separate schools could be founded for the younger pupils who therefore went to the same schools with boys of 18 and 20 years of age. A few years later, schools were divided according to levels of education, from primary to secondary.

Another change that began with the discovery of oil was the easing of restrictions on women in Bahrain. As the city of Manama, the capital, grew more cosmopolitan, the women became aware of new ways

of living. It is hard to believe that only thirty years ago, no women were to be seen walking unveiled in the narrow streets of Muharraq, while today women drive their own cars to work to take part in the country's development side by side with men. They go to study abroad, and on business trips unaccompanied. It is also quite acceptable for women, including those who come from the most conservative and highly esteemed Bahraini families, to run their own fashion stores and attend to customers in person.

Cornelia Dalenberg recalls Bahrain:

"The coming of oil expanded the horizons of many women. They came to realize that not all women were sequestered. In our mission schools, girls began appearing in the elementary, co-educational classes. First they came from the lower classes, and then from the upper classes. It seemed that the slowest progress was made by the middle class."

26

At present in BAPCO, in ALBA (Aluminium Bahrain), in BANOCO (Bahrain National Oil Company), and in other companies operating on the Islands, there are several women engineers who play an active part in oil production. They also work with men in hospitals as doctors, in the universities as instructors, in the banks as accountants, on the stage as actresses, in the pharmacies as lab technicians, and in the Ministry of Interior as police officers.

Comparing women in old Bahrain with their counterparts in modern Bahrain, the author of the Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America wrote:

"The faces of the girls would not leave my mind, when I had first gone to the Arab world a half century before, women in Bahrain had to run for cover when a man at the door of the room merely cleared his throat. Some women passed their lives in the dreary confines of their quarters, never learning to read, write, or even show their faces outside the walls of their home. Now here they were Arab girls studying at McGill University in Canada, learning to adapt themselves! What a change had taken place! Surely the story would fill a book."

27

The number of students in 1928 was 150; by 1986 the student population had become 85,867 of whom 43,987 were males and 41,880 were females.<sup>28</sup> Bahrain started sending male students abroad as early as 1928 when six scholarship students left for the American University in Beirut; by 1985, in addition to sending some postgraduates abroad, there were five institutions offering higher education on the Islands where male and female students studied side by side - a remarkably progressive step by Gulf standards. However, if women are to be offered equal educational opportunities with men and if expensive duplication of facilities is to be avoided, then co-education is essential.

Indeed Bahrain has gone through a gradual and peaceful development due to the fact that oil has been produced for a relatively long time (since 1932) and in relatively small quantities (only 19.9 million barrels a year in 1977 and declining by 4% in recent years).<sup>29</sup> This has meant a modest but steady influx of money into the state treasury.

There is in Bahrain of today, a more subtle change in the people's social attitudes and outlook on life. This concern with the public welfare on the part of the Government and the people of Bahrain, stems from a realization that the country could not depend, forever, on oil. The education of the young generation is regarded as a major way to real development. This belief in the importance of education led Bahrain to review its policy on educational services at all levels.

Not only did oil in the thirties, forties, fifties and the sixties have great impact on the wealth and the development of the country which indirectly affected the development of the educational system, but its gradual decline since the 1970s has also affected the policies and the objectives of the system.

In one of his speeches in the early 1980s, as the Minister of Education, Dr. Ali Fakhro said:

"We are living in the era of science and technology, the two main elements towards achieving general development in the field of material production. Thus we feel the need of a strong base composed of craftsmen, technicians, technologists, and engineers, a target which we aim to reach. Accordingly such an aim will enable our society to expand its industrial and technological projects without the need of depending on expatriate workers. As a result we must plan the objectives of each stage in our educational system."

30

Since the beginning of the 1980s there have been substantial changes in the Bahraini educational system. The curriculum has been developed to link education more closely to the economic needs of the country. Other reforms introduced in response to economic changes have been the improving skills of Bahraini teachers, the innovations in examinations and assessment of students, and the development of higher education especially for technical and professional studies. Such changes were indirectly related to the decline in oil production.

Indeed changes in the life of men and women in Bahrain, which were brought about indirectly by the discovery of oil in 1932, were both vast and numerous. It is hard to grasp or overestimate their extent and complexity.

### 3.1.2. The Direct Effects

The direct effects of the discovery of oil on educational development in Bahrain have, largely, been through the activities of BAPCO - by the teaching and the educational facilities provided by the oil industry for Bahrain employees at all levels of learning. And also by the direct contribution given by BAPCO to the Ministry of Education in the form of scholarships at home and abroad which has had an impact on the development of technical education. Some explanation of this point is necessary.

Normally a private company would not be expected to provide

educational facilities, but the appearance of a complex enterprise, following the discovery of oil in Bahrain, an underdeveloped country, caused special problems and responsibilities and, therefore, the company turned in 1938 to education.<sup>31</sup>

The first need was for educational provision for the children of its foreign employees, mainly British and American. This was met by founding the staff children's school in Awali in 1938. By 1956 the school had grown to ten classrooms following the British primary school curriculum.<sup>32</sup> This school still exists but with the curricula more adapted for Bahraini pupils - children of the Bahraini staff who live in Awali. The school provides a full range of extra-curricular activities, and there is a parent-teacher association.<sup>33</sup>

A second educational facility was the Arabic courses provided for non-Arabic-speaking employees. The BAPCO programmes for their own employees were motivated by various considerations including the need to reduce the level of "dollar" and "sterling" personnel, to reduce the turnover of daily-paid employees, to reduce the level of accidents, and to integrate the company into the total society.<sup>34</sup> At present, this scheme which was started by BAPCO has been taken over by the Ministry of Education. It provides Arabic lessons three times a week for those interested in learning the language from all over the country.<sup>35</sup>

A third but major direct contribution to education was the formal training of Bahraini employees. The first initiative was the opening, in November, 1948, of a school at Zallaq.<sup>36</sup> Here Bahraini employees (36 initially) were given a four-months course in simple English with full pay.<sup>37</sup> Very shortly afterwards, the company made additional plans and as early as February, 1949 new educational facilities were being discussed. First proposals called for an expenditure of \$245,000, but this was scaled down to an appropriation of \$114,000 in October

of 1949.<sup>38</sup> The building was shifted to Awali instead of Zallaq and had six classrooms, an auditorium seating 160, lunch and wash facilities, and office.<sup>39</sup> Early in 1950 an extension of this school was completed.<sup>40</sup>

Courses offered were in four stages. All students were paid their regular salaries:

Stage I was a continuation of the old programme at Zallaq, for example a four months, full-time programme for illiterates in English and Arithmetic. The goal of the language side of this course was to develop a 300- word vocabulary, with facility in simple tenses. A total of 2,300 employees had completed this stage by 1956.<sup>41</sup>

Stage II was started in 1953 and it also lasted for four months for stage I graduates or the equivalent. At this level the goal was an attainment comparable to that of ten or eleven-year-olds in the United States. The topics covered were English reading and grammar, Middle Eastern geography and social studies. There were 600 graduates.<sup>42</sup>

Stage III also lasted four months. It had a two-fold goal: to teach English and mathematics to a level necessary for junior supervisory staff, and to screen out those students incapable of further scholastic progress. The syllabus of the course was: decimals, logarithms, algebra; in science - light, air, heat, water, and elementary physics and chemistry. This course began in 1956 and approximately two-thirds of the students were deemed capable of further progress.<sup>43</sup>

Stage IV was the final stage; and it consisted of a ten-month, full-time course which aimed to prepare students for further training in the United Kingdom and to round off the education of men training for supervisory jobs. Its syllabus in English, mathematics and science was designed to bring the students to a level which would enable the best of them to pass the three subjects at a secondary school level (United Kingdom, G.C.E. 'O' level) in one academic year.<sup>44</sup>

A further development at the vocational training centre has been the addition of a fifth stage in 1961 to the Bahraini Development Programme. This stage was composed of line employees and ex apprentices who were considered to have the potential for development through further training towards supervisory, professional and technical positions in the company. It was divided into two groups, technical and commercial, and suitable candidates were chosen for extended courses overseas.<sup>45</sup>

A revised programme of supervisory development courses had also been instituted in 1961 as a means of training selected employees for positions of leadership and special responsibility in keeping with the Company's policy of promoting from within. The courses were geared to three levels of supervisory function from first-line supervisor to department-head level. Training was given in supervisory skills and techniques as they related to the practical job requirements of those under training. By the end of 1961, over 120 employees had undertaken this course.<sup>46</sup> By 1965 the number of employees who had attended the Supervisory Development courses reached 671.<sup>47</sup>

In 1968, 25 Bahraini students left Bahrain for further education in England under BAPCO's sponsorship: 3 from the Accounting Department were studying for the Institute of Cost and Work Accountancy examination, 2 from the Medical Department were doing the Pharmacy Technical course, 10 oil operations trainees were taking the City and Guilds of London Institute course in chemical plant operation. A further 10 students, from Power and Utilities, began a special City and Guilds of London Institute course for electrical generation operatives.<sup>48</sup>

At the end of 1968, 2 BAPCO trainees received B.Sc. degrees in Electrical Engineering. They were the first BAPCO trainees to receive B.Sc. degrees in Britain through BAPCO's graduate training programme.<sup>49</sup>

During 1970 a total of 53 Bahraini employees were in the United

Kingdom on full-time courses aimed at higher academic qualifications to fit them for superior positions in BAPCO.<sup>50</sup> Supervisory development has become the company's main internal training activity; and during that year between 90 and 100 employees attended courses from junior to stage III level. In addition special courses were run for well over 300 Bahraini supervisors on the subject of Effective Human Relations. A ten-session seminar for senior supervisors was also conducted, covering such subjects as Motivation, Participation, Communication, the Economics of Organization and a Management Simulation Exercise.<sup>51</sup>

In 1971 BAPCO decided to discontinue the training arrangements for all levels beyond stage III. The new arrangements for obtaining qualified Bahrainis to meet recruitment needs were as follows:

1 - The development of a register of all Bahrainis engaged in secondary and further education in schools and colleges on the Islands, and also of those undergoing training overseas. Suitable students were offered either posts with the company, or further training, sponsored by the company, with a view to taking positions with BAPCO.

2 - Through discussion between department heads and the BAPCO training co-ordinator, local and overseas training programmes were designed as required for the development of personnel within the department.

The decision to close the BAPCO Training School was a consequence of the establishment of the Gulf Technical College in Bahrain in 1967. In theory, this College was intended to replace the Training School by producing sufficient suitably qualified men for further training overseas.<sup>52</sup>

During that period, 56 Bahraini employees were on full-time training assignments at various colleges and universities overseas. These comprised employees studying for degrees in Mechanical, Geological, Chemical, Electrical and Power Engineering.<sup>53</sup> During the summer of

1971, groups of students from the Gulf Technical College and the Technical School in Bahrain were recruited by the company to give them industrial experience and help them to find a suitable position when they had completed their academic courses.<sup>54</sup>

In 1972, a considerable number of Bahraini employees were sent to the U.S.A. and Japan on short training assignments related to the company's low-sulphur fuel oil project. The company's main internal training activity continued to be centred on supervisory and management development, and during the year, a total of 72 employees attended six courses at various levels to improve their skills in these areas.<sup>55</sup>

In 1973, 35 students from the Gulf Technical College participated in a summer vacation programme sponsored by the company.<sup>56</sup>

Ten years later in 1983 the company's new \$4.3 million Training Centre was opened. The Centre was fully equipped to meet a wide variety of training requirements and was able to provide in the same building courses ranging from basic craft skills to supervisory/management techniques.<sup>57</sup>

During the same year BAPCO offered many scholarships to Bahraini students selected with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education. Recipients of awards went to the Gulf Polytechnic (formerly the Gulf Technical College), the Petroleum Minerals University in Saudi Arabia, and to universities and colleges in the U.K., the U.S.A. and Canada. In 1983 there were 67 students benefitting from these scholarships. Later in that year 20 Bahraini girls joined a secretarial course at the Gulf Polytechnic under company sponsorship.<sup>58</sup>

During 1984 there were 84 students sponsored by BAPCO. Of these, 18 were scholarship students and 66 were employees sponsored for long-term academic programmes. What is interesting is that a number of individual 'firsts' were recorded: a Bahraini girl became the first ever to be

presented with a special runner-up award following her achievements in a U.K. shorthand examination; a Refining Division employee received two certificates from the United Kingdom, one of them giving him four distinctions in his process plant operation part II examinations. It was also reported that another Bahraini was nominated by the U.K. Institute of Mechanical Engineering as the best student in the U.K. for 1983-84.<sup>59</sup>

By 1986 the number of BAPCO trainees had grown to 1094; and the training costs amounted to US\$32.7 million as indicated in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2

BAPCO Training Costs

1983	US\$ 11.5 million	414 Trainees	30% Productive
1984	US\$ 9.7 million	267 Trainees	40% Productive
1985	US\$ 6 million	210 Trainees	55% Productive
1986	US\$ 5.5 million	203 Trainees	55% Productive

Source : State of Bahrain, Bahrain Petroleum Company, Personnel Department, 1987

In addition to these educational facilities which have been provided directly by the oil company, it also presented Bahraini colleges and universities with valuable books, resources, and encyclopaedias. As early as 1953, when the number of school children exceeded the capacity of the state school-buildings in Bahrain, three new village schools were opened at Sanad, Tubli, and Karzakan, built, furnished and presented to the Government by BAPCO; and it was possible, then, to increase the total number of boys in the state schools by 610.<sup>60</sup> Among the

leaders and senior administrators in Bahrain today there are several who were, in the past, young employees of BAPCO.<sup>61</sup>

Educational opportunities that have been made available for men and women in Bahrain since the discovery of oil in the thirties are vast and numerous - an indication that oil was, and still is, a crucial factor in developing education in the country.

### 3.2. The Impact of Manpower Problems on Education

Since the diversification of the economy in the 1960s and the 1970s, there has always been a shortage of manpower in Bahrain. This problem became acute in the 1980s. Some people blamed the education system for not producing the skills needed by the country. Others thought the education system was lagging behind economic developments. To understand the impact of manpower problems on the development of education and the strains it has created on the system since the beginning of the 1980s, a brief explanation is necessary.

Bahrain is the first Gulf oil state to have to face the immediate prospect of dwindling oil output, and, as a result, was the first country in the lower Gulf to start diversifying its activity by developing other industries. In recent years, and especially during the last two decades, the Government has seriously committed its economic strategy to industrial and commercial diversification and the creation of an active service economy. It has initiated many new projects in international banking, major construction programmes, dry dock, aluminium smelters, and petro-chemicals, which have been discussed earlier. It has also expanded its hotel industry, desalination and power plants, communications and many housing projects. Emphasis, in the 1980s, has been placed on the development of Bahrain as a regional centre for business and off-shore banking.<sup>62</sup>

This rapid economic and social development has been brought about in less than two decades with enormous pressure on the development of manpower resources, the educational system and especially on technical and vocational education. This, compounded with rapid technological change plus the rising expectations and opportunities of the people in the Gulf, poses very demanding and complex challenges to manpower and educational planning that have to be faced and responded to swiftly.

The expansion and development of Bahrain's economy created the need for skilled and trained manpower which Bahrain did not possess in sufficient numbers and so had to rely on a large expatriate labour force. In 1982, Allen G. Hill observed:

"The real danger in depending on outside labour is not that the whole supply may suddenly dry up but that the workers themselves may cease to identify their interests with those of the state employing them and may combine or form associations aimed at furthering their own interests at the expense of that host country."

63

The growth in employment levels in Government as well as in commercial and industrial establishments has been so rapid that the country has outgrown its domestic labour supply in all sectors of the economy. And though the Government has been very successful in managing the development of a wide variety of commercial and industrial activities which started in the sixties, the Ministry of Education started to react to this new situation only in the eighties - in other words two decades too late.

In an interview with the National Geographic Magazine in September 1979, the Minister of Development and Industry said:

"Here on the Arabian side of the Gulf we were the first nation into the oil business - and we will be the first one out. But more than 12 years ago we started doing something about it - diversification is the answer."

64

But it was not until December, 1981, that the Minister of Education, Dr. Ali Fakhro announced:

"First, we have to link education to the requirements of the economic and social developments, so that it may cover in its initial stage, industrial specializations, with its various branches, such as commerce, health sciences, catering, printing, agriculture, science and literature. These specializations will increase in the foreseeable future, in response to any changes that may occur in the structure of society."

66

In that year major changes took place in the development of education in Bahrain. In addition to changing the curricula at secondary level, 20 million Dinars were allocated to increase the efficiency of teachers in the state schools.

And to encourage the people of Bahrain to respond to such changes the Minister declared:

"I beg the people of Bahrain who have built that history throughout 6000 years not to reverse their move, before the challenges of the present or future civilization and understand now, before it is too late that the future of their country and the region lies in their attainment of knowledge and education. They can see the Japanese and American experiments, both of which have one thing in common: positive response from their people in implementing an evolved educational system."

67

Beginning with the academic year 1981-82, attempts had been made to improve secondary education by linking its curriculum to economic and social needs as well as to the needs of the local labour market. In addition to nursing and hotel catering, the Ministry introduced other specialized branches such as agriculture and animal husbandry. The number of students who undertook technical and vocational studies reached two-thirds of the total number. This ratio, according to the Ministry of Education, was one of the highest in the entire Arab world.<sup>68</sup>

The Ministry of Education also tried to introduce measures necessary to create a suitable pedagogic and administrative environment. In his annual speech in 1982, Dr. Fakhro stated:

"We have completed a comprehensive report with the help of UNESCO concerning the status of education in the country. This report will form the basis on which we shall build our future schemes. We have made several changes in the central

teaching administration in the Ministry, and created several centres to direct such changes through researches and pedagogical studies, to extract from them new educational methods according to the needs of Bahrain, and at the same time linked to future scientific and technological tendencies.

69

Early in 1983, an anti-illiteracy campaign was started and about 8000 men and women joined the adult literacy teaching programme. And with the support of UNESCO, the examination system has also been revised. Instead of yearly examinations, the state schools have, since 1983, followed a two-semester system.

Outlining his views on the importance of technical education

Dr. Fakhro said:

"We are living in the era of science and technology, the two main elements towards achieving general development, particularly in the field of material production. Thus we feel the need of a strong base composed of craftsmen, technicians, technologists, and engineers, a target which we aim to reach. Accordingly, such an aim will enable our society to expand its industrial and technological projects without the need for depending on expatriate workers. As a result we must plan the objectives of each stage in our educational system."

70

Following the major changes in the Bahraini educational system in 1983, further changes were introduced in 1984. Particular attention was given to further education. Seven new specializations were introduced into the curricula. Consequently students in secondary schools, in addition to the various available specializations, could choose any of the following: Computing, Postal services, Insurance, Radio and Telephone Communication, Design, Library science, the Media and Information. Guide books were given to all intermediate students to help them and their parents in choosing a future career. Such reforms were warmly welcomed by the majority of Baharini people. However the more conservative families viewed these innovations with suspicion. They wanted changes but were unenthusiastic about the process of Westernisation. In his annual speech of 1984, the Minister referred

to these criticisms:

"The society demands radical changes to be made in the curricula, and this is right. It is our duty to promote such changes. However, the success of such changes depends upon the society. If we are going to strengthen the Arabic language curricula, then is society going to respond to this movement by adopting Arabization in administration, commerce, communications, manner of living and in attitude?"

71

Concerning foreign and local workers he said:

"If we press for introducing certain specialisations which are linked to the needs of the society, and impose them on the students to adopt such ramifications, then would the business community resist the temptation of preferring cheap and competing foreign workers to the local workers?"

72

Regarding graduates from the state vocational schools and job opportunities in local industries, he said:

"If we wish to make fundamental changes in technical education curricula, an objective towards which we have taken our initial step, then one of the most important elements of its success will be a major participation by the local industries in the training schemes. This matter requires temporary financial and technical sacrifices for the sake of achieving such noble national objectives. The question is: are we going to have such support voluntarily and without any need for begging?"

73

The fact that university students, males and females, sat together side by side in classrooms, campuses and cafeterias made the issue more controversial. On the subject of modernism, the Minister posed the following questions:

"The society demands the modernisation of the Arab mentality so that science, technology, and culture are combined together. But science and technology require a strict rational methodology and reject any restraint. Both require a free atmosphere where questioning takes place, hence they mainly depend on the individual's adventurous and courageous initiative. So are we going to have enough courage to meet such demands and needs, not only concerning science and technology but concerning humanities as well?"

74

Similarly, regarding the new policy for education, Dr. Fahkro said:

"We shall continue our experiment to create an educated society in Bahrain keeping in mind that even advanced countries such as the United States of America, the Republic of West Germany, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom and others,

are now reviewing their educational systems, and they ask the same questions as we ask today. So, we are not the only people. There are others too who are making similar efforts; but the blessed ones among us are those who will be able to build a society made of men who have been described by the British author, C.P. Snow, as 'Men who, in addition to bearing the past in their heads also carry the future in their bones'."

75

Apart from the emphasis on science and technical education, there appears to be a determination on the part of the Ministry of Education to seize every opportunity to meet the needs of the market and society at large. The Bahraini Government realises that the country can not depend, for ever, on outside professional help for its development. The education of the young generation is regarded as the chief means of achieving self sufficiency. This belief in the importance of education led Bahrain to extend the curricula to include vocational education.

But changes and reforms introduced into the education system will always create some problems, difficulties, and strains. The changes in the philosophy of education, which have been put into effect since the 1980s, is an expression of the two forces at work in educational thinking in Bahrain. The first emphasizes those aims which are connected with the preparation of the young for life in an Arab Moslem society through a religious-moral-national education, in which the child is helped to identify with his family, country, the Arabian Gulf, and the Arab world at large. The second is more concerned with adapting the young generation to an ever-changing society with new demands, outlooks and requirements. It is likely that these two forces will continue to operate, and there will always be a conflict in interest and emphasis with respect to certain objectives as long as Bahrain is open to the outside world.

Undoubtedly, though Bahrain has been very successful in managing

its entry into a wide variety of commercial, and industrial activities which should be able to sustain its economy when the oil is depleted, the fact is that much of the investment may become an economic liability if the enterprises are not made productive and competitive through an efficient and trained work force.

On this issue a recent World Bank Report stated that:

"Bahrain's potential for further economic development can, however, only be realised for the benefit of the local population if important questions of national economic policy are addressed. One of the most vital issues appears to be rooted in the fact that Bahrain has not produced a labour force which can hold its own with expatriates in industrial pursuits."

76

According to the latest survey of the Ministry of Labour, the percentage of the Bahrainis in the private sector constitutes only 30% of the total labour force.<sup>77</sup> Greater efforts are, therefore, required to develop the technical skills of the local labour force and to accelerate the policy of substituting Bahrainis for expatriates in technical and professional jobs. Otherwise, the country's economy will become increasingly dependent on foreign labour which, through remittance and the use of local facilities and services, constitutes a growing drain on Bahrain's financial and other resources.

### 3.3 Rapid Rate of Growth in Population

Other pressures on the educational system, at present, are caused by the rapid growth in population. According to the 1981 census, about 40% of the population is under the age of 15, whereas the median age for most industrial countries is 30 to 35.<sup>78</sup> This means that the working population of Bahrain, being proportionally smaller, must carry a much larger burden of support - including educational support for those below working age. This, plus the mounting educational aspirations of parents and their children, plus the new stress on educational

development as a precondition for overall national development, contributes to the sharp increase in the schools' enrolment.

The number of students and their percentage of the total population are shown in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3  
Population and Students 1980/81 - 1985/86

<u>Years</u>	<u>Bahraini Population</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>%</u>
1980-81	238,420	69,083	29.0
1981-82	238,420	71,177	29.9
1982-83	245,239	75,434	30.8
1983-84	252,253	78,797	31.2
1984-85	259,467	82,699	31.87
1985-86	265,379	85,867	32.35

Source : Statistical Summaries of Education in Bahrain for the years 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86.

Figures in this table show that the number of school-age pupils has grown from 69,083 in 1980-81 to 85,867 in 1985-86. Similarly, the percentage of students in Bahrain state schools has grown from 29% in 1980-81 to 32.35% in 1985-86. These figures indicate that in the year 1986 more than one-third of the population was in school.

The last census of 1981 revealed that Bahrain's population is very young and fast growing. The annual growth of the population was estimated at 7.9%. And though natural increase accounts for part of this, immigration of non-Bahrainis has been the largest contributory

factor to such rapid growth. The annual addition of Bahraini youngsters compounded by the growing numbers of children of immigrants with similar needs for schooling, health care and the like is placing a heavy burden on public services in general and on education in particular.

Children in primary schools in Bahrain form the majority of the school population. In the year 1986 the number of children in the state primary schools was 50,936 or 59.3% of the total student population. And the number of pupils in intermediate schools was 19,838 or 23.1%.<sup>79</sup> This structure has put a strain on the education system since children at the age of what can be called "Basic Education" constitute about 82.4 percent of the total school population. Such a fact means that both manpower demands and the rapid rate of growth in population have put pressures on the development of education in Bahrain.

#### 3.4 Summary and Conclusion

The discovery of oil in Bahrain in 1932 has affected the development of education in the country in various ways through its revenue which constituted the backbone of the country's economy - hence the building of schools and expansion of education at all levels, through the direct teaching and educational facilities provided by the oil industry to Bahraini employees - hence the change in attitudes toward work and training; through the direct contribution given by BAPCO to the Ministry of Education in the form of scholarships at home and abroad - hence the development of technical education, and above all through changes in life for both women and their daughters - hence equal opportunities for both men and women in education. Such changes continue to be a positive force in the development of the education system in the 1980s.

However the development of education at present is also influenced by other factors. The decline of oil production, since the early seventies, has necessitated the diversification of the economy which in turn created a need for skilled and trained manpower; and because Bahrain did not possess sufficient numbers, it has relied on a large expatriate labour force. This economic and social development has been brought about in less than two decades with enormous pressure on the development of education - hence the diversification of the curricula in the early 1980s, and the development of technical and vocational training. By then, the number of expatriates and their children had increased and constituted a growing drain on Bahrain's social services - particularly on education - a fact which meant both manpower demands and the rapid growth in population have put pressures on the development of education.

It is clear that, in the past, policy concerning educational expansion was based mainly on the assumption that, as long as the demand for the available types of education exceeded the supply, expansion was socially justified. But the demand did not exceed the supply of technical education. As a result the educational system failed to provide all the necessary skills required to meet the changes in the occupational structures. On the other hand, Bahrain has had little difficulty in filling from local sources its requirements for administrative personnel in Government services, primary school teachers, and most white-collar jobs.

The basic problem is that industrial and commercial development have raced far ahead of the educational system, in spite of the enormous efforts made by the Ministry of Education to keep pace with the Government's commitments towards its new economic strategy and development. This is further aggravated by the fact that the "lead time" in producing

qualified manpower is long. In fairness to the Ministry of Education it must be pointed out that, prior to 1978, the Ministry was not provided with the necessary information and data on the manpower needs of the country.

But the question that poses itself here is the interdependence of economic planning and national manpower planning. To be consistent and optimal, a plan must resolve several questions: to what extent should the general economic plan be modified to take account of the structure of manpower supply; and also to what extent the manpower supply should be modified to meet the requirements of the plan.

Despite the growing debate concerning education, there is evidence that some employers doubted the ability of the education system to prepare an adequate supply of manpower, particularly for industrial work. This has led to a situation of growing distrust mainly because some unrealistic demands made upon education have not been satisfied. And there remains a preference for experienced and cheap workers imported from abroad.

It is recommended, therefore, that adequate co-ordination should be established between educational activities administered by the Ministry of Education and those of the private sector. This could be achieved by (1) an effective and permanent body set up for the purpose of translating available information into priorities for the country's vocational and technical education, and (2) by placing restrictions on the import of foreign labours though cheap and experienced.

Faced with such difficulties and problems of manpower demand, further changes were introduced into the education system in 1980-87: - in school administration, the curricula, and in the training of teachers. These will be discussed in the following chapters.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### EDUCATION AT THE PRESENT TIME

#### - 1980 ONWARDS -

After this discussion of the historical development of education in Bahrain in pre-Independence and in the post-Independence eras, and the various factors affecting this development, it is appropriate to consider the current education system. This chapter will deal with several related educational topics: the aims and objectives of education, the administration and control of education, the budget and the system of financing education, the structure and organisation of education, and the curricula and problems of learning.

#### 4.1 Policies and Objectives

The Bahraini educational system of today is embedded in a rich cultural heritage that dates back to the rise of Islam in the late 7th century; and for the past five years it has been guided by the Islamic principle "seek education from cradle to grave".<sup>1</sup> This policy has been adopted to encourage teachers and administrators - young and old - to join the in-service teacher training.

For many years Bahraini education has been characterised by change, and much of the post-1975 period has also been marked by growth: large increases in the number of pupils, the expansion of higher educational opportunities, and increased expenditure. Although the process of change continues, the 1980s have seen increasing reassessment and consolidation as well as a number of other significant developments. These include the class-teacher movement at the primary level, the diversification of curricula at secondary level - a slowing down in the demand

for higher education, and the need, because of economic circumstances, to reduce public expenditure. In recent years, the number of primary school children has increased, and the rise in numbers began to reach the secondary schools. It has led to an increased demand for additional teachers at primary level and an even greater need for teachers of certain specialised subjects at secondary level. Since 1982, the teacher training system has been reorganised to cope with the new situation while retaining flexibility for future expansion.

Bahraini education aims to develop fully the abilities of individuals, both young and old, for their own benefit and for that of society as a whole. This aim has assumed a new importance in an age of rapid technological change. Free schooling is provided for children between the ages of 6 and 17, although many pupils remain at school beyond the minimum leaving age. Post-school education, mainly of higher education, and at universities on the Islands, is organised flexibly to provide a wide range of opportunities for academic and vocational education.

The Government's education policies are designed to increase parental choice and involvement in pre-school organisation, to allow local societies to organise nurseries and kindergartens where appropriate, and to assist children from less well-off homes to benefit from attendance at these private pre-primary establishments, in particular those run by local societies and groups. There are plans to improve the special educational provision for handicapped children but this is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs. A further plan includes the provision of better vocational education in schools for the 15, 16 and 17 age groups, mainly for students intending to enter employment directly after leaving school. Consideration is also being given to the development of the intermediate schools for the 12 to 14 age group, and the

development of secondary education to broaden the scope of its curricula. The plans have recognised that the academic, commercial and technical studies offered in all secondary schools, for male or female, in towns or villages, can help the young to acquire the skills needed for the economic development of the country.

The policy of the Ministry of Education is based upon two fundamental principles of the State Constitution. First, the provision of education for all children of school-going age throughout the country. Second, the improvement of the quality of education to meet the socio-economic development needs of the students. On this basis the Ministry has established its priorities:<sup>2</sup>

To provide education for all children of school-going age, to improve the efficiency of the Ministry's employees; to develop curricula suitable for meeting the community's needs; to raise teachers' standards and the efficiency of school administration; to build sufficient numbers of school buildings to meet the needs of a growing population; to strengthen commercial and technical education to serve commerce and industry; and, to make adult literacy a reality.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the individual, the aims of education are his physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional development. The objectives of education also state that (1) each individual must have the opportunity to develop his abilities, skills, and attitudes to raise his/her socio-economic and cultural level; (2) every citizen of Bahrain must become a devout Moslem, a patriot, a well educated person, and a responsible, active member of society; (3) opportunities for self-learning must be available to all citizens, young and old, male and female, inside and outside schools; (4) leisure time activities can be made more enjoyable and profitable with instruction in new hobbies; (5) education must bring science and technology to the common man to better his/her

life without enslaving it.<sup>4</sup>

Finally education in Bahrain aims at developing international co-operation and understanding based on justice, equality and mutual respect.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4.2 Administration

The education system in Bahrain at present forms an integral part of the Government administration. The Minister of Education, a Cabinet Member, is supreme head of the Ministry. He has the power to issue directives and regulations of a general character in relation to the whole field of public education, adult education, private education, the national museums and public libraries.<sup>6</sup>

The Ministry of Education (MOE) usually exercises its responsibilities through the control of finance as well as through the inspection system. The MOE usually prepares the educational budget for the country as a whole except where educational functions are carried out by other relevant Ministries as in programmes of youth and sport, recreational education for children after school, or educational functions carried out by the private sector. Once the budget is approved, the MOE makes the final decisions as to who gets what, when, and how. The system of inspectors is founded on the idea that the MOE should be able to reach even the remotest village to ensure that educational programmes are properly implemented.

While all kindergartens and the private schools, with their various levels of education, are financed, run, and administered by the private sector, they are supervised and inspected regularly by the Ministry of Education.

The provision of education in the state schools is the responsibility of the MOE authorities. They employ the teachers and other staff,

provide and maintain buildings, supply equipment and materials and provide grants to students proceeding to higher and university education. The MOE also provides all scholarships for the class-teacher training provided by the University College of Arts, Sciences and Education. And though the Ministry of Education is not responsible for higher education at colleges and universities on the Islands, it is the Ministry which decides to whom scholarships should be given even though the money is provided by other authorities in the area, by other Ministries in Bahrain, by the private sector or by the oil and other companies.

The Minister of Education is responsible for all aspects of education in Bahrain, and for the Government's relations with and support for higher education throughout the country. He is consulted about education in all the colleges in Bahrain except the College of Health Sciences which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, and the Catering Centre which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Information. He is currently the Chairman of the Gulf Technical College, the Bahrain University College, and the Arab Gulf University (financed by the seven Gulf states).

Private schools throughout the Islands, whether national or foreign, are administered by the private sector; but the MOE takes an active role in supervising these schools. Nurseries, however, and schools for handicapped children are supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Table 4.1 (see p. 136) shows the organisation of the Ministry of Education in Bahrain. This Ministry is composed of the following:

I. The Minister.

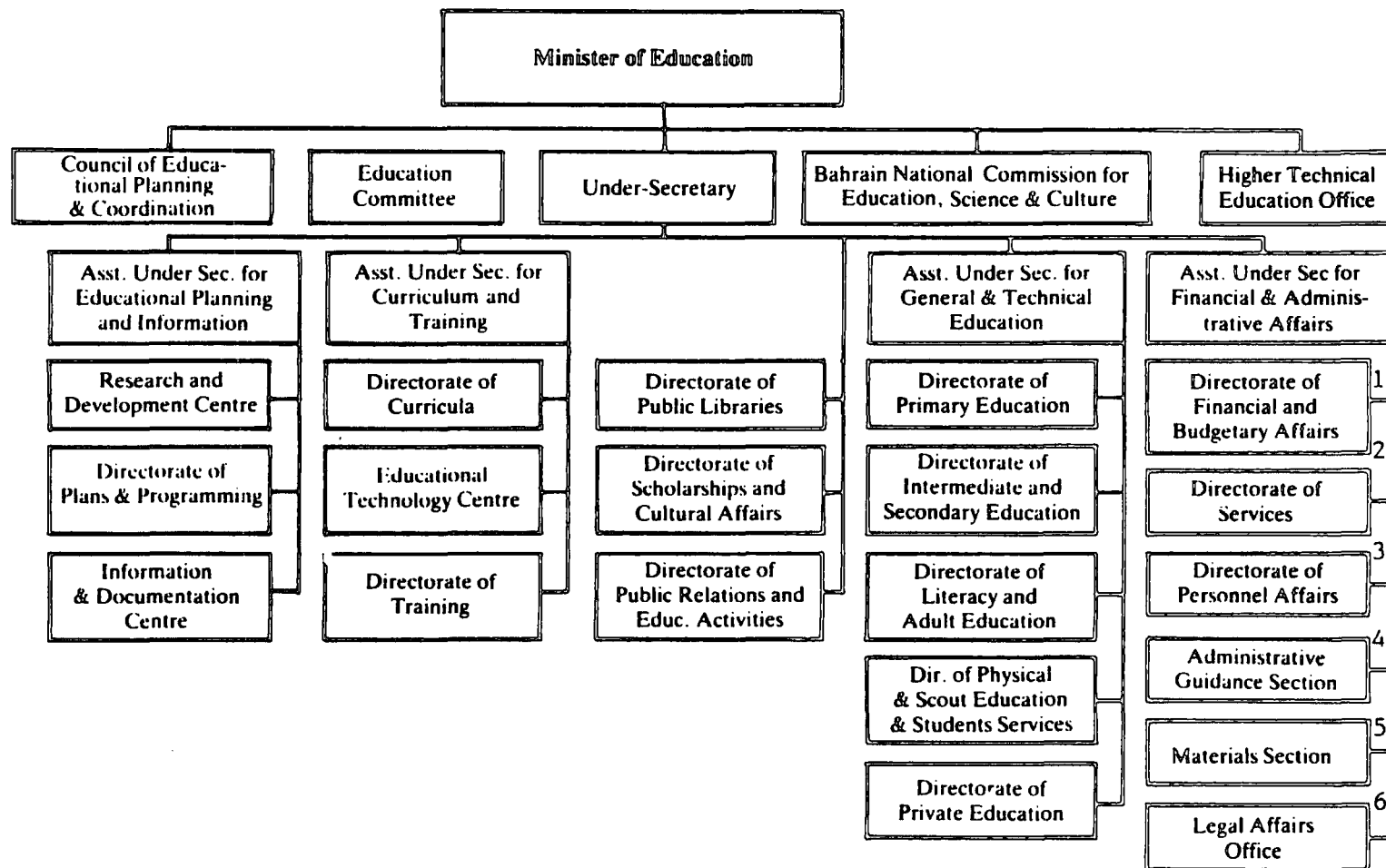
He is head of the structure and has immediate access to:

- 1 - Education Committee
- 2 - Bahrain National Commission for Education, Science and Culture.
- 3 - Higher Technical Education Office.
- 4 - Council of Educational Planning & Coordination.

TABLE 4.1

Organization Chart of Ministry of Education

1985



Source : Jain, Jiya Lal, A Brief History of Education in Bahrain, (Arabian Printing & Publishing House, Bahrain, 1986), p. 28

## II The Under Secretary

He reports to the Minister and has immediate access to:

- 1 - Directorate of Public Relations and Educational Activities.
- 2 - Directorate of Cultural Affairs and Scholarships.
- 3 - Directorate of Public Libraries.

## III The Assistant Under Secretary for Administration and Financial Affairs

He has access to:

- 1 - Directorate of Services.
- 2 - Directorate of Personnel Affairs.
- 3 - Directorate of Financial and Budgetary Affairs.
- 4 - Administrative Guidance Section.
- 5 - Materials Section.
- 6 - Legal Affairs Office.

## IV The Assistant Under Secretary for General and Technical Education

He has access to:

- 1 - The Directorate of Primary Education.
- 2 - Directorate of Intermediate & Secondary Education.
- 3 - Directorate of Sports and Scouts.
- 4 - Directorate of Private Education.
- 5 - Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education.

## V The Assistant Under Secretary for Curricula and Training

He has access to:

- 1 - Educational Technology Centre.
- 2 - Directorate of Training.
- 3 - Directorate of Curricula.

## VI The Assistant Under Secretary for Planning and Educational Information

He has access to:

- 1 - Research and Development Centre.
- 2 - Directorate of Plans and Programming.
- 3 - Information & Documentation Centre.

To summarize, the control of education in Bahrain is exercised through various directorates. The Minister is the head of the structure; and in performing his duties, he is assisted by: one Under Secretary, four Assistant Under Secretaries and other councils and committees. Each Under Secretary is responsible for some aspects of education

represented in the various Directorates. Table 4.1 shows that each Directorate and Centre is divided into several units. For example, the Educational Technology Centre is divided into: Unit of Educational Resources, Unit of Production, Unit of Maintenance and Unit of Educational Television. The Directorate of Training is divided into Unit of Research and Unit of Training.

The Assistant Under Secretary for Planning and Cultural Relations recently stated:

"The 1975 reform of educational administration had taken many young Bahraini educators, who were trained abroad, mainly in Britain and the American University of Beirut, in Lebanon, to many leading administrative positions in the Ministry of Education. By virtue of their positions, they are exerting great influence on decisions related to educational change particularly at the national level."

7

Indeed, training, research and decentralization can help bring about beneficial changes. What is needed more than anything else is a cadre of enlightened leaders who can make the issue of administrative reform of wide public interest and can mobilize support, both material and psychological. These leaders will need to appreciate that, in order to make the educational reform succeed, it has to be part of other changes taking place in other sectors of society. As many of the previously quoted authors have said, changes in educational administration will have to be made in the context of changes in public administration covering all aspects of governmental processes and services.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4.3 The Budget

The question of education has been and will always be a high priority in Bahrain. The allocation of funds to education is a testimony to that interest. In 1987, £14,976,000 (7,488,000 Bahraini Dinars) was allocated for the Ministry of Education, and £8,400,000 (4,200,000 Bahrain Dinars) was allocated for both the Gulf Polytechnic and the

University College.<sup>9</sup> To understand educational expenditure in Bahrain in relation to public expenditure in 1985/86 some explanation is necessary:

First, the withdrawal of the British from the Islands in 1971 necessitated an increase in the defence budget; and secondly, the decline in oil production in Bahrain since 1971 has had a profound effect on the revenue.

To cope with this situation Bahrain needed a new policy for budgetting: and after thorough study and research the following guidelines were recommended to the Council of Ministers in 1975. Without fore-knowledge of the price of oil and without control of the activities of the private sector, there was no basis for the Bahrain Government to undertake four or five years forward planning. The resources on the Islands were too limited, the population and the area were too small to justify the creation of a supreme Board of Planning.<sup>10</sup> Therefore the Bahrain Government accepted that finance would be a limiting factor in policy; and in the light of this principle, the following course of action was adopted:

- That a capital expenditure programme of 4 years would be adopted and a recurrent expenditure plan of 2 years would be accepted. This is called the "Four Year Capital Expenditure Programme" and is reviewed every two years.

When this capital expenditure is approved, a two-year current expenditure budget is completed four months after the 4-year capital expenditure is approved; and then the whole proposal is discussed and approved in the Cabinet between October and November and the budget begins on the 1st of January.<sup>12</sup>

To determine the Education Budget, the Ministry of Education submits to the Ministry of Works a list of requirements for schools,

additional classrooms, playgrounds, and so on. The Ministry of Works converts these schemes into budgetary estimates and submits them to the Ministry of Finance. On the recommendation of the Economic Committee the allocated capital expenditure budget is divided among the Ministries, and the final decision on priorities comes from the Cabinet of the Ministers - hence a four-year expenditure begins. In the light of what is allocated for capital expenditure, the Ministry of Education plans its recurrent expenditure two years at a time. Normally the education budget, like the budget of any other Ministry, falls into four main divisions:

- a - Personnel such as wages, salaries and housing,
- b - Services and Support,
- c - Subscriptions and Costs of international activities such as UNESCO, ARABESCO, and similar international educational institutions,
- d - Costs of Higher Education such as sending students for specialisation on the requirement of the Ministry of Education itself, fall under the main recurrent expenditure of the Government.

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It should be noted at this point, that budgets of institutions for higher and university education come under a totally separate budgetary estimate. Here the Government determines the total budget which is then given to the Board of Trustees of such institutions to allocate. The priorities and divisions between capital and non-capital are also matters which are left to the Board of Trustees.<sup>14</sup>

This policy of budgeting was approved in 1975 and has been implemented since 1978. Since then the Ministry of Finance has prepared and published the country's budget on a two-years plan. Bahrain's budget for the years 1986 and 1987 is shown in Table 4.2 (see p. 141). This table shows the allocation of the budget to each Ministry in the country.

Table 4.3 (see p. 142) shows the distribution of Educational expenditure compared to the Government expenditure during the period

TABLE 4.2

The Government Budget for the Years 1986, 1987  
(in thousands of Bahraini Dinars)

Ministry	1986	1987
Defence	9,040	5,015
Interior	3,923	2,097
Cabinet Affairs	36	157
Foreign Affairs	4,992	728
Justice	1,496	1,888
Information	8,885	2,255
Education	5,220	7,488
Bahrain University	1,900	4,200
Health	2,834	9,697
Labour & Social Affairs	1,744	537
Youth & Sports	2,076	925
Commerce & Agriculture	5,300	6,800
Development & Industry	1,853	2,820
Aviation	6,244	7,630
Finance & Economy	8,036	7,106
Housing	38,700	34,800
Public Works	32,270	47,164
Electricity & Water	55,912	52,201
Transport	936	333
Municipality	1,603	1,059
<b>Total</b>	<b>193,000</b>	<b>196,000</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Finance & Economy

TABLE 4.3

Educational Expenditure compared to Public Expenditure  
1975 - 1985 (B.D.)

Fiscal Year	Government Expenditure	Educational Expenditure			Percent-age
		Current Exo.	Non-Current Exo.	Total	
1975	119,875,393	9,605,822	799,425	10,405,247	8.7
1976	203,183,160	11,306,090	799,375	12,105,645	6.0
1977	259,448,782	17,047,691	3,874,057	20,921,748	8.1
1978	234,717,000	20,106,316	4,818,000	24,924,316	8.8
1979	296,343,000	23,143,414	4,692,646	17,836,060	9.4
1980	345,153,000	28,166,718	4,438,020	32,604,739	9.6
1981	381,370,000	32,254,097	4,528,000	36,782,097	9.6
1982	472,959,245	37,390,137	7,418,000	45,308,137	9.6
1983	532,228,000	43,465,428	10,640,000	54,105,428	10.2
1984	538,589,802	33,002,814	1,722,912	34,725,726	6.4
1985	508,548,000	47,798,000	4,374,000	52,172,000	10.3

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics 1984/85, p. 23. And Educational Statistics 1985/86, p. 27

1975 to 1985. Figures on this table indicate the following:

1 - that there was a steady increase in educational expenditure from B.D. 10,405,274 in 1975, to B.D. 24,924,316 in 1978, to B.D. 54,105,428 in 1983, to B.D. 52,172,000 in 1985.

2 - that there was a decline in expenditure from B.D. 54,105,428 in 1983 to B.D. 34,725,726 in 1984.

3 - that this decrease was mainly in non-recurrent expenditure.

It was B.D. 10,640,000 in 1983 and became B.D. 1,722,912 in 1984.

This could be explained by the fact that most of the new school buildings and equipment had been provided in the previous years. Also, since 1983/84 most of the undergraduate studies and therefore most of the Government's scholarships have been directed to colleges for higher education existing on the Islands.

Table 4.4. presents information on education expenditure items. Figures on this table show that in the year 1985/86 the MOE spend B.D. 40,632,000 on manpower, B.D. 4,763,000 on services, B.D. 1,015,000 on consumable goods such as papers, chalks and so on, B.D. 1,115,000 on assets, B.D. 273,000 on maintenance, and B.D. - on transfer payments.

TABLE 4.4.

The Expenditure of the Ministry of Education  
According to Expenditure Items : 1985

Expenditure Items	Expenditure (B.D.)
Expenditure on Manpower	40,632,000
Expenditure on Services	4,763,000
Expenditure on Consumable Goods	1,015,000
Expenditure on Assets	1,115,000
Expenditure on Maintenance	273,000
Transfer payments	-
TOTAL	47,798,000

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 26.

Such figures indicate that the largest item of the education expenditure was teachers' salaries.

The educational budget and its ratio to the general budget for the last six years (from 1980 to 1986) are shown on Table 4.5. Figures on this table show that in 1980/81, the percentage of Education Budget to Government Budget was 8.2, in 1981/82 it was 8.5, in 1982/83 it was 12.70, in 1983/84 it was 10.17, in 1984/85 it was 6.44, and in 1985/86 it became 10.3. In other words, the educational budget was B.D. 28,166,718 in 1980 and gradually over the years it reached B.D. 52,172,000 in 1986.

TABLE 4.5

Ministry of Education Budget compared to the  
National Budget (B.D.), 1980 - 1986

Year	Government Budget	Educational Budget	Percentage
1980/81	345,153,000	28,166,718	8.2
1981/82	381,370,000	32,254,097	8.5
1982/83	298,282,000	37,890,137	12.70
1983/84	532,226,000	54,105,000	10.17
1984/85	538,589,802	34,725,726	6.44
1985/86	308,584,000	52,172,000	10.3

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain, 1980/81 to 1986/86.

To summarize, according to the latest 1986 educational statistics, about 10.3 percent of the Bahraini national budget is allocated to education. And about 72.3 percent of the educational budget is spent on salaries.

The analysis of the educational budget in Bahrain shows that support for colleges of higher education, grants to students and teachers' salaries account for most of the recurrent expenditure. In spite of the decline in the country's revenue, which necessitated cuts in

expenditure, it is the Government's policy to maintain and improve the quality of education. This has been made possible partly because neighbouring Arab countries have offered aid in some educational fields. For example, the Kuwait Technical Education Office in Bahrain builds a number of new schools each year. Saudi Arabia finances some educational projects. A few educational institutions are financially aided by the Arab Gulf States in collaboration with the Bahrain Ministry of Education. Examples are the Gulf Polytechnic, the Al-Noor Institution for the Blind and the Arabian Gulf University project. Private institutions, however, are financed by fees paid by the students.

#### 4.4 The Organization of Education

Education in Bahrain is organized into pre-primary (both the nursery and the kindergarten), primary (grades 1-6), intermediate (grades 1-3), secondary (grades 1-3) and higher. These five levels, through which a student passes, constitute the structure of education in Bahrain. However, successive leaders in the Ministry of Education have expanded and sometimes reduced educational opportunities provided by Government funds within the constraints of limited resources and this means that currently all children aged 3, 4 and 5 are receiving education in schools or classes outside the state schools on a fee-paying basis. In addition many children attend informal, school play groups organised by parents and voluntary groups; and in a few areas there are separate nurseries. Such an organization means that free education in the state schools, in effect, begins at six.

The transition from one grade to another depends on daily observation and on the end of the semester examinations, except for the first three grades of primary education where automatic promotion is practised because these grades are considered as preparatory only. At the end

of each level (except for the primary) pupils who are not permitted to continue their studies because of their low academic standard, are eligible to learn a craft in order to be able to take part in active life.

Following graduation from the secondary schools, students can continue their education at any of the specialized colleges for higher education in Bahrain. Those following the technical track are admitted to the Gulf Polytechnic; those following health sciences, for example nursing, are admitted into the College of Health Sciences; those following education, arts or sciences are admitted to the Bahrain University College; and those following medicine are selected by their governments in the seven Gulf states to enter the Arabian Gulf University. Other vocational or technical courses are given in specialized institutions, such as the Hotel and Catering Centre.

Parallel with the system of education described above is a system of Religious Education which combines general studies with religious education. Upon successful completion of the secondary stage, students may enter Al-Azhar University in Egypt. This branch of education in Bahrain is open only to male students.<sup>15</sup>

Also parallel with the state schools are a number of private schools. In addition there is Al-Noor Institution for the Blind, catering for many blind pupils from the Gulf region.

Education at pre-primary level, in the private schools and at higher level, is co-educational and fee-paying. However, the state schools are all single sex; but both boys and girls are offered the same opportunities for learning - except in the technical branch of the secondary school and in the Religious school where only boys are admitted to these courses of study. The textile and clothing secondary education is only for girls.

For a number of years, the general trend has been increasingly to provide special education in ordinary schools where this is in the educational interest of the child and where the nature of his or her disability permits. The Ministry of the Interior, however, provides a special education for children with emotional or behavioural disorders.

The following sections discuss education in the State schools.

#### 4.5 The Curriculum and Problems of Learning

Since the establishment of Al-Hidaya school in 1919 there have been several curricular changes. In its earliest stages the education system provided three different curricula, one for the village schools where courses were directed towards Agriculture and Farming, one for the town schools where study was directed towards Business connected with pearl fishing, and one for the girls' school where Home Economics, Needlework and Cooking were emphasized. This was done because it was thought that the main purpose of education was preparation for work. In the case of the girls' school curricula, it was supposed that the great majority of girls would eventually get married and therefore the study of Home Economics, Childcare, and Needlework was considered essential.<sup>16</sup>

Today, however, all schools in Bahrain, state or private, local or foreign, in towns or villages, provide almost equal educational opportunities for both boys and girls on the Islands. Although article no. 3 of the educational project states that "basic education" - which includes both primary and intermediate cycles, is compulsory, regulations for compulsory education have, as yet, not come into effect. However, school education is free and available for all. In 1986, almost every child in the age group 6-11 went to primary school.

#### 4.5.1 Primary School Education

Statistical summaries of education in Bahrain show that in the year 1985/86 the number of children attending the state primary schools was 50,936 of whom 25,756 were boys and 25,180 were girls - comprising ratio of 59.3% of the total student population.<sup>17</sup>

Subjects at present taught per week in the state primary schools are shown in Table 4.6.

TABLE 4.6

#### Curricula Plan for Primary Education

Disciplines	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year	6th Year
Religion	3	3	3	2	2	2
Arabic Language	11	11	11	10	9	9
English Language	-	-	-	6	7	7
Arithmetic, Geometry	6	6	6	6	6	6
General Sciences	2	2	2	3	3	3
History, Geography	-	-	2	3	3	3
Drawing	3	3	3	3	3	3
Physical Education	3	3	3	2	2	2
Songs and Music	2	2	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	30	30	32	36	36	36

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Education Statistics, 1984/85, p. 78.

The table shows that the first three years are spent in learning elementary subjects. The curriculum includes religion, the Arabic language, arithmetic, general science, fine arts, physical education, songs and music. In the remaining three years, a wider range of

subjects is introduced including the English language together with geometry, history, geography, science and hygiene.

The policy for pupil evaluation in the first three grades generally emphasizes a diagnostic approach rather than assessment for promotion purposes. That is, a teacher will keep a record of what activities, experiences, books, number skills and projects the child has completed in order to record where a child is in skill development for both the teacher's and parents' purposes. Teachers usually report to parents from two to four times per year. The report cards reflect the individual child's "curriculum" covered, effort, social development and behaviour, as well as a teacher assigned symbol (e.g. satisfactory, unsatisfactory or A, B, C) and diagnostic comments. The great majority of pupils are promoted from grade to grade with their age level peers. Pupils seldom repeat a grade. Pupils who have difficulty are able to receive extra help from special remedial teachers or are put in special classes. In the last three grades, semester examinations and class work together decide promotion. At the end of primary education, successful pupils embark upon intermediate education.<sup>18</sup>

The physical arrangement of the classroom, methods of teaching, how active learning is or how integration is achieved among subjects, is left to the teacher. Official advice however generally exhorts the teacher to be "child-oriented". In recent years the Ministry of Education has made various attempts to improve primary education by modifying the curriculum so as to relate it more closely to the Bahraini environment. To achieve this aim, the Ministry began by introducing new courses such as modern mathematics, traffic and environmental education and modern methods of learning reading and writing were encouraged. In the study of science, particular attention was paid to the animals and birds of the Gulf region and special emphasis was put on the history

and the geography of Bahrain.

Teachers at the primary level are required to possess a first degree plus teacher training to become class teachers. The great majority of the present primary teachers pursue a B.Ed. degree, which usually takes four to five academic years to attain at the Bahrain University College. The syllabuses of the different subjects were reviewed and modified, in 1982/83, with the aim of teaching an integrated curriculum to the first three grades rather than separate subjects. Accordingly, experiences and activities in all fields such as arithmetic, language, science, art, physical education, and so on were built around topics that were of interest to the primary school pupils and related to their immediate environment and social life. Through substituting the class teacher for the subject teacher, the authorities hoped to overcome the following defects of the previous system:

- It was generally felt that the previous method of educating young children was dull, too academic and relatively remote from the child's needs. It emphasised theoretical aspects and neglected the need for practical activities and experiments.

- The content of the curriculum had little relevance to the environment in the Gulf or to life in Bahrain generally.

- The teaching methods did not promote independent initiative or critical thinking. Stress was placed mainly on memorization; and the use of audio visual aids was limited.

- In spite of the emphasis given to continuous assessment in evaluating the pupil, the implementation of this reform was below the anticipated standard. Particularly among unqualified teachers, it was not used to diagnose the weaknesses of a particular child and to provide proper remedies at the right stage, but rather to promote or fail a particular pupil.<sup>19</sup>

Those problems in primary education in Bahrain have stimulated changes in the training courses for teachers. On the introduction of class-teaching, Mr. Boubshati, the Under Secretary of Curriculum, commented:

"In this way, the pupils will be taught by fewer teachers and hence they will be able to establish a rapport - at present the teachers hardly know their students' names ..."

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However, officials in the Ministry of Education must realize that even though the movement towards the class-teacher is pupil oriented in its implicit pedagogy, there needs to be more emphasis on process as well as on content.

#### 4.5.2 Intermediate Education

This is the second level of education through which a student passes in the Bahraini state schools. It is free, compulsory and lasts three years (ages 12, 13 and 14). Statistical summaries of education show that in 1985/86 there were 19,838 pupils attending the state intermediate schools in Bahrain of whom 10,529 were boys and 9,309 were girls forming 23.1% of the total student population.<sup>21</sup>

Subjects at present taught per week in the state intermediate schools are shown in Table 4.7 (see p. 152).

The table shows that currently, at this stage, the curriculum is divided into separate but interrelated subjects; and covers the following subjects: Religious education, Arabic language, English language, Sciences, Social subjects such as History, Geography and Civics, Mathematics, Physical education, Fine arts, and Home Economics which is taught only in the girls' schools. In addition to these subjects, the intermediate syllabus includes practical studies in Chemistry, Taxidermy, Textile printing, Gardening, Carpentry and Pottery, which are intended to stimulate the students' interests and help them acquire new skills. However

TABLE 4.7

Curricula for Intermediate Education

Disciplines	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	7	7	7
English Language	7	7	7
Mathematics	5	5	5
History, Geography, Civics	3	3	3
Sciences	4	4	4
Practical Studies	4	4	4
Physical Education	2	2	2
Art Education	2	2	2
TOTAL number of periods per week	36	36	36

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 84

the main aims of the practical subjects are to help students of intermediate level to choose the type of secondary education which best suits their abilities and to encourage them to respect manual work.<sup>23</sup>

Table 4.7 also shows that while 14 periods per week are devoted to the study of the Arabic and the English languages, only 5 periods are allocated for the study of mathematics, and 4 periods for sciences.

Evaluation, at this stage, is based on the students' performance at the mid and final semester examinations, together with class attendance and daily exercises.<sup>24</sup> Pupils who pass the general examination at the end of the final year are awarded the Intermediate School Certificate and are admitted to the secondary level. But those who fail the course more than once are not awarded the certificate.

However, they are eligible to learn a craft, such as dressmaking, hair-dressing, etc., in order to be able to take part in active life.

Teachers of intermediate schools are required to possess a B.Ed. degree in specialized educational areas. Most of them, at the present time, are trained to be subject specialists at the Bahrain University.

#### 4.5.3 Secondary Education

In the Bahrain state schools, secondary education is the third and the last stage where education is free. The full secondary course lasts three years from grade one to grade three. Admission to the various types of secondary education is mainly based upon performance in the Certificate of Intermediate Studies. Pupils apply for the particular branch they wish to enter according to their interests and abilities. Their choices are placed in an order of priority. Coordination between the preference of the students and their total marks is taken into consideration; and if the total marks of a particular student do not qualify him/her for his/her first choice, he/she is transferred to another branch according to his/her list of priorities. Thus, if two students have the same total marks and the same priorities, preference is given to the one who has the higher marks in the specialised subjects.<sup>25</sup>

In 1978, the curricula of this stage was reformed. The reform established different types of studies. The idea behind the diversification of the secondary school curricula was to meet the needs of business, agriculture and industry because of Bahrainization of staff in these sectors after the diversification of the economy which has been discussed earlier. It was also intended to limit the number of students, who would have access to academic specialization, because the number of foreign labourers in the newly introduced sectors exceeded the number of Bahrainis. At present the need for developing education to equip

students for a life-time's work and to provide them with the professional knowledge and skills required for the economic development of the country is one of the main forces which shapes secondary education in Bahrain.<sup>26</sup>

On 14/12/81, in an attempt to explain the new policy of diversifying secondary education to the Amir and the people of Bahrain, the Minister of Education, in his annual speech, stated:

"Thus, the three lines of development of education will meet which are (1) linking education to economic and social requirements for development, (2) proper and continuous development of the curricula, and (3) preparation of highly efficient teaching staff. With these available, we can achieve the desired educational reforms. But if these three paths do not meet with a fourth one, then they will all lead to a dead end. The fourth path is the public (the people of Bahrain) response to the demands of these changes. Here I must confess with the boldness of a man who loves his people and is concerned to tell them the truth, that I am not certain that as yet there is such a response."

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He also added:

"We are living in a region which encourages giving everything (to some citizens) without asking them what they have to offer in return to their country such as knowledge, efforts or beneficial activities. Thus the value of work is lost... Therefore, I beg the people of Bahrain who built their history throughout 6000 years, not to reverse the trend, in the fear of challenges of the present or future civilization and understand now before it is too late, that the future of their country and the region lies in their attainment of knowledge and education. They can see the Japanese and the American experiments, both of which have one thing in common - positive response from their people for implementing an evolved educational system."

28

In 1983, further reforms, concerning the course system, the academic year, and evaluation of students, were implemented. Their aim was to enable the student to work without being distracted by a fear of the final examination, which in the past had reduced teaching techniques to a continuous reviewing and memorizing procedure. The old examination had also transformed the schools' campuses during the last two months of the academic year into an arena for collective hysterical outbursts by students and their guardians. The Minister of Education, in his annual speech of 1983, explained this development:

"During this year we applied the system of two semesters and this change joined other basic reforms concerning examinations and student programmes. If this pilot scheme is successful then we shall follow it with other steps until we reach the stage of making the assessment system an effective procedure which will be able to appraise students objectively and comprehensively, which will take into account skills, conduct, individual development, ability for self education and social maturity. This is very difficult even for many advanced societies. It will take quite a long time; nevertheless we shall keep on trying and struggling - as long as achieving such a form of assessment is valuable for the students."

29

The idea behind these reforms was to reduce the percentage of students taking general academic courses, from 85% to between 35-40% over five years. However not all the new types of secondary education that were introduced into the system had initially the full support of the public. Only 34 students, mostly boys, were enrolled at first in the Catering and Hotel Section. The Minister of Education expressed his disappointment, saying:

"I have now before me the 'temporary' failure of the Catering Programme, despite the fact that it is an important field, and the diligent student of catering can achieve high levels of progress - morally and materially ..."

30

By 1985/86 the number of students who attended the state secondary schools had become 14,979 of whom 7,391 were girls and 7,588 were boys.<sup>31</sup>

By the same year secondary education had been divided into nine types: General, Commercial, Industrial, Nursing, Agriculture & Animal Husbandry, Catering, Textiles, Printing and Religious Education.

The curriculum within each type is also subdivided into branches; and each branch has its own emphasis, for example, General Secondary Education consists of two main branches: (1) the Scientific, and (2) the Literary. It aims at educating a student in the sciences and arts in order to prepare him/her for higher education. The Science section has two streams, (1) Mathematics and Physics, and (2) Biology and Chemistry. The Literary section has four streams: (1) Languages - English and French, (2) Home Economics, (3) Economics and Office Practice,

and (4) Fine Arts.

The following Tables present information on each type of education at the secondary level in the state schools in Bahrain.

1 - General Secondary Education - (Sciences and Literary)

TABLE 4.8

Curricula plan for SCIENCES SECTION  
of General Secondary Education

Compulsory Subjects for All Branches	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	7	5	5
English Language	9	8	7
Social Subjects	2	-	-
Mathematics	8	6	6
Physics	2	2	2
Chemistry	2	2	2
Biology	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2
TOTAL no. of periods per week	34	29	28

Branch Subjects

Branches	Subjects	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Mathematics & Physics	Mathematics	2	3
	Physics	3	3
Chemistry & Biology	Chemistry	3	3
	Biology	2	3

Table continued .....

Optional Subjects \*

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Typing	3	3	3
Home Economics	3	3	3
Fine Arts	3	3	3
Music	3	3	3
French Language	3	3	3
Social Subjects	3	3	3
Technical Drawing	3	3	3
Auto-Mechanics	3	3	3
Electronics	3	3	3
Electricity	3	3	3

\* Each student opts for one subject each year

Total number of compulsory periods per week	34	34	34
Total number of optional periods per week	3	3	3
Total number of activity periods per week	5	5	5

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, pp. 113, 115.

The table shows that some subjects are common to both streams which include Religious Education, Arabic Language, English Language, Social subjects, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Physical Education. The fact that more time is devoted to teaching English than to Arabic reflects the importance of the former in higher certificate education. The purpose of this is to improve the student's standard in the language

for most of the science and mathematics courses are taught in English at university level. There are also activity periods where students work in groups to develop an idea, a theme or a model by producing an apparatus, or a machine - a model to show how the human body works would be an example. The subjects for the separate branches include: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Each student also chooses one of the following optional subjects: Typing, Fine Arts, French, Technical Drawing, Electronics, Electricity, Social subjects, Music, and Home Economics. A student in the science section is required to take 42 periods per week of which 34 periods are devoted to the compulsory subjects, 3 periods are for the optional subjects and 5 periods for activities.

A typical General Secondary Curriculum in the Literary Section is shown in Table 4.9 (see p. 159). The Table shows that all literary students study the same subjects in their first year. Their timetable includes the following courses: Religious Education, Arabic, English, Social subjects, Mathematics, General Sciences, Physical Education, Statistics and Probability or the French language. In their second year, students opt for one of the following streams: Languages, Home Economics, Fine Arts, Economics and Office Practice. The Languages stream has an emphasis on the English and French languages. The Economics and Office Practice stream has an emphasis on the principles of Economics, Typing, Commerce and Office Practice. The Home Economics stream emphasises Nutrition, Housekeeping, Family relationships, Dress-making, Family Health and Mother and Child care. The Fine Arts stream emphasises Drawing, Sculpture, Photography and Technical Drawing.

There are also optional subjects where each student opts for one of the following subjects each year, studied for three periods a week: Typing, Electronics, Electricity, Music, Technical Drawing, French

TABLE 4.9

Curricula Plan for LITERARY SECTION  
of General Secondary Education

Assigned Subjects compulsory for all Branches	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	7	8	8
English Language	9	9	8
Social Subjects	6	7	8
Mathematics	3	-	-
General Sciences	2	-	-
Physical Education	2	2	2
Statistics and Probability or French Language	3	-	-
<b>TOTAL number of periods per week</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>

Branch subjects

Branches	Subjects	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Languages	English Language	2	2
	French Language	4	4
Home Economics	Home Economics	6	6
Economics and Office Practice	Economics	2	2
	Office Practice	2	2
	Methods of Commerce	2	-
	Typing	-	2

Table continued .....

Optional Subjects \*

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Typing	3	3	3
Home Economics	3	3	3
Fine Arts	3	3	3
General Sciences	3	3	3
Mathematics	3	3	3
Music	3	3	3
French Language	3	3	3
Technical Drawing	3	3	3
Auto-Mechanics	3	3	3
Electronics	3	3	3
Electricity	3	3	3

\* Each student opts for one subject each year

Total number of compulsory periods per week	34	34	34
Total number of optional periods per week	3	3	3
Total number of activity periods per week	5	5	5

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, pp. 127, 128

language, Mathematics, General Science, Home Economics, and Fine Arts. Through such a division of courses, a student in the Literary Section is required to take 34 periods of compulsory subjects per week, 3 periods of optional subjects per week and 5 periods of activity per week in his/her first, second and third grades of General Secondary Education.

2 - Commercial Secondary Education is the second type of education that is offered in the state secondary schools. It consists of three streams, (1) Accounts, (2) Secretarial, and (3) General. Table 4.10 (see pp. 162, 163 and 164) shows that the curriculum in the first and second years is general. In the third years students enter one of the three more specialized streams. Commercial secondary students have certain subjects in common with all other secondary students, such as Religious Education, Arabic, English, and Physical Education, but they also study specialized subjects, such as Accounts, Secretarial practice, and Typing. In addition, each student studies assigned subjects compulsory for one semester only. These are Financial Maths, Principles of Commerce, Social subjects, Accounting and Bookkeeping, Office Practice and General Science. There are also general optional subjects where each student chooses one of the following subjects each year, studied for three periods a week: Art education, Music, French language, Social subjects, Mathematics, Home Economics, Arabic typing, English typing, Vocational activities, Auto-Mechanics, Electronics, and Electricity. The commercial optional subjects consist of: Salesmanship, Store-keeping & Purchasing, Insurance, Accounting & Costing, Governmental Accounting, Shorthand, Commerce, and Travel Agency.

Table 4.10 also shows that the total number of compulsory periods per week is 34. The total number of optional general periods per week is 3. The total number of optional commercial periods per week is 2 for the second and third grades; and the total number of activity periods per week is 5 for the first grade, 3 for the second and third grades.

3 - Technical Education is the third type of secondary education. It is only available to male students. Entry is conditional upon successful completion of the intermediate level; and preference is

TABLE 4.10

Curricula Plan for COMMERCIAL Secondary Education  
1985/86

Subjects in Common

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade		
			Accounting Branch	Secretarial Branch	General Branch
Religious Education	2	2	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	5	5	5	5
English Language	8	8	6	6	6
Arabic Typing	4	3	-	4	4
English Typing	-	4	-	4	3
Economics	-	-	2	2	2
Labour Law and Commercial Law	-	-	1	1	1
Bank Accounting	-	-	-	-	4
Secretarial Practice in English	-	-	-	4	-
Secretarial Practice in Arabic	-	-	-	-	2
English for Special Purposes	-	-	3	3	-
Financial Mathematics	-	-	3	1	3
Accounting in English	-	2	4	-	-
Accounting in Arabic	-	2	2	-	4
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>34</b>

Table continued .....

(Cont'd) Commercial Plan

Assigned Subjects Compulsory for one term only of the Year

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Financial Mathematics	5	5	-
Elementary Commerce	4	-	-
Social Subjects	3	3	-
Accounting & Book-keeping	5	5	-
Secretarial Studies	4	3	-
General Sciences	3	-	-

Commercial Optional Subjects

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade		
			Account- ing Branch	Secretar- ial Branch	General Branch
Salesmanship	-	-	2	2	2
Store-keeping & Purchasing	-	-	2	2	2
Insurance	-	2	2	2	2
Accounting & Costing	-	2	2	2	2
Governmental Accounting	-	2	2	2	2
Shorthand	-	2	2	2	2
Commerce	-	2	2	2	2
Travel Agency	-	2	2	2	2

Table continued .....

(Cont'd) Commercial Plan

General Subjects

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade		
			Accounting Branch	Secretarial Branch	General Branch
Art Education	3	3	3	3	3
Music	3	3	3	3	3
French Language	3	3	3	3	3
Social subjects	3	3	3	3	3
Mathematics	3	3	3	3	3
Home Economics	3	3	3	3	3
Arabic Typing	-	3	3	3	3
English Typing	-	3	3	3	3
Vocational Activities	3	3	3	3	3

Total number of compulsory periods per week	34	34	34
Total number of optional periods per week	3	3	3

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1986/86, pp. 214, 215 and 216.

given to students who demonstrate ability in Maths, Science, and English. A typical curricula plan for this type of education is shown in Table 4.11 (see p. 165). The table shows that there are General Academic subjects, Technical Academic subjects and Workshop periods. The General Academic subjects include Arabic Language and Islamic Religion, English Language,

TABLE 4.11

Curricula Plan for Industrial Secondary Education  
(Boys only)

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
<u>General Academic Subjects</u>			
Arabic Language and Islamic Religion	2	-	-
English Language	4	4	4
Sciences (Physics and Chemistry)	2	2	2
Mathematics	3	2	2
TOTAL	11	8	8
<u>Technical Academic Subjects</u>			
Machine Drawing	3	3	3
Applied Mechanics	-	2	2
Technology	3	4	4
TOTAL	6	9	9
Workshop *	18	18	18
Physical Education	1	1	1
TOTAL	36	36	36

\* Three Days per week

Table continued .....

(Cont'd) Curricula Plan

Industrial Secondary Education Full-Time  
Vocational Training - (Boys only)

Subject	1st Grade	2nd Grade
Arabic Language & Islamic Religion	1	-
English Language	3	3
Industrial Subjects	1	1
Machine Drawing	3	4
Technology	3	3
Workshop	24	24
Physical Education	1	1
TOTAL	36	36

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, pp. 198 and 199.

Sciences (Physics and Chemistry), and Mathematics - making a total of 11 periods per week for the first grade, 8 for the second grade and 8 for the third. Technical academic subjects include: Machine Drawing, Applied Mechanics, and Technology - making a total of 6 periods per week for the first grade, 9 for the second and 9 for the third. Workshop periods are 18 periods per week for all grades. The programme also includes Physical Education of one period per week for the three grades. Students in the first, second and third grades are therefore required

to take a total of 36 periods per week. This kind of curricula is mainly for students wishing to pursue their higher education at university level. Another curricula plan for vocational training is shown in Table 4.11 (see p. 166). Vocational training is given for only two years and includes the following subjects : Arabic language & Islamic Religion, English language, Industrial subjects, Machine Drawing, Technology, Workshop, and Physical Education, making a total of 36 periods per week for each grade.

4 - Health Sciences is the fourth type of education offered in the state secondary schools for both boys and girls. This programme started in 1980-81 as a part of the secondary education development plan. It is administered by the Ministry of Education in co-operation with the Ministry of Health. This type of education aims at preparing male and female nurses. The curricula plan for this type of education is shown in Table 4.12 (see p. 168). The curriculum includes theoretical and practical subjects in health sciences and in nursing. Students obtain their training in hospitals and in health centres under the supervision of their teachers. And while the emphasis is on Sciences, students also share general subjects with other sections. Health Sciences and Nursing curricula include the following subjects: Health Sciences & Nursing, Physical Education, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Humanities (Sociology & Psychology), English language, Arabic language, and Religious Education. Table 4.12 shows that the total subjects taken at first, second and third grades is 37.

Successful students are awarded the Secondary School Certificate in Health Sciences and are then appointed as nurses in one of the Ministry of Health hospitals or health centres. Those with good results can continue their higher education in the College of Health Sciences.

TABLE 4.12

Curricula Plan for Health Sciences Section  
of General Secondary Education

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	7	5	4
English Language	8	8	5
Humanities (Sociology & Psychology)	4	-	-
Mathematics	2	2	-
Physics	2	-	-
Chemistry	2	-	-
Biology	2	-	-
Physical Education	2	2	2
Health Sciences & Nursing	6	18	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 141.

5 - Catering is the fifth type of education offered in the state secondary schools. This programme started in 1982-83 and is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education in co-operation with the Ministry of Information (Hotel and Catering Training Centre). It aims at preparing young people for work in hotels and catering. The curriculum, as shown in Table 4.13 (see p. 170), includes Catering Sciences, Tourist

TABLE 4.13

Curricula Plan for Catering Section  
of General Secondary Education

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	5	4
English Language	5	5	5
French Language	3	3	3
Physical Education	1	1	1
Typing	3	-	1
Mathematics	2	-	-
General Sciences	-	2	-
Principles of Book-keeping	2	-	-
Humane Studies (Sociology and Psychology)	2	-	-
Tourist Geography	-	-	2
Catering Sciences	14	21	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 164

Geography, Humane Studies (Sociology and Psychology), Principles of Book-keeping, General Sciences, Mathematics, Typing, Physical Education, French language, English language, Arabic language, and Religious Education. The curriculum includes general subjects together with theoretical

and practical subjects. The total periods per week is 40 for the first year students, and 39 for the second and third years.

6 - Agriculture and Animal Husbandry is the sixth type of secondary education. It is carried out in co-operation with the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture. The curricular plan for this type of education is shown in Table 4.14 (see p. 172). The curriculum includes the following subjects: Statistics and Marketing, Animal production, Vegetable production, Fisheries, Geography, Physical Education, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, English language, Arabic language and Religious Education. The total periods per week is 37 for the first grade and 38 for the second and third. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry is only available to male students.

7 - Textiles is the seventh type of education offered in the state secondary schools and is only available to female students. It was introduced in 1982-83. A typical curricular plan is given in Table 4.15 (see p. 173). The compulsory subjects include the following : Measurement and Costs, Textiles Technology, Technical Drawing, Vocational Training, Physical Education, Mathematics, Social and Humane Studies, the Arabic language and Religious Education. The optional subjects include: Typing, Home Economics, Fine Arts, French language and Music. The total number of compulsory periods per week is 34 for the first, second and third grades; and the total number of optional periods per week is 3 for the three grades.

8 - Printing is the eighth type of education offered in the state secondary schools and it is available only for boys. It was introduced in 1983-84. The curriculum is shown in Table 14.16 (see p. 175) and

TABLE 4.14

Curricula Plan for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry  
Section of General Secondary Education

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	5	5
English Language	7	6	6
Biology	3	3	3
Physics	2	2	-
Chemistry	2	3	2
Mathematics	2	2	-
Physical Education	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	1
Fisheries	2	3	4
Vegetable Production	5	5	8
Animal Production	2	3	3
Statistics and Marketing	-	-	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 153.

TABLE 4.15

Curricula Plan for Textiles Section  
of General Secondary Education - (Girls Only)

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Religious Education	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	5	5
English Language	5	5	5
Social and Humane Studies	2	2	2
Mathematics	2	-	-
Physical Education	2	2	2
Technical Drawing	2	3	3
Textiles Technology	4	4	3
Measurement and Costs	-	2	2
Vocational Training	9	9	10
TOTAL	34	34	34

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational statistics, 1985/86, p. 175.

Table continued .....

## (Cont'd) Curricula Plan

Optional Subjects \*

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade
Typing	3	3	3
Home Economics	3	3	3
Fine Arts	3	3	3
French Language	3	3	3
Music	3	3	3

\* Each Student opts for one subject each year

Total number of Compulsory Periods per Week	34	34	34
Total number of Optional Periods per Week	3	3	3

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational statistics, 1985/86, p. 176.

includes the following subjects: Printing and Preparation, Copying operations, Planning and Composing Letters in addition to Typing, Physical Education, Physics and Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, Social subjects, English language, Arabic language, and Religious Education. The curriculum includes theoretical and practical subjects. Table 4.16 (see p.175) shows that there are three sections for specialisation in this type of education: (1) Typesetting & Design, (2) Photography & Plate Making,

TABLE 4.16

Curricula Plan for Printing Section  
of General Secondary Education - (Male Only)

Subjects	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade		
			Type Setting and Design	Camera and Plate Making	Printing and Finishing
Religious Education	2	2	2	2	2
Arabic Language	6	5	5	5	5
English Language	6	6	6	6	6
Social Subjects	2	2	-	-	-
Mathematics	2	2	-	-	-
Biology	2	-	-	-	-
Physics & Chemistry	4	2	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2
Typing	2	2	2	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>

Printing Subjects	Theoretical		Theoretical		Theoretical		Theoretical		Theoretical	
	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical	Practical
Planning and Composing letters	-	-	-	-	18	2	4	1	3	1
Copying operations	-	-	18	2	-	-	4	1	2	1
Printing and Preparation	18	2	-	-	-	-	5	1	3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>20</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>16</b>		<b>11</b>	

Table continued .....

## (Cont'd) Curricula Plan

Total Compulsory subject periods	39	39	39	39	39
Total number of optional subject periods	3	3	3	3	3
TOTAL	42	42	42	42	42

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics, 1985/86, p. 187.

and (3) Printing and Finishing. These specialisations are offered in the 3rd grade. The total compulsory subject periods per week is 39 for the three sections, the total number of optional subjects is 3 - making a total of 42 periods per week for the three years of study.

#### 4.5.4 The Religious Institute

For those who wish to specialize in Islamic Religion, education is provided by the state in a separate institute, named the Religious School; and only male students are admitted to this school. It has three levels of education - primary, intermediate and secondary. The curriculum, as shown in Table 4.17 (see p. 177), includes specialised subjects: Holy Koran, Tafsir (interpretation of the Koran), Al-Hadith (the sayings of the prophet), Al-Tawhid (monotheism in Islam), Al-Fiqh (Islamic Law), and Al-Tajweed (the recitation of the Koran). It also includes the Arabic language, the English language, Mathematics, and Social subjects - Sociology, Economics, Psychology, Philosophy, and

TABLE 4.17

Curricula Plan for Religious Education

Subjects	Primary			Intermediate			Secondary			Total
	4	5	6	1	2	3	1	2	3	
<u>Religious Subjects</u>										
Holy Koran	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	22
Tafsir	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	3	3	11
Al-Hadith	-	-	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Al-Tawhid	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	10
Al-Fiqh	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	33
Al-Tajweed	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
TOTAL	7	7	7	12	12	11	11	11	11	89
Arabic Language	11	10	10	10	10	11	12	12	12	98
English Language	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	42
Mathematics	5	5	5	4	4	4	2	-	-	29
Social Subjects	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	26
Sociology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Economics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Psychology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Logic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Art Education	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Sciences	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	-	-	16
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	12
TOTAL no. of periods per week	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	324

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Education Statistics, 1985/86, p. 228.

Logic, Art Education, Sciences and Physical Education - making a total of 36 periods of study per week for each grade at primary, intermediate and secondary levels. What is surprising about the curriculum in the Religious School is that, unlike the other curricula offered in the state schools, students appear to learn no Mathematics or Science after the age of 14/15. This is because the curriculum of this Institute follows that of Al-Azhar (in Egypt)<sup>32</sup> where the English language, Science and Mathematics are not taught for this type of specialization. However in Bahrain a total of 42 periods is allocated for the learning of English and a total of 29 periods for the learning of Mathematics. In spite of the additional subjects, one may notice that the curriculum at this school still looks incomplete for the fourteen and fifteen year olds. Usually graduates of religious education pursue their higher studies at the University of Al-Azhar.<sup>33</sup>

These three levels of education, the primary, intermediate and secondary with its different types - General, Commercial, Technical, Health Sciences, Catering, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Textiles, Printing, and Religious, constitute the structure of the current education system in Bahrain. The idea behind the ramification of the secondary school curriculum was to meet the needs of business, agriculture and industry - because of Bahrainization of staff in these sectors after the diversification of the economy of the country. It was also intended to limit the number of students who would have access to academic higher education, and to increase the number of students in the vocational and technical sections.

The following table is derived by summing up figures of the latest statistics on education in Bahrain.

Figures of enrolment at primary and intermediate levels show that the number of girls is less than that of the boys - an indication that

TABLE 4.18

Number of Students at Each Level of Education  
in the State Schools for the Year 1985-86

Type of Education	Male	Female	Total	%
Primary	25,756	25,180	50,936	59.3
Intermediate	10,529	9,309	19,838	23.1
General Secondary	2,472	4,637	7,109	8.28
Commercial	2,145	2,389	4,534	5.3
Industrial	2,630	-	2,630	3.06
Nursing	94	165	259	0.3
Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	96	-	96	0.11
Catering	91	28	119	0.14
Textiles	-	172	172	0.2
Printing	60	-	60	0.07
Religious Institute	114	-	114	0.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43,987</b>	<b>41,880</b>	<b>85,367</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain 1985-86.

even at the present time, there are some girls living on the Islands who, for various reasons, are not benefiting from the education system. This situation demands that all parents should be required by law to see that their children, and in particular their daughters, receive efficient full-time education, at the state schools or elsewhere between the ages of 6 and 14.

Figures of the enrolment at secondary level show that the number

of male students in the industrial section had reached 2,630 and in the commercial 2,145 by 1985/86 - an indication that the 1980s plan to change the emphasis from the theoretical studies to practical and from academic to vocational, has partly succeeded. And while more girls flocked into the General and Commercial sections - 4,637 and 2,389 female students respectively, the other Vocational sections still have only low enrolments: only 28 girls in the Catering section, 172 in Textiles, and 165 in Nursing. The same situation obtains in the Printing section where only 60 boys were interested in this type of education.

A study of the curricula in the state schools suggests that since the early 1980s various attempts have been made to link education with the world of work. The ramification of secondary school curriculum was introduced to facilitate this process. But problems faced by Bahraini educators in trying to implement a meaningful programme for children are numerous. One was the attitude of parents towards certain specializations such as Hotel and Catering. The second was in the pedagogy. And though the work of the teachers was generally satisfactory and the keenness of the students was largely due to their influence, their teaching methods were often out-of-date and lacking in variety. The third was the drop-out problem. Table 4.19 (see p. 181) shows the situation in 1985-86.

Figures in the table show that in the year 1985-86 alone there were 936 students who failed to complete their schooling at the primary, intermediate, and secondary levels in the state schools. And though this number is high, comparing figures in Table 4.19 with figures in Table 4.20 (see p. 182) shows that over the last three years, 1982/83 - 1985/86, there has been improvement in the drop-out percentage. It was 41.2% for the boys and 23.8% for the girls in 1982/83 and became

TABLE 4.19

No. of Drop-out and Drop-outs percentage 1985-86

Level of Education	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Primary	195	0.7	132	0.5
Intermediate	200	1.9	157	1.7
General Secondary	32	1.3	45	0.9
Commercial Secondary	54	2.5	39	1.6
Industrial Secondary	64	2.4	-	-
Nursing Secondary	7	7.4	4	2.4
Other Secondary Branches	4	1.6	2	1.0
Religious Education	1	0.9	-	-

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain, 1985/86.

18.7% for the boys and 8.1% for the girls in 1985/86. This improvement was mainly due to the reform of 1983 concerning evaluation and the promotion system.

#### 4.6 Evaluation and Promotion

The reforms of 1983 were a great improvement in reducing the number of repeaters. Before 1983, examinations were held at the end of each academic year and students' promotion from one grade to the next and from one level to another depended mainly on the results obtained in the final examinations. But after the reform, the school year was divided into two terms, each culminating in an examination.

The new system of evaluation and promotion works as follows:

TABLE 4.20

No. of Drop-out and Drop-outs percentage  
1982/83 to 1985/86

Year		Prim-ary	Inter-med-iate	Gen-eral Sec.	Commer-cial Sec.	Indust-rial Sec.	Health Sciences Sec.	Other Sec.	Relig-ious Sec.
1982/83	% M	1.4	3.2	2.1	2.0	5.8	6.3	8.3	12.1
	F	0.7	1.3	1.1	2.0	-	1.3	17.3	-
	no.	474	428	74	77	101	5	6	12
1983/84	% M	0.96	3.5	1.8	1.5	2.3	-	2.6	9.7
	F	0.43	1.32	0.82	1.6	-	-	17.4	-
	no.	338	458	67	81	48	-	5	9
1984/85	% M	0.80	2.03	1.55	0.51	4.22	3.06	2.58	6.34
	F	0.50	1.39	0.74	1.29	-	1.71	0.64	-
	no.	326	328	67	43	102	6	6	8
1985/86	% M	0.7	1.9	1.3	2.5	2.4	7.4	1.6	0.9
	F	0.5	1.7	0.9	1.6	-	2.4	1.0	-
	no.	327	357	77	93	64	11	6	1

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education Statistical Summaries on education, 1982/83, 1983/84, 1984/85, 1985/86.

1 - In the first three years of primary school, teachers continuously evaluate pupils' performance. They observe them at work in class, daily exercises, oral, written and practical applications, activities both individual and in group, projects and diagnostic tests are set. At this stage terminal examinations are not the vital consideration. For promotion, the class-teacher decides the successful

pupils according to their continuous assessment throughout the year. At the end of the second semester, the promotion of low achievers is considered by a committee consisting of the Arabic language and Arithmetic teachers, the class-teacher and the Head teacher with curricula specialists as advisers.<sup>34</sup>

- The grading system from the fourth year of primary school to the second year of secondary, except for the third year of intermediate education, is calculated according to the following system: 30% of the semester total mark is based on the continuous evaluation of daily work. The mid-semester examination carries 20% marks. The remaining 50% marks are awarded at the final semester examinations.<sup>35</sup>

In the third year of intermediate school, 15% of the semester total mark is based on the continuous evaluation of daily work; 10% of the semester total mark is for the mid-semester test; and 75% of the semester total mark is for the final semester examination.<sup>36</sup>

In the third year of secondary school, 15% of the semester total mark is based on the continuous evaluation of daily work; 85% of the semester total mark is for the final semester examination. At the end of the academic year, the student's mark is obtained by calculating the average of each semester result, except for the subject studied for one semester only, where the mark is added as a whole.<sup>37</sup>

- The promotion system is based upon the following: in the second three years of the primary cycle, 50% pass mark is required in each subject; and the pupil is promoted to the next class at the end of the academic year if he/she passes all subjects or if he/she fails in only one or two subjects (other than Arabic) but has a mark of at least 25% in those subjects. In such circumstances, the school is expected to provide remedial lessons.<sup>38</sup>

At the intermediate cycle, 50% is required in each subject. At

the secondary cycle, 50% is required in Arabic language and in specialized subjects. The student is considered successful in a given subject if he/she obtains the mark averaged over the two semesters; and is promoted to the next class if he/she passes all subjects or if he/she passes all subjects except one - on condition that he/she passes Arabic language at intermediate and secondary cycles, and specialized subjects at the secondary cycle.<sup>39</sup>

Students who are promoted to the next class having failed one subject are required to attend remedial lessons arranged by the school with at least 75% attendance; and resit the examination in the subject they failed. Students must resit the examination at both intermediate and secondary cycles if they failed in the general average of their results in both semesters in one or two subjects; or if they did not sit the final semester examination for a reason accepted by the school administration. If a student takes the re-sit examination for the semester that he/she failed (in 1st and 2nd intermediate and secondary classes), his or her marks are calculated by class work (daily work and mid semester test) together with the final mark for the re-sit examination.<sup>40</sup>

Technical education students (males only) who fail in workshop practice have the right to resit the examination if it is certified that they have undertaken additional training during the summer vacation for a period of not less than 8 weeks in the appropriate specialization.<sup>41</sup>

- Pupils repeat the academic year from the first to the fifth class at the primary cycle once only; and if they fail for a second time, they are promoted to the next class but must take remedial lessons. In the sixth class, special classes are organized for pupils, who fail, where the emphasis is on remedial lessons according to their needs. If they fail for the second time, special classes are organized with an appropriate curriculum which includes vocational training; or they

may be transferred to vocational training centres, provided they are old enough.<sup>42</sup>

At the intermediate and secondary cycles, students have the right to repeat their class once if they fail in more than two subjects, and remedial lessons are provided. But if they fail in the resit examinations for the second time, they are transferred to a vocational training programme and may sit for the school examinations as external students.<sup>43</sup>

This new way of evaluation and promotion, which has been implemented since 1983-84, was regarded as a positive confirmation of the Ministry of Education's desire to tackle the problem of repeaters - where admission to the second grade or level was related to the student's work and perseverance judged by marks and teacher's assessment throughout the school year. And because the first year of the secondary cycle is also a year of orientation, a special council for orientation meets each year in the state secondary schools to decide whether the student should continue in a literary, scientific, or vocational branch. Such decisions were made after the study of each case individually and after consulting the student's scholastic records. Consideration is also given to the student's own choice of specialisation. In intermediate schools and in the first years of secondary education, students receive a general education which combines both literary and scientific disciplines which are considered as the basic subjects for further education. It is due to this system of evaluation that gradually through the years, the promotion percentage at all levels had increased. The educational statistics of 1978-79, for example, show that there were 8,304 pupils being retained in their grades in primary schools in that academic year. This figure constituted 18.6% of the total enrolment in the state primary schools in that academic year.<sup>44</sup> Such a high percentage of grade

repetition may increase the unit cost of education because the number of students-years needed for a given number of children to complete education is higher than the optimum time that would be required if there were no repetition. In addition, grade repetition may decrease the input-output capacity of schools by hindering the ordinary flow of students in grades.<sup>45</sup>

However, admission to the University is limited to holders of the Tawjihia - Secondary School Certificate. At this level it is the student's specialisation at the secondary cycle that determines the kind of studies he/she will pursue. Some students continue their studies in centres and institutions of vocational education. Among these are those students who hold their Secondary Certificate in vocational training such as Hotel and Catering and so on.

#### 4.7 Conclusion

In the previous sections an attempt was made to give a picture of the current educational system in Bahrain - its objectives, administration, budget and structure. It also included a description of the most recent prevailing trends - the class-teacher approach at primary level, the curriculum diversification system at secondary level, and evaluation and promotion of students at all levels of state schools' education.

The purpose of the remaining section is to examine the importance of these developments and the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the current trends, changes and reforms which have been introduced into the system since 1981. However, this is a very broad series of topics. They are not topics that can be discussed with any finality or in prescriptive detail. The two radical changes: the class-teacher system at primary levels; and the curricula diversification system

at secondary level, have been introduced only in the last five years, to the education system in Bahrain; and the results of their implementation are yet to be seen.

The approach, therefore, is to take a very broad view of education and the problem of change.

#### 4.7.1 The Curriculum Reform Era

The curriculum reform movement in Bahrain occurred during the late seventies and early eighties. It was something of an anomaly since it was originally initiated from outside education as a consequence of the evolution of social and economic conditions. When reliance on outside labour became high it created dissatisfaction with the education system. Education, particularly secondary education, was blamed for the failure to produce competent graduates for the various jobs available in the country. New secondary school vocational curricula were developed using more funds. These curricula, however, were not developed only by educators in the Ministry of Education but also by experts in forecasting man-power demand. In a sense this represented an appeal to train experts for educational development.

This process of reform continued through the grade levels to the primary school, not only in the curricula but in methods of teaching as well. Each wave of reform brought more new curriculum documents, texts, resource books, and media. Increasingly, the Ministry of Education was necessarily involved in the process of developing teachers' retraining.

Not only did this reform movement provide exemplary curricula with updated content, but it eventually resulted in a curriculum designed according to modern theories of learning. As well as content these curricula focused on the skills and processes, the modes of inquiry

characteristic of the separate disciplines. The implicit pedagogy, therefore, was active, moving away from traditional classroom interactions to a wide variety of learning strategies including: experiments, fieldwork, group work, independent study, and so on. The emphasis was on the pupil experiencing and inquiring with the teachers practising less direct teaching. The Ministry of Education's Under Secretary of Curriculum, Ali Boubshatit, in 1985 wrote:

"A new informal style of teaching, a departure from the present formal and book-based method, has been introduced in a number of primary schools in Bahrain in order to create healthy environments so that the student develops an enquiring and independent mind and doesn't get the habit of learning by rote as is common now. In most schools, teachers teach only one subject to various grades which means that they do not get enough time with any class of students to develop a rapport with them. In the schools where the new system has been introduced, teachers will not specialise in any one subject but be trained to teach a group of related subjects."

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This era then, while a departure from traditional pedagogic methods, re-emphasised the cognate disciplines as a knowledge structure even at the primary school level. At the same time the teaching was pupil-oriented in its implicit pedagogy and in the emphasis on the process as well as content. The reform movement is expected to provide an abundance of exemplary ready-made curricula complete with materials, teaching aids, and equipment kits where necessary.

#### 4.7.2 The Reactive Era

It is reasonable to assume that one of the aims of the reform movement in the first three classes of primary education in Bahrain was to develop the personality of the children and not just fill them with knowledge and information, hence the need to retrain the teachers. It was hoped that this programme might change the approach to primary teaching not only for the first three years but also for the three

grades that followed. It is the reverse of the general trend in the Arab world by which secondary school graduates are recruited to teach languages and some arithmetic at elementary school level.

But the curriculum reform movement failed to change what went on in the classrooms. Pupil achievement in the first three years of primary education did not show the gains expected, indeed, some felt basic literacy was declining, especially with automatic promotion, although this was far from being proved conclusively. On the other hand, in spite of the revised system of evaluation and emphasis on the significance of continuous assessment, it is still generally felt that attainment in the final three grades of primary, intermediate and also secondary level, is below the anticipated standard and that it is still being used to monitor ratings, and for promotion rather than for progressive diagnosis in order to provide the proper remedy at the right time.

Another part of the reform movement was the diversification of curricula at the secondary level to meet the needs of economic and social development in Bahrain. In the past, 85% of secondary students followed the traditional academic line. Under the reform, it was hoped that 65% or more of secondary students would be diverted to trade and professional technical education. In spite of the many who welcomed vocational specialization at an early stage of secondary education there were a few who protested strongly, among them the more conservative parents within the community. Typical arguments against the diversification of the curricula were "We do not wish to change our secondary schools into a huge laboratory for the purpose of fitting our children into jobs that they might not like later on". Others complained "How can we expect a sound decision from 15 or 16 years old pupils on their future career! And if the same pupil changes his/her mind after a year or two to another type of specialization would not such going

back to the start be accompanied by a sense of failure, frustration and embarrassment. Above all it is also time consuming!"<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps an exposure to a broad variety of subjects from different types and fields of education might provide a solution to this problem.

The curriculum reform movement also failed to change what went on in classrooms regarding the teaching of the English language. Employers in companies and banks complained that the level of English taught in the state schools was lower than that required in spite of the fact that this language was taught over nine years and the sessions allocated to English were almost identical to those allocated to Arabic language. It appeared that there was some deficiency in the methods of teaching English as a foreign language, or in the standard of teachers of English. The retraining of teachers who teach this language might be the main solution to this problem.

The deficiency in the teaching of the English language was parallel to the deficiency in the teaching of Science in Bahrain, as indeed it is in other Arab countries. One suggestion is that Science should be taught from the first year of primary school right through to the end of secondary education. Another is that the teaching of Science should be combined with Applied Science 'Technology' as well. Perhaps changing the name of all Science periods to call them 'Science and Technology' might help to remind the teachers that they should teach technology as well as science. But this is not easy for it requires equipment from abroad as well as the utilization of what is available in Bahrain today. Of more significance it requires the retraining of teachers of science in all matters related to the methods of teaching these subjects.

Until 1985 Computer Education was not taught in the primary, intermediate nor in the secondary schools. However it is taught at university

level. On this matter, in an interview, the Minister of Education explained:

"We will introduce computers into our system of education but without a big noise. What I mentioned before was overplayed and sounded as if it was a great crime not to introduce computer science. The problem here, as England is finding at the moment, it is not a question of hardware but a question of software. Teachers in England are finding that most software programmes are of marginal value and directed more towards games rather than good educational value. It is important that we do not follow the 'fashions'. Perhaps the West can afford to do so because they are producing these machines; but for us to buy them is expensive. I do emphasise that I am not against the computer but it has to come slowly without a dazzling effect. We should concentrate on Arabic programmes that are geared to the needs of an Arab society. There is no point in taking programmes geared to English, French, German or indeed any Western society where programmes and needs are different."

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But Bahraini educators have to realize that, at present, Computer Science forms an integral part of Commercial Education; and indeed students who graduate to employment from this section have already discovered that they need this knowledge. Therefore, one solution to this problem, is that computer education should be introduced in secondary schools and in particular in Commercial Studies.

Within this general reform movement, the Ministry of Education has achieved a great deal. But up to 1985, Bahraini educators had not tackled the problems of School Administration, Education Research, Technological Education nor had they fostered a healthy relationship between the schools, the parents, and the community. These are areas where no significant reforms have been undertaken. But the authorities have promised to do so and have already taken some preliminary steps. It is very difficult to change the curricula and the school when the administration is poorly developed.

Another area of great importance which the curriculum reform movement has not as yet touched is a television and radio educational system that will be complementary to the school system.

#### 4.7.3 The Practical Era - A Sensible Future

The reform movement did indeed change many of the traditional features of the educational system in Bahrain; but there are other areas which reform has not yet reached. The previous section was devoted mainly to those areas that have not yet been covered by the curriculum reform movement.

A - In fact, as a large Bahrain research project, documents and materials reveal, the implementation of, for example, the retraining of the teachers of the state schools and the diversification of secondary education to meet the needs of the economic and social development, have already penetrated the educational superstructure and significantly influenced curriculum guidelines. Above all they have, also, influenced the current trends in educational thought, rhetoric and policy not only in Bahrain but in the Gulf region in general.

But it is a mistake to assume, then, that the plan of retraining teachers, in particular in primary schools, has already led to relatively quick and lasting changes in classroom practice. The plan will take between 8 and 10 years to be effective. The aim is to make a complete change at primary school level. The Ministry of Education plans to retrain between 800 and 1,000 teachers, by giving them a four-year degree course at the University College of Bahrain. This is a very costly project as the existing teachers will be trained on full salary. The four years will be used to prepare the ground for the first group of teachers by changing the curriculum, and building bigger classrooms that can be divided into areas for art, libraries, and so on. Certainly some of the teachers will never be able to take a degree course, so the Ministry of Education will have seminars, work-shops, and orientation courses for them. To do so, the Ministry has sought the help of advisers from other countries which are using this method. Thus, apart from those

who enrolled for a four year teachers training course at the University College of Bahrain, there are also those who have volunteered for in-service training while carrying their full load. Thus starting mid 1983, an intensive sixty hours in-service training programme for teachers has been conducted by a team of teachers from Jordanhill College in Scotland. In addition, other teachers, after completing their training in grade one and being promoted to grade two, were sent to Jordanhill College in Scotland for a two months course.

One of the major contributions to the reform of primary education is the introduction of the class teacher approach, particularly during the first few years of formal education. The programme started in 1983 as a pilot project with grade one and grade two pupils at Hafsa Girls' School and Badre Boys' School. Both schools are in Isa Town, and the results were encouraging. These schools were chosen for the project because the buildings had been designed with such a project in mind and had the right specifications. For instance, the class rooms at these two schools were larger than the average Bahraini class rooms, and have 2\*5 metres per child, rather than the normal 1.5 metres per child. The class rooms in the two schools were  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times larger than the standard class room in order to accommodate book shelves, educational kits and games as well as to provide 20 feet of carpeted open space as a play area for the children.<sup>49</sup> This was considered necessary as the new system is based on the principle that children learn better through supervised activities than through book-based teaching methods. At present the programme covers 13 schools, in which 42 classes of grade one and another 12 classes of grade two are participating with each class having an average of 30 children.

Thus, one of the major contributions to the reform of primary education, at present, is the introduction of the class teacher approach,

during the first few years of formal education. But such an approach can be controversial if its aims, purpose and implementation are insufficiently understood. Even when this approach has a wide measure of professional and popular support, a considerable amount of time and effort is needed for its satisfactory and effective introduction. A considerable public relations campaign is necessary to ensure that there is general acceptance of the approach and to remove fears that parents may feel regarding the quality of the education it provides. The reason for this fear on the part of the parents can be explained by the following.

(1) The successful introduction of a class-teacher approach in primary education involves implementing the aims of child-oriented education, of an activity approach to pedagogy, and of an integrated approach to knowledge. Parents fear that this may lead to a lack of coverage of all the subjects in the primary curriculum. (2) They are inclined to think that the real primary class room curriculum consists mostly of paper and pencil activities and lessons focused on basic skills. Further, they suppose that some of the subjects on the primary school time table may not be thoroughly taught unless they are in the hands of a specialist. These specialists, however, are disappearing as budgets tighten. The class room teacher, then, has an even larger task. Besides these subjects which might be taught by a specialist such as physical education, music, art and a second language, the class teacher has also to teach social studies and science in addition to basic reading and writing. This must be a strain because, in addition to the quality of work, the nature of teaching itself is a source of stress. What to teach is not a simple question. Teaching is characterized by complexity, diversity, contradictory indications and uncertainty. So a teacher will act to simplify complexity, reduce

diversity, search for certainty, resolve dilemmas in favour of what appears to be practical, and seek to feel safe. To be a class teacher in Bahrain, despite its supposedly short day (7 a.m. - 1 p.m.) and long vacations, remains one of the most stressful occupations.

The up-grading of teachers by means of certification will not of itself guarantee the desired results. Much of the expertise and skill required can only be obtained through actual observation, demonstration, critical appraisal and practice in schools, or in analogous simulated situations. Moreover, directors of schools, administrators, and other support staff including resource personnel must all be trained and made fully aware of the methods to be used in the implementation of the class-teacher approach.

It is also important that a new interpretation of what curriculum, curriculum development and evaluation mean should be worked out since what is learned and taught should arise from the needs of the child and society and not from the demands of traditional subjects. The combination of the learning of numbers, oral, and mental skills and studies of local society and environment do not lend themselves easily to traditional syllabuses and teaching methods. The encouragement of activity and practical skills demands understanding and effort from teachers who may be unaccustomed to allowing the necessary freedom of movement and communication in the class room.

It is crucial to realize that the foundation for all other educational levels is primary teaching. Thus it provides a preparation for the diversified curricula now being developed at the higher levels of schooling. Unless activity and child-centred methods are used in the early stages, it will be difficult to reform education at the upper levels.

B - More than 70% of the Bahraini population aged 12-17 has experienced

during the last five years three notable structural changes: (1) the extension of the period of schooling to 6 instead of 5 years. (2) The diversification of education to include, in addition to academic, industrial and commercial courses, other specialisations such as nursing, home economics, hotel and catering, hairdressing and tailoring. (3) A shift of enrolment from academic studies to technical and vocational courses. These changes have been accompanied by a comprehensive revision of the content of education at every level and grade.

In spite of these reforms, secondary education in Bahrain still suffers from certain weaknesses, the most important are: (1) the inadequate preparation of a substantial number of its students for the world of work or for higher studies; (2) inappropriate specialisations and the reluctance of students to follow certain newly introduced courses of study due to cultural considerations and/or duplication between some of these specialisations and training provided by some vocational centres - as in the case of Hotel and Catering; and (3) the drop-out problem particularly in the first grade of both intermediate and secondary schools as shown in Tables 4.19 and 4.20.

Certainly with the improvement of the curricula, well-qualified teachers, counselling and guidance, and improved support services, the level of drop-outs and repetition should be reduced.

At this present stage of Bahrain's development it is certain that there will be changes in the educational needs of the country according to the rise and fall of demands in the different sectors of the economy.

School libraries and workshops all with qualified staff and properly equipped and maintained are essential at all levels of education. Of more importance is the training of technical teachers for secondary schools. At present there is no provision within Bahrain for such, and it is important that future technical teachers learn how to teach

through practice in the schools of Bahrain.

This chapter was devoted to the present framework for current trends in educational thought and policy, mainly the class-teacher method in the primary schools and the diversification of curricula in the secondary schools of Bahrain. These two movements have made certain penetration into the educational superstructure and significantly influenced the current education of Bahrain. But it does not follow that there will be quick implementation and immediate results. It will take some years before all teachers, in the Bahraini primary schools, are qualified and retrained. It will also take some time before all old buildings are replaced by the spacious well equipped modern schools. But with the introduction of the curriculum reform movement to the Bahrain system of education in 1981, a new era in the history of education in the Gulf region has begun.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### HIGHER EDUCATION

After the successful completion of secondary level, students can pursue their studies at home colleges or abroad. However, admission to higher studies at home colleges is totally dependent on the Tawjihia - Secondary School Diploma or equivalent, known by different names in the area: Baccalaureat in Lebanon, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; Mowahhadeh in Syria; and Tawjihia in Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain. And because secondary education in Bahrain is streamed into different specialisations at the senior high level, this Diploma determines the type of higher education for which students are eligible. For the Tawjihia is far more than a school leaving examination. It gives the right of access to higher education in all its forms, not only in Bahrain but throughout the Arab world.

Holders of the Tawjihia decide for themselves about their future studies, in the sense that the type of Tawjihia they hold qualifies them for admission to the appropriate college or establishment where suitable studies are available. In addition most of the vocational establishments are administered by the relevant Ministry, unlike the universities which are autonomous with little interference from the Ministry of Education. And where there is no higher education available for certain specialisations needed by the country, the most able students are given scholarships for overseas universities.

In this chapter an attempt will be made to trace the development of higher education in Bahrain, first at universities abroad, and second at home colleges. As well as written sources, people who were involved in its beginning and who are still taking an active part in its develop-

ment have been consulted. This is made possible by the relatively recent history of higher education in Bahrain.

In order for this study to provide a view which permits events to be understood with a broad cultural, social and economic context, a brief description of higher education in the Arab world, and a brief description of the forces that currently are influencing grants, scholarships and fields of specialisation are necessary. This is because some issues, weaknesses and problems in higher education in Bahrain are closely related to those in higher education in the Arab world in general, and to the economy of the country in particular.

#### 5.1 Universities in the Arab World - An Overview

According to Byron G. Massialas, the Arab states are the inheritors of a higher education tradition that dates back to the 7th century and the rise of Islam, when college-mosques started to emerge as the main centres for religious and academic higher studies. One of the earliest of these centres that gained prominence was Al-Qarawiyin Islamic Institute, which was founded in a mosque at Fez, Morocco, in 859. Al-Azhar, founded in 970 at Cairo, became an institute of higher education in 988. Al-Azhar can thus claim to be the oldest university in the world today.<sup>1</sup> Other famous institutions of higher education flourished around the 10th century, for example, Al-Zaytouneh at Tunis, which later became the nucleus of the University of Tunis. Baghdad witnessed the establishment of Al-Madrassa Al-Nizammiya in 1065-67 and later, Al-Madrassa Al-Mustansiriah, which were the first formal, comprehensive academies of higher learning. Most of these institutions started as predominantly traditional Islamic centres for higher theological studies that flourished around the main mosques.<sup>2</sup> The college-mosque centres preserved their role down the centuries until they were joined in the latter part of

the 19th century by Western-type private colleges and institutes of higher education, many established by missionaries. Notable among them are the preparatory schools of medicine and pharmacy founded in Algeria in 1859, and the higher schools of medicine, law, arts and science founded in 1879. These institutes were combined to form the University of Algiers in 1902.<sup>3</sup> The Syrian Protestant College was founded in 1866 and later became known as the American University of Beirut (AUB); and Saint Joseph University was established by the French Jesuits in 1875, also in Beirut.

With the coming of the 20th century, the Arab world witnessed a proliferation in institutes of higher education in the form of schools, colleges or institutes of higher specialised studies that became with time the nucleus of many of the universities in the area. Colleges and schools started as early as 1902 at Khartoum (Sudan), Baghdad (Iraq) in 1908, Rabat (Morocco) and Umdurman (Sudan) in 1912. Other private universities were founded at the time, such as the Egyptian University (1908), later known as Cairo University, and the American University in Cairo (1919). By 1939, eight fully fledged universities flourished in the Arab region, half of which were private, with varying degrees of foreign affiliation.<sup>4</sup>

As more countries achieved independence, higher education became more and more a public-sector activity with state-run universities, except for Lebanon where higher education remained predominantly privately-run (only 2 out of 8 institutes of higher education are public). Egypt, Sudan, the West Bank, and Gaza have private institutions of higher education, some of which are foreign. It is worth noting here that all higher education institutions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza are private.

The control of higher education was dominated by the governments

of the region. The main issue that emerged was the control of the rapid growth of institutions of higher education that were mushrooming in numbers of students and were generally unruly. A conflict developed between governments that wanted universities to adhere strictly to civil service rules and policies and universities striving for academic freedom and autonomy.

Universities and colleges in the area started to increase in numbers after World War II. The Arab universities increased from 8 in 1940 to around 23 in 1960, to around 50 in 1977 and to over 70 in 1982. The number of institutes of higher education increased from 57 in 1960 to 284 in 1977, or nearly five-fold.<sup>5</sup>

Gradually through the years, other universities were established in the Gulf area. In addition to Kuwait University, founded in 1966, Qatar University was opened in 1973 followed by the University of UAE in 1977; and later, in 1978, the University College of Arts, Science and Education was established in Bahrain. Most recently the University of Oman started in 1986. Table 5.1 (see p. 205) shows that by 1987 there were eleven universities and 35 institutions of higher education in the Arab Gulf countries. These universities and institutions aim at preparing local cadres to participate in the national development of their respective countries and to conduct scientific research relevant to their societies in order to meet economic, social and educational aspirations and goals.<sup>6</sup>

Most of the universities in the Arab world and many others in the West have, over the years, provided education for Bahraini students; but the American University in Beirut (AUB) has for more than half a century provided not only higher education but also research facilities, experts and training for Bahrain. This is because most of the country's scholarships in the past have been directed to this University.

TABLE 5.1

Universities and Institutions of Higher Education  
in the Arab Gulf States 1986

Country	Year of Establishment	Name of University or Institution
Iraq	1960	University of Technology
	1963	Mustansariah University
	1964	Basrah University
	1967	Mosul University
	1968	Salah Al-Deen University
	1985	Baghdad University
	1964-1986	25 other Institutions of Higher Education
Saudi Arabia	1957	King Saud University
	1961	Islamic University
	1963	Petroleum and Minerals
	1967	King Abdul Aziz University
	1974	King Faisal University
	1974	Imam Mohammed Bin Saud
1979	Um Al-Qura	
Kuwait	1966	Kuwait University
	1967	Institute of Applied Technology
Qatar	1973	Qatar University
UAE	1976	UAE University
Bahrain	1968	Gulf Polytechnic
	1976	College of Health Sciences
	1976	Hotel and Catering Centre
	1978	University College of Arts, Science and Education
	1982	Arab Gulf University
Oman	1986	Oman University

Source : Aitken, D.J., International Hand Book of Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education, 10th Edition, (Macmillan Publishers Ltd., England, 1986).

Bahrain, in contrast to other countries of the Gulf, had introduced a modern system of education by the turn of the century, long before the discovery of oil in the region. Yet, in spite of having the longest history of education in the area, it did not have a national university of its own until 1986 when the University College of Arts, Science and Education was joined with the Polytechnic, already existing on the Islands, to form Bahrain University.

As with other matters in Bahrain, the development of higher education was slow, gradual but firm and closely related to the economic needs of the country. For the first few decades, the people and the Government of Bahrain believed that not only was it cheaper to send the best secondary graduates abroad, but this would eventually ensure an indigenous professional class. This policy could be explained by the fact that Bahraini leaders could not afford, at that time, to establish their own university because of the relatively poor economic condition of the country, and the small number of students who were willing to pursue higher education. And though there was a shortage of qualified teachers, this shortage was greater in the rich neighbouring states which used the problem as an argument for the opening of their own home universities.<sup>7</sup> Pressure for establishing a university in Bahrain further diminished with the opening of universities in Saudia Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and so on. Their governments offered scholarships for Bahraini students to pursue their higher education. Thus it was only when the number of Bahrainis demanding higher education had increased, and the economy of the country had improved as a result of the increased oil prices in the 1970s, that it became possible for Bahrain to establish colleges for higher education.

## 5.2 Difficulties for Higher Education

The gradual change within the economic structure of Bahrain has been paralleled by the evolution of higher education. To make this discussion clear, it seems best to focus on those events that occasioned changes in higher education.

Until 1933, the economy depended on pearl diving and palm cultivation. The development of cultured pearls in the 1920s, and world financial recession in the 1930s, restricted demand for pearls and lowered their market value.<sup>8</sup>

The development of oil in the 1930s wiped out the pearl industry because pearl divers moved to the oil industry, attracted by better pay and improved working conditions. During the 1950s and 1960s the oil industry was concentrated in a limited range of activities such as oil-well-drilling, extracting and exporting crude oil, and refining Saudi oil. Worried over its dependence on oil, the Government began to diversify its economy in the mid sixties. This diversification included a fishing company, an aluminium smelter, a dry dock, several petrochemical plants, an international airport, and a great number of banking and communication facilities which made Bahrain in the 1970s the service centre of the Arabian Gulf States.<sup>9</sup>

Further diversification in the 1980s included the modernizing of oil refining, heavy oil conversion, construction of an iron pelletizing plant and the establishment of a physical link to Saudi Arabia - the causeway.

This growth in industry, services and commerce created a demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers and university graduates. To meet these urgent needs, Bahrain was obliged to employ foreigners. But in the meantime a high priority was given to training Bahrainis both locally and abroad. There was a shortage for skilled people in

all the professions. Bahrain needed teachers, nurses, doctors, engineers and trained business and social workers.

By the 1970s and early 1980s, the problem of the general shortage of manpower had been eased but there were still many jobs which were filled by foreigners. And gradually, as more Bahraini students left home to study in universities abroad, more graduates returned well qualified but they tended to be concentrated in a limited number of disciplines. The problem of a general shortage of manpower, especially in engineering, medicine, computing and, to some extent, in teaching, was not solved.<sup>10</sup> There were demands which were not satisfied and others which needed to be expanded. There was also a need for new skills due to the development of new technologies. By then, the country's expenditure had exceeded its resources; and Government scholarships for undergraduate studies to overseas universities in Canada, America, and Europe could no longer be afforded. In 1985, officials in the Ministry of Education emphasized:

"Although students have the right to study in fields not needed by the country, it is important to question continuing the current enrolment in traditional majors of study for which the job market is dwindling and the advisability of offering new programmes of study that go hand-in-hand with the emerging technologies and new jobs.

It is equally essential to question the practice of producing graduates in excess of available jobs. Students need to learn that college education does not guarantee a job and that matching educational supply with occupational demand tends to increase their chance to get the right job." 11

Higher education in Bahrain was, and still is, an expensive service; and over the years changes in the economy and many other factors have influenced its development. But in recent years, due to the gradual decrease in the oil supply since the early seventies, and the gradual increase in the cost of higher education abroad, urgent measures were taken to promote higher education at home colleges.

It would be wrong, however, to give the impression that because

of the Island's small size and its modest resources of oil, the country, until then, had lacked higher education. Bahrain, today, enjoys university, higher, further and technical education. The Bahraini higher educational institutions are known for their diversity in terms of standards and studies.<sup>12</sup> There are colleges and universities undertaking the task of qualifying teachers, training technical personnel and offering courses in literary and scientific studies. These colleges are: The Gulf Polytechnic, The College of Health Sciences, the Catering and Hotel Training Centre, and the University College of Arts, Science and Education. Further, the Arabian Gulf University is concerned with medical, scientific and educational courses and is envisaged as a centre offering M.A. and Ph.D. courses in the near future.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore despite some problems with the economy of the country owing to the small size of Bahrain's hydrocarbon reserves that have forced the Government to take a much more immediate concern with ways of diversifying the economy than has been the case in many other countries of the region,<sup>14</sup> the Government is never-the-less still striving for educational advances, and plans are currently being implemented for the development of Bahrain University - the National University of the country.

But it is also due to these factors in the economy that the Government was forced to introduce certain changes regarding grants, scholarships and fields of specialization. The tight financial constraints have forced higher education to be effectively guided by the manpower requirement approach advocated by the economic planners. These changes have directly or indirectly influenced the development of higher education in Bahrain.

### 5.3 Stages of Development

Although higher education in Bahrain is in continual evolution, specific reforms that were introduced into the system marked the beginning of successive new stages in its development.

From the beginning of 1940 until 1966, higher education was limited to sending students to overseas universities to attain higher education in any field of specialization which happened to be of interest to the trainee himself. In those days there was no shortage or competition for jobs because there were more job opportunities in both the public and private sectors than there were young Bahraini citizens who could fill them.

According to Winder, the Government of Bahrain did not consider the need to introduce facilities for higher education at home because most Bahrainis following completion of their secondary education used to seek employment or join their families' businesses.<sup>15</sup> As a result, scholarships were granted by the State to the intellectually ablest of all students, boys and girls leaving the secondary schools at the age of 16 or 17 and who were willing to go abroad, specialize and at the end of their course of study return home and fill the vacant jobs available in abundance at that time. This freedom to choose the specialization one considered best for one's self had, until then, been a leading principle of Bahrain higher education.

#### 5.3.1 Teacher-Training Classes

Teacher-training was initiated in Bahrain in the 1950s, when a one-year course of in service training was offered to secondary school graduates. This programme was upgraded in the 1960s, when the first two-year Teacher-Training Colleges were opened.

### 5.3.2 Teacher-Training Institutes

Two teacher-training institutes, one for men and another for women, were established in 1966 and 1967 respectively with the objectives of preparing teachers for primary education. Secondary school graduates spent two years at these institutes and graduated with an associate degree in upper primary and lower secondary teaching. It was hoped that in due course, these institutes would provide all the teachers necessary for the primary and intermediate levels. Their subjects included, in addition to the field of specialization, methods of teaching, school curriculum, educational and developmental psychology, hygiene and social development, physical education, arts, Arab history, Arabic and English languages and Islamic culture.

The total enrolment of males and females in the secondary teacher-training schools and at the Teacher-Training Institutes, and the programmes of study prior to their closure were discussed in Chapter Two.

### 5.3.3 The Gulf Polytechnic

Two years later, in 1968, the Gulf Technical College was founded in Bahrain following an agreement, among and supported by Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and U.A.E. It was designed as an institution to provide post-secondary education in the technical, commercial and administrative fields.

At the time of its inception, the Gulf Technical College was housed in a temporary building donated by the Bahrain Petroleum Company and it had approximately 18 students and 3 teachers. In 1981, the name was changed from the Gulf Technical College to Gulf Polytechnic, a significant event which symbolises the college development, growth and status. Such a status commits the Polytechnic to a policy offering a variety of higher academic programmes. 16

Today the Gulf Polytechnic is an autonomous regional institution of higher education designed to serve both Bahrain and other Gulf States. It has a distinct regional orientation reflected in its governance, structure, curricula and student body. Foremost among its priorities is making a serious contribution to the development of professional and semi-professional manpower throughout the Gulf area.

Currently, the two major academic units of Gulf Polytechnic are the Department of Engineering, and Business and Management. The former comprises a section in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical Engineering, as well as Computer Science, Basic Science and Mathematics, with degree and diploma programmes in each of these areas. The Business and Management Department offers diploma and degree programmes in Secretarial Studies, Commercial Studies, Accounting and Business Administration. The Department also offers a series of courses in the field of Public Administration.<sup>17</sup>

The gradual development of this College throughout the years until 1980 and the role of the Oil Company in this development were discussed earlier.

#### 5.3.4 The College of Health Sciences

In 1976 the Ministry of Health established the College of Health Sciences with the main objective of preparing the much needed Middle Level Nursing and Allied Health professionals.

Historically, a few local nurses were trained in Bahrain as early as 1959 with the establishment of a small School of Nursing. One year after the opening of Salmania Hospital, the School started offering a four-year training programme for students who had completed the primary school level. In ten years, between 1965 and 1975, other training programmes were initiated by the Ministry of Health in response to the

needs of various clinical departments, i.e. the need for laboratory and radiography technicians, assistant pharmacists, nurse-midwives, etc. All these training programmes were largely non-academic in orientation and stressed practical, on-the-job training.<sup>18</sup>

In 1972, through a major contribution from some Bahraini families, the School of Nursing moved into new and expanded premises. At the same time, its programme was changed to offer: (1) General Nursing Training for a three-year period, open to secondary school graduates, and (2) Practical Nursing Training for an 18-month duration, open to intermediate school leavers.<sup>19</sup>

In 1976, the American University of Beirut (AUB) was invited to study Bahrain's health manpower training needs in general. By the end of the feasibility study, it became clear that a centralization of all the Ministry's training programmes was needed. Six months later, the College of Health Sciences was created as the much needed central training institution.<sup>20</sup> Since then the College has improved in both the quality and quantity of student intake, and programmes offered. There has been a tremendous surge in the services of the College for basic, post-basic, vocational and in-service education locally as well as regionally.

In 1977 the College initiated its first regional programme, the Medical Equipment Technicians programme. Gulf and Arab students in this programme, qualifying with Associate Degrees, are prepared to repair and maintain medical equipment used in health facilities of their respective states. A one-year regional vocational programme in Medical Equipment Repair and Maintenance was implemented in 1979.<sup>21</sup>

In 1979, the College initiated the Regional Teacher Training programme, as a one-year post-basic programme for teachers of the allied health professions in Health Science Education.

In 1981, three new programmes were initiated by the College, namely, the Medical Secretary programme, the Sports Therapy Technician programme and the post-basic Psychiatric Nursing programme. By 1982, the Community Nursing programme was started; and in 1983, the Health Care Administration programme began. In 1984 the College admitted the first student intake to the Bachelor Degree Nursing programme.<sup>22</sup>

Currently the College is recognised as a leader in allied health professional education in the Gulf region. Several of the College programmes are being reviewed for the award of Bachelor degrees, Nursing being the first. The College has, over the years, established close working relations with academic institutions in the region, such as the American University of Beirut, and other international institutions, such as the University of Illinois, the University of Texas, the University of Colorado in the United States, and the University of Glasgow in the U.K.<sup>23</sup>

It is worth noting that over half of the staff of the College is Bahraini. This has been accomplished through staff development, both locally and overseas. Bahraini staff, upon recruitment, are enrolled in the Teacher Training programme. This post-basic programme in Health Science Education prepares them in related educational areas such as teaching, curriculum planning and evaluation, constructing and validating examination items and use of audiovisual aids.<sup>24</sup>

#### 5.3.5 The Catering and Hotel Training Centre

In 1976 a Centre was established with the objective of training the manpower needed for the Hotel and Catering services.<sup>25</sup>

A recent development in Bahrain has been the remarkable growth in tourism on the Islands, bringing with it a significant growth in the number of hotels and restaurants. Due to the lack of qualified

Bahrainis in this field, it was necessary to rely entirely upon expatriates who were needed to keep pace with the development in this area in the country. Considerable attention was paid by the Government, through the Ministry of Development and Industry, to this sector in an attempt to make up the manpower shortage, to lessen dependence on expatriates and gradually to Bahrainize jobs in the hotel industry.

This Centre was established in 1976 with assistance in technical expertise from the International Labour Organisation and the UNDP. Programmes of study include the following: (1) a twenty-week course of training for those who completed the intermediate school and attended the hotel studies for three years at secondary school level, after which the trainees are awarded a diploma in Hotel Management. (2) A two-year period of study at the Centre for those who have already completed their secondary education in any of the following areas: kitchen work (chefs), serving foods and beverages (waiters), room service, front-office duties, and management, after which a student is awarded the Hotel Operation Diploma. <sup>26</sup>

Currently this Centre is affiliated to the Ministry of Information; and recently major steps have been taken to turn it into a regional facility for preparing hotel and restaurant administrators and chefs with participation of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, Oman and Saudi Arabia. <sup>27</sup>

#### 5.3.6 The University College of Arts, Science and Education

Two years later, in 1978, the two Teacher Training Institutes, discussed earlier, were upgraded and amalgamated to form one University College for both men and women. This College seeks to develop interest and foster study in three broad areas of human knowledge and research: Arts, Sciences and Education. Its main function is to prepare teachers

for the different schools - primary, intermediate and secondary. Undergraduate programmes of study in the humanities and social sciences lead to the degree of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.): in education they lead to a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.); in the natural sciences to a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and in physical education to a Bachelor of Physical Education (B.P.E.). Mathematics may be studied either for a B.A. or B.Sc. degree. The College also provides programmes leading to a diploma or degree at postgraduate level in education. In addition, the College offers pre-service and in-service programmes of training for primary school teachers; re-training of subject teachers at the upper primary (or intermediate) and lower secondary levels. The College also offers a programme in demographic and statistical studies for training middle-level professionals in various Ministries of the Government.<sup>28</sup>

### 5.3.7 The Arabian Gulf University (AGU)

On April 1st, 1980, a decision was taken and was made public, to establish a unified Arabian Gulf University.

In its early stages, the idea of a common Gulf University was merely a wish and hazy concept that was replaced by the building of local universities. Today, the idea has become a plan and fast growing project, benefiting from the experience gained over two decades of local academic achievement. The AGU enjoys a special distinction.

It draws from the region's pool of experience in the fields of higher education and development, which represents a qualitative advance in the course of higher education in the region. It is also a return to authentic co-operation and mutual aid in academic enterprise and a symbol of the higher academic institutions' potential for co-operation.<sup>29</sup>

AGU does not represent a substitute for the diversified higher educational institutions in the region. It represents an innovative development in the co-operation and co-ordination and the exchange of expertise among the region's institutions. It is also an advanced study and research centre, highly sensitive to its environment, specializing in higher studies and scientific research. The foundation charter of the AGU states that "the University is a regional autonomous scientific institution with a public status".<sup>30</sup> It is jointly managed by the member countries on the basis of equal representation on the general conference and on the board of trustees. The participating states are the seven Arabian Gulf states - U.A.E., Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman and Qatar. The proportion of financial contributions provided by the seven member states towards the budget is listed below:

<u>Member State</u>	<u>Contribution as percentage of the total University Budget</u>
Kuwait	25%
Saudi Arabia	25%
Iraq	21%
United Arab Emirates	15%
Qatar	9%
Oman	2.5%
Bahrain	2.5%

Bahrain was chosen to be the site of the University. The main campus is in the "Sakhir" area occupying a central location in Bahrain. It lies on a four square kilometre tract of land located 25 km from Manama, the capital, and 3 km from the western shore facing the Saudi mainland. In addition the University was granted a 3,600m coastal strip to be later developed for oceanographic research.

The University plans, within the next 20 years, to accommodate

some 5,000 students.<sup>31</sup> It is committed to the orientation of its programmes and curricula toward the cultural, scientific and occupational needs of the participating states. It will undertake the education and training of scholars and specialists in the various branches of knowledge needed by the member states, especially in those branches where local universities are unable fully to satisfy the needs. Further, AGU seeks to investigate the origins of the region's social, administrative and technical problems and to conduct research in the various fields of development and suggest appropriate scientific and practical solutions.<sup>32</sup>

The study and research programmes at AGU adopt a comprehensive, realistic, social and environmental approach to better serve the society and the environment of the Arab Gulf States. Programmes in Oceanography, Science of Deserts and Arid Lands, are designed with a view to the future course of science and development in the members states, and with a special emphasis on promoting technology in the region. Committed to regional development, AGU does not confine its activities to academia. It looks forward to serving the Gulf societies in the cultural and intellectual arena by means of sponsoring conventions, seminars and cultural and scientific exhibitions.<sup>33</sup>

The College of Medicine and Medical Sciences is the only college currently operating; however, the College of Education (which will offer programmes in Special Education, Counsellor Education and Education of Planning), The College of Sciences, The Graduate Division and the Scholarship Programme (for outstanding students), will be established in the near future. Scholarships are granted in the fields of Medical Sciences, Information and Communication Sciences, Science of Energy, Science of Deserts and Arid Lands, Biotechnology, Educational Planning, Vocational Education, Special Education, Guidance and Counselling, Astronomy and Oceanography.<sup>34</sup>

This University, unlike all other institutions for higher education in Bahrain, is not co-educational. Male and female students study in separate classrooms; however both share the same library, the same campus and the same dining hall. The staff-student ratio is 1:10; and the average class size is 25 students. Students are required to take 16 semester credits. The University operates on a two semester plan; and the semester stretches over 15 weeks, excluding examination and registration periods.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, the most recent stage in the development of higher education in Bahrain was the decision in 1986 to establish Bahrain University by integrating both the University College and the Gulf Polytechnic under one administration to form the National University of the country. Thus, after many years of joint efforts, changes and evolution, higher education in Bahrain has begun a new stage in its development.

It is most probably a result of this pattern of evolution that higher education in today's Bahrain is closely geared to the economic needs of the country. This is because in recent years, as a result of tight financial constraints, the institutions of higher education, together with the Ministry of Education, undertake the following:

- a) - plan the number of students to be enrolled at the universities as a whole,
- b) - decide the proportion of students entering different specializations, and
- c) - allow the students to choose their specializations.<sup>36</sup>

These factors in the economy have also forced the Government to avoid wastage and duplication and therefore higher education in Bahrain, unlike in the Gulf states, is fee paying and co-educational - where boys and girls sit side by side in all Bahraini institutions for higher education.

#### 5.4 Higher Education at Countries Abroad

Bahrain started sending students abroad officially as early as 1928 when 6 scholarship students left for the American University of Beirut. At the end of the academic year 1966-67 Bahraini graduates amounted to 200. By 1981 the Ministry of Education, through a specialized department responsible for scholarships and cultural affairs had helped 7,832 Bahrainis to attain university degrees (Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate) in various fields.<sup>37</sup> At the present time university studies abroad are regulated by the scholarship regulations, which include Government scholarship, subsidies, and grants given to Bahraini students by friendly governments.

After establishing the five colleges for higher education the Ministries started to direct their undergraduates to home colleges in addition to continuing to send students abroad for graduate as well as for undergraduate degrees in subjects which were not available in Bahrain, for example, medicine, pharmacy, psychiatry, architecture, special education, music education, art education, and library science. The number of Bahraini students at universities abroad for the years 1978/79 to 1985/86 is given in Table 5.2 (see pp. 221 & 222).

An analysis of the data of enrolment of Bahraini students at universities abroad on the basis of years, countries and sex suggests the following conclusions.

##### First, differences in enrolment from year to year.

The data in Table 5.2 indicates that the number of Bahraini students, both male and female in Arab and foreign countries was higher in 1980/81 than in the years that followed. The number of Bahraini students at universities abroad reached a maximum of 2,913 in 1980; but fell to 1,670 in 1986. This gradual decrease in the number of enrolments can be explained by the fact that since the establishment of the colleges

TABLE 5.2

Number of Bahraini Students Abroad 1980/81-1985/861. At Universities in Arab Countries

Country	Sex	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1986-86
Egypt	M	220	205	132	121	109	113
	F	224	185	122	66	67	85
Kuwait	M	115	100	82	40	54	43
	F	131	96	78	51	69	87
Saudi Arabia	M	202	207	253	325	310	360
	F	72	80	97	123	125	128
Iraq	M	37	49	31	40	45	59
	F	37	48	37	43	50	50
Qatar	M	120	106	97	29	7	4
	F	208	194	170	86	69	62
Jordan	M	-	-	-	-	-	13
	F	1	-	-	-	-	1
Lebanon	M	7	7	7	-	-	-
	F	4	4	-	-	-	-
Syria	M	57	48	21	20	-	-
	F	42	30	16	16	-	-
U.A.E.	M	44	63	73	47	46	34
	F	67	111	88	161	111	80
Libya & Morocco	M	12	7	8	8	-	-
	F	24	16	19	19	-	-
TOTAL	M	814	792	704	630	571	613
	F	810	764	627	563	491	493
TOTAL		1624	1556	1331	1193	1062	1106

Table continued .....

Table 5.2 (Cont'd)

2. At Universities in Non-Arab Countries

Country	Sex	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86
U.K.	M	317	324	241	289	50	49
	F	21	20	28	51	3	3
France	M	19	22	14	21	9	8
	F	21	20	19	28	18	18
Germany	M	2	2	-	-	-	-
	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canada	M	98	114	149	149	100	99
	F	81	91	77	72	45	40
America	M	184	187	149	149	88	88
	F	57	82	46	40	24	24
India	M	185	161	152	223	141	138
	F	28	37	78	121	77	77
Pakistan	M	10	15	4	4	4	5
	F	5	10	1	2	2	2
TOTAL	M	815	825	709	835	392	387
	F	215	260	249	314	169	164
TOTAL		1030	1085	958	1149	561	551

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain, 1980-81, 1981-82, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86.

for higher education in Bahrain, Government scholarships have been directed to Bahraini colleges of technology, health sciences, and education. As a result there has been a gradual fall in the enrolment of Bahraini students abroad.

Second, differences arising from country to country

The data in Table 5.2 indicates that the number of Bahraini male and female students in Arab countries has, in recent years, been slightly higher than in non-Arab countries. Despite the general decline in enrolment for graduate studies abroad, there is still a large number of Bahraini students taking graduate courses in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. This can be explained by the fact that the governments in these countries allocate yearly a certain number of fellowships for Bahraini students to study in their universities. Almost 98% of the total number of Bahraini students with fellowships, at present, are at universities in Arab countries, particularly universities in the Gulf area.<sup>38</sup> Since their establishment in 1966, in 1973, and in 1977, the University of Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates respectively have allocated a certain number of fellowship awards for Bahraini students. In addition, private students find it easier to enrol in such universities because they are familiar with the way of life and traditions. Travel is much cheaper to these countries than to Western countries. Therefore financial support is a major factor promoting enrolment at the Arab universities in general and at the Gulf universities in particular.

However the financial assistance and facilities provided by the Kuwaiti Government to build the Bahraini University College has resulted in a considerable decline in the number of scholarships for Bahraini students to study in Kuwait - from 246 in 1980 to 130 in 1986. The overcrowding and problems of finding space for Kuwaiti students could also be another factor for this decline.

It is clear that since the establishment of the University College in Bahrain in 1979 there has been a decrease in the enrolment of Bahraini students in Egypt from 444 in 1980 to 198 in 1986, in Qatar from 328

in 1980 to 66 in 1986; and in Syria from 99 in 1980 to zero in 1986.

This could be due to political reasons.

However the data in Table 5.2 also indicates that in spite of the opening of University College in Bahrain there was a gradual increase in enrolment of Bahraini students in Saudi Arabia and in U.A.E. The data shows that the number of Bahraini students in Saudi Arabia was 274 in 1980 but rose to 448 in 1986. This is due to the fact that the governments in both countries offer fellowships and scholarships to Bahraini students. In recent years, for example, Bahraini students wishing to specialize in petroleum engineering had gone to the University of Petrol and Minerals in Saudi Arabia. Some Bahraini girls have found that Saudi universities are not suitable for them, while others find them more suitable because they do not allow co-education. But the availability of financial support seems to be the main factor in the enrolment of both male and female Bahraini students at universities in the Arab world.

The data in Table 5.2 further shows that the preference of private students receiving their education in non-Arab universities in 1986 is in the following order: India, Canada, America, The United Kingdom, France and Pakistan. The language of instruction seems to be a major factor in choosing a foreign university. However, in an interview with Dr. Ali Fakhro, the present Minister of Education, regarding scholarships abroad for Bahraini students, he asserted that cultural shock was the main reason for not sending Bahraini students to Western universities before they had acquired their undergraduate degrees from universities in the Gulf area or in other Islamic countries. He explained:

"...We did not stop sending our bursary students abroad. This year we sent many students to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, U.A.E., Qatar, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, India and Pakistan. We have though stopped sending our students to Canada, America, and Europe for their first degree because they are still too young to cope with cultural shock in these societies where moral standards are more relaxed. But we shall send them to

Western universities for their postgraduate studies.

We agreed that the Ministry of Education, the Gulf Polytechnic, and the University College of Bahrain shall continue sending their students to get their Masters, and Ph.D. degrees from Europe, America and Canada." 39

### Third, scholarships and grants

Since 1956, the year when the first Bahraini girl students graduated from secondary school in Bahrain, scholarships to study abroad had been given to both boys and girls on the basis of merit shown in the final examination results. This policy continued until 1982. In fact in many years, the results of the girls were far better than those of the boys. The following statement by Sir Charles Belgrave regarding boys' and girls' education in 1956 is of interest:

"By 1956, the year before we left Bahrain, Majorie and her Lebanese assistant, Mrs Nair, were in charge of 13 girls' schools containing over 4000 girls, with a staff of 135 women teachers, of whom 94 had themselves been educated in the Bahrain schools. On the whole girls' education was more satisfactory and ran more smoothly than that of the boys. In 1956 boys and girls sat for the same examination; at the end of the term, out of the four top pupils, three, including the first one, were girls, which caused complete consternation in the boys' education department for between them and the girls' schools there was strong rivalry." 40

In 1984 boys and girls sat for the same final secondary school examinations; and girls came top. However some felt, especially the girls and their parents, that there was some sort of discrimination in that more scholarships were given to boys than to the girls - even though female students got better results in the final examination than the males.

In 1985, the Bahraini Minister of Education repudiated the suggestion that there was discrimination on the basis of sex:

"...What I would like to emphasise is that we do not want at any time to discriminate between boys and girls in opportunities for education. But when we give scholarships at the Ministry of Education we give priority to boys because our future needs male teachers. Female teachers are in excess of our demand. Therefore our need, today, is for male teachers and not for female teachers. Just imagine what would happen if I gave the girls all the scholarships

because they came top. And if after 4 or 5 years they come back and find no work, what would happen then?

Those girls who study Sociology and Psychology come and blame us and they say: 'You have sent us abroad, you have given us grants and scholarships. It is your responsibility to find us jobs'.

Such discrimination in giving scholarships to boys rather than girls is practised by the Ministry only to meet our needs. In Medicine we have given equal numbers of scholarships to both sexes. Regarding scholarships for Engineering there are some problems - because upon graduation, female engineers refuse, sometimes, to work at night, or to go to the field because the sun is very hot, or because some female engineers complain that the Koreans 'make eyes at them'.

As a result the private sector which offers these scholarships told us frankly that girls are of no use to them. Therefore they feel it is pointless to send girls to study engineering abroad."

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The Minister continued:

"I dream of equality but when one awards scholarships, one has to follow the demand. It is a fact of life, it is easy for anybody to preach equality and I wish I could achieve that but we have our own reality. In fact a great responsibility for this problem falls on the girls themselves. In many cases when girls apply for a job with us, the Ministry finds that their specialisations fit the private sector with better pay and better advantages. And when we advise them to go to the private sector, they finally refuse saying that they could not do that."

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It seems that the prevailing conditions in the area have, since 1982, influenced decision-making in Bahrain. And though the majority of the Bahrainis profoundly dislike discrimination of any kind, at the same time, in the context of the relatively limited resources of the country, they find the Minister's argument convincing.

To conclude this section on higher education at countries abroad, one may deduce that over the years there have been different forces affecting the enrolment of male and female Bahraini students in foreign universities. Some of these factors are social, some are political, and some are cultural; but the majority of them have their roots in the economy of the country. Most of these factors seems to operate together to produce the present situation.

## 5.5 Higher Education at Home Colleges

Post-school education is available in Bahrain at present to everyone above school leaving age. It is provided at all levels and may be part-time or full-time, vocational or non-vocational. In fact one of the main policies and objectives of education in Bahrain at the present time is strengthening technical and vocational education to meet the growing demands of commerce and industry in the country.

Further education is a broad term usually taken to refer to all post-school education outside the universities. Nowadays there are many institutions in Bahrain which offer further education and training specifically suited for their employees; major companies so involved include: Gulf Air, Cable and Wireless, ALBA, Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO) and the Banks.

Many vocational courses are also provided at the Gulf Polytechnic. The "10,000" training programme by which some 10,000 Bahrainis received vocational training during the five years 1981-1985, and the secretarial training programme of the High Council for Vocational Training have budgets incorporated into that of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

However in the discussion of higher education in Bahrain, vocational and further education offered by the various companies on the Islands are outside the scope of this thesis.

### 5.5.1 The Colleges - Basic Information

Higher education (first degree and similar level work) is provided in Bahrain, at present in two universities, one college and one training centre. The principle institutions of post-school education are therefore five: (1) The Gulf Polytechnic and (2) The College of Health Sciences are undertaking the task of qualifying and training technical

personnel. (3) The University College, in addition to qualifying and training teachers, also offers academic courses in literary and scientific studies. (4) The Catering and Hotel Training Centre is undertaking the task of preparing technical personnel for the tourist industry which developed recently on the Islands. (5) Further, the Arabian Gulf University is committed to the production of highly qualified personnel in the fields of medicine, education, applied sciences and research.<sup>43</sup>

Three models appear to dominate the higher educational scene in Bahrain. The first provides enough latitude for each institution to issue its own bylaws and design its curriculum with very little interference from the Ministry of Education. Examples of such institutions are the University College and the Gulf Polytechnic. The second model is one controlled by the Ministry of Health as in the College of Health Sciences, or controlled by the Ministry of Information as in the Catering and Hotel Training Centre. As for the third model, national councils for higher education in all the Gulf states are empowered to plan, supervise and develop higher education. An example of this model is the Arabian Gulf University (AGU).

The national council for higher education through the AGU presents a new experiment in higher education. It is jointly managed by the member countries on the basis of equal representation in the general conference and on the board of trustees. Members of the board of trustees are the Ministers of National Education from the seven participating Arabian Gulf states. A Council was established which promulgated the establishment of the Grants Committee. The Council and the Committee were charged with the development of higher education at the planning, executive, and financial levels. The Grants Committee was established to help the Council handle its financial

duties. The responsibilities of the Committee cover the examination of accounts and suggestions for funds to be allocated to the University for recurrent and developmental requirements. The Committee was charged with handling student boarding arrangements and finance.<sup>44</sup> This model is the first of its type not only in Bahrain but also in the whole Gulf region and probably in the Arab world.

As far as finance is concerned, most Bahraini establishments for post-school education derive their funds from the Government of Bahrain or from the Governments of the Gulf states, as in the case of AGU. They also derive some income from fees obtained from students, because higher education in the country is fee paying. Some colleges, such as the Gulf Polytechnic and the University College, undertake training for commercial and industrial firms, making charges which broadly reflect the economic cost of provision. And though each college is financed directly by the Ministry concerned, (for instance, the College of Health Sciences received direct financial aid from the Ministry of Health; and the Catering Centre received its financial share directly from the Ministry of Information), the autonomy of the Bahrain University is guaranteed by a special arrangement with the Ministry of Finance. All of them, therefore, derive their income primarily from the State, from tuition fees, and from grants and gifts given by corporations, Government and private philanthropic sources.<sup>45</sup>

Though these colleges charge fees for tuition, admission to them is made solely on the basis of the academic merit of a candidate. The ability to pay fees does not enter into the decision about admission.<sup>46</sup> Financial aid, in the form of part or total remission of tuition, is available to any qualified student who has been admitted to the college and who can establish the need for such aid. A limited number of scholarships is available to students of exceptional merit.

In all colleges the governing body is the Board of Trustees. The composition of this Board varies, but normally it includes senior Government officials, Rectors of other universities; and in the case of AGU the seven Ministers of National Education of the seven Gulf states (U.A.E., Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman and Qatar). In most colleges, including AGU, the Boards are chaired by the Bahraini Minister of Education (as in the case of the University College, and the Gulf Polytechnic) or by the Under Secretary (as in the case of the College of Health Sciences). The University President or Rector (Chancellor) is in charge of the educational, administrative and financial affairs of his college or university. He is also the executor of all laws and regulations pertaining to the university. In almost all the colleges, the President or the Rector is nominated by the Minister of Education. The Cabinet or the Council of Ministers approve the nomination. The confirmation, however, is not finalized until a royal decree is issued.<sup>47</sup>

It was stated explicitly by Government officials that the aim of a university or college is to dispense higher education, to promote scientific research, to train manpower, and to contribute to the diffusion of knowledge. Such aims were stated by the Minister of Education as:

- 1 - to obtain specialized manpower necessary for Bahrain's economic and social development;
- 2 - to participate in solving problems faced by the society;
- 3 - to develop scientific research in human, cultural and scientific domains.

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To realise this purpose, the academic structure of each college consists of a broad spectrum of departments and programmes. For instance, in the University College there are ten departments:

- 1 - Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies
- 2 - Department of Biology
- 3 - Department of Chemistry

- 4 - Department of Education
- 5 - Department of English, and The English Language Centre
- 6 - Department of General Studies (History, Geography and French Language)
- 7 - Department of Mathematics
- 8 - Department of Physical Education
- 9 - Department of Physics
- 10 - Department of Psychology

The University College also encompasses the following programmes:

- 1 - training of classroom teachers (the B.Ed. programme)
- 2 - retraining of subject teachers (certificate courses)
- 3 - programme in Demographic and Statistical Studies
- 4 - postgraduate Diploma in Education
- 5 - M.Ed. in Science Education
- 6 - preparatory courses.

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The College of Gulf Polytechnic consists of the following:

- 1 - the orientation programme
- 2 - the English Language Unit
- 3 - Department of Business and Management
  - a - Commercial Studies Diploma programme
  - b - Accounting Diploma programme
  - c - Associate Business Diploma
  - d - Secretarial Studies
- 4 - Department of Engineering
  - a - Civil Engineering
  - b - Electrical Engineering
  - c - Computer Science
  - d - Chemical Engineering
  - e - Mathematics and Science
  - f - Mechanical Engineering
- 5 - Continuing Education
  - a - Clerical Level Certificate
  - b - Basic Supervision Diploma
  - c - Middle Management Diploma
  - d - Advanced Management Diploma
  - e - Executive Management Diploma
  - f - Specialized Workshops.

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The College of Health Sciences consists of the following Units:

- 1 - the English Department
- 2 - the Integrated Sciences Division
  - a - Department of General Sciences & Mathematics
  - b - Department of Life Sciences
  - c - Department of Social & Behavioural Sciences
- 3 - the Allied Health Programmes Division
  - a - Radiography Technician programme
  - b - Medical Equipment Maintenance Vocational Training programme
  - c - Medical Equipment Technician programme
  - d - Medical Laboratory Technician programme
  - e - Medical Secretary programme
  - f - Pharmacy Technician programme
  - g - Public Health Inspectors programme

- h - Sports Therapy Technician programme
- i - Health Care Administration
- 4 - the Nursing Division
  - a - High School Nursing stream programme
  - b - Maternal and Child Health Nursing programme
  - c - General Nursing programme
  - d - Nurse-Midwife programme
  - e - Psychiatric Nursing programme
  - f - B.Sc. Nursing programme
- 5 - the Educational Development & Learning Resource Centre
  - a - Teacher Training programme
  - b - Visual Aids Production and Use
  - c - Curriculum Planning and Evaluation
  - d - Continuing Education
  - e - Testing and Measurement

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The premedical programme at the Arabian Gulf University is a two-year programme aiming at teaching undergraduate medical students the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for their later studies at the College of Medicine and Medical Sciences. The curriculum includes basic knowledge of the natural sciences and social behavioural sciences with special emphasis on the study of the English language as a medium of information. The curriculum also includes a special emphasis on Islamic and Arabic culture and heritage.<sup>52</sup>

It is important to note that while the language of instruction at the University College is both Arabic and English, the teaching of Science, Mathematics and Technology at all colleges for higher education in Bahrain including AGU is conducted in the English language.

Except for the Arab Gulf University that requires a minimum of 80 percent average in the Tawjihia examination, the other colleges require a minimum of 70 percent. Further, the AGU adopts the following admission guidelines: 30% of the total admission for each programme is reserved for member states whose local universities do not offer the same programme. The remaining 70% is equally distributed among all member states including those from other Arab states on the condition that they do not exceed 5% of the total number of students in each programme. The AGU therefore caters for the top

5 percent of all graduates from the science and humanities streams.<sup>53</sup>

The academic year in all colleges is divided into two semesters, each extending over approximately 16 weeks. One credit is given for each hour of lecture per week or for each 2-3 hours of laboratory or studio work per week over a period of one semester. Normally a student is expected to spend two hours each week in study and preparation for each credit. Thus, on an average, a student enrolled for 16 credits in a semester is expected to spend at least 48 hours in class, study, and preparation per week.

The semester system is based on the course unit system which allows the students flexibility in that they can join the college at more than one point during the academic year. It also allows them to go beyond their departments in pursuit of courses. This system, which is characteristic of American higher education, has the advantages of both flexibility and adaptability that meet students' needs and interests, and allows for a better teacher-student ratio by controlling class size. For instance, the average class in the AGU is around 25 students with a staff-student ratio of 1:10.<sup>54</sup>

Final examinations are held at the end of each semester. In addition, the instructor devises a mechanism for continuous assessment of each student. The student is assigned a grade indicative of his/her overall performance in the course. The following grade points are used to record a student's achievement in courses:

- A - 4 grade points per credit - Excellent, superior academic achievements.
- B - 3 grade points per credit - Very good, commendable academic achievement exceeding all requirements.
- C - 2 grade points per credit - Average, satisfactory, meeting all requirements.
- D - 1 grade point per credit - Poor, passing, below average achievement.

F - 0 grade point per credit - Failing or withdrawal while doing failing work.

I - Incomplete.

A student's academic achievement is summarized by an index typically referred to as the "Grade Point-Average" (GPA). The grade point average is the quotient obtained by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of semester hours in which a student is enrolled.

For example:

<u>GPA</u>	<u>Sholastic Achievement</u>
From 3.5 to 4	excellent
From 2.5 to less than 3.5	very good
From 2 to less than 2.5	good
From 1.5 to less than 2	poor
Less than 1.5	failing

A student, therefore, must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in the undergraduate programme of study in order to graduate.<sup>55</sup>

The Academic Council is a leading organ in every college. It has the right to study, discuss, and make proposals on all academic matters connected with teaching or research, and any other administrative or financial matter which has a direct and close effect on academic functions. It consists of the Rector, Vice-Rector, Chairmen of Departments and Heads of Academic Units, one professor and one associate professor appointed by the Executive Committee on nomination by the Rector for a renewable period of two years.<sup>56</sup>

One may notice that the way the departments and units are organised makes possible a high degree of departmental autonomy and responsibility in terms of curricula and resources.

#### 5.5.2 Enrolment at Home Colleges

Because students in Bahrain are placed into different specialisations at the senior high level of the secondary schools, these

specialisations feed into appropriate institutions of higher education. Thus the College of Health Sciences basically receives graduates of the Health Sciences secondary stream. The Gulf Polytechnic gives first priority to graduates of the secondary Technical and Commercial schools who wish to specialise in Engineering or in Business Administration. The University College basically receives graduates of Science and Literature. And the Arab Gulf University caters for the top five percent of all graduates from the Science and Humanities streams.

Student enrolment in the five institutions for higher education existing on the Islands has been expanding gradually, as is shown in the following tables.

#### 5.2.2.1 Enrolment at the University College

TABLE 5.3

Enrolments at the University College of Arts,  
Sciences and Education - 1979/80 - 1986/87

Year	Males	Females	Total
1979/80	38	166	204
1980/81	42	246	288
1981/82	69	423	492
1982/83	202	633	835
1983/84	276	802	1078
1984/85	300	932	1232
1985/86	307	1035	1342
1986/87	345	1124	1469

Source : University College of Arts, Sciences and Education, The Graduates 1986/87, (in Arabic).

The table shows that the University College had an enrolment of 204 students in 1979/80; the number became 288 in 1980/81; 492 in 1981/82; 835 in 1982/83; 1078 in 1983/84; 1232 in 1984/85; and reached 1469 in 1986/87. The reason for this gradual increase is that since 1981/82 most of the undergraduate scholarships have been directed to home colleges. Further analysis of the same data shows that the growth of female enrolment was much higher than the male. It was 166 in 1979/80 and reached 1124 in 1986/87 compared with 38 male students in 1979/80 and 345 in 1986/87. This is because the majority of students enrolled at the University intended to be teachers; and Bahraini girls, in general, are more interested in teaching as a profession than are the boys - a tendency which was and is still common in the Arab world.

#### 5.5.2.2 Enrolment at Gulf Polytechnic

The enrolments of students at this college from 1968/69 to 1986/87 are shown in Table 5.4 (see p. 237).

The data in Table 5.4 shows that the number of Bahraini students interested in technical and business studies has been increasing. It was 18 in 1968/69 and became 200 in 1980/81 (in this year the name of this college was changed from Gulf Technical College to Gulf Polytechnic); and reached 2169 in 1986/87. More classified information about the present situation (1986) is given in Table 5.5 (see p. 238).

#### 5.5.2.3 Enrolment at the College of Health Sciences

Table 5.6 (see p. 239) shows the distribution of students at the College of Health Sciences in 1986/87.

The data in the table show that in 1986/87 there were 203 students studying for Associate Degree, 50 students in the programme of Practical Nursing, 57 in Post Basic, and 13 in Vocational Medical Equipment -

TABLE 5.4

Enrolment at the Gulf Polytechnic  
1968 to 1986/7

Fiscal Year	No. of Students
<u>1 - Gulf Technical College</u>	
1968/69	18
1969/70	72
1970/71	144
1971/72	200
1972/73	465
1973/74	506
1974/75	782
1975/76	944
1976/77	973
1977/78	872
1978/79	1000
1979/80	1180
<u>2 - Gulf Polytechnic</u>	
1980/81	2000
1981/82	2142
1982/83	1993
1983/84	1993
1984/85	2086
1985/86	1992
1986/87	2169

Source : State of Bahrain, Bahrain University, REgistrar's Office of Gulf Polytechnic, 1987.

TABLE 5.5

No. of Students at the Gulf Polytechnic by  
Nationality and Type of Study 1986/87

Department	Bahrainis	Gulf States	Arabs (Non Gulf)	Non-Arabs	Total
Engineering	1009	32	45	9	1095
Business	1028	19	21	6	1074
TOTAL	2037	51	66	15	2169

Source : State of Bahrain, Bahrain University, Registrar's Office of the Gulf Polytechnic, 1987.

making a total of 323 students of whom 60 percent were female.

#### 5.5.2.4 Enrolments at the Hotel and Catering Training Centre

Table 5.7 (see p. 240) shows the number of secondary school graduates, Bahraini and non-Bahraini, who benefited from the Centre from 1976/77 to 1986/87. The data show that though the Bahrainis constitute the highest number, it is small compared to enrolment at other colleges. It was 41 in 1976 and became 142 in 1986.

#### 5.5.2.5 Enrolment at the College of Medicine (AGU)

With regard to the enrolment at the College of Medicine in the Arab Gulf University, Table 5.8 (see p. 241) shows the number of students by sex, years, and countries since its establishment in 1982/83 to 1984/85. The data shows that despite the fact that the seven Gulf States have an equal quota of places for their nationals, some of these states had less students than their permitted quota. In 1982/83,

TABLE 5.6

No. of Students at the College of Health Sciences  
by Type of Study 1986/87

Programme	Total
<u>1 - Associate Degree</u>	
Nursing	100
Laboratory	19
Pharmacy	16
Public Health	9
Radiography	11
Dental Hygiene	10
Medical Secretary	18
Sport Therapy	6
Medical Equipment	14
<u>2 - Practical Nursing</u>	50
<u>3 - Post-Basic</u>	
Teacher Training	12
Bachelor Degree	12
Midwifery	6
Community	6
Health Care Admin.	21
<u>4 - Vocational Equipment</u>	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>323</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Health, Registrar & Student Affairs Office of the College of Health Sciences, 1987

TABLE 5.7

Enrolment at the Hotel and Catering Training Centre  
by Nationality and Sex (Secondary School Graduates)  
1976/77 to 1986/87

Nationality		1976 /77	1977 /78	1978 /79	1979 /80	1980 /81	1981 /82	1982 /83	1983 /84	1984 /85	1985 /86	1986 /87
Bahraini	M	9	24	38	20	10	6	10	67	86	97	78
	F	25	42	35	26	21	15	13	39	54	51	42
Saudi	M	4	7	2	7	3	5	7	18	23	24	13
Omani	M	2	5	4	3	3	1	-	-	1	2	3
	F	-	-	-	-	3	1	3	6	-	-	2
Qatari	M	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kuwaiti	M	-	-	-	-	28	4	2	10	5	4	1
	F	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	6	-	-
U.A.E.	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Others		-	-	-	-	-	1	1	4	13	9	3
TOTAL		41	78	79	57	70	35	36	144	192	187	142

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Information, The Hotel and Training Centre, 1987.

Table 5.7(A) gives more details about the enrolment in 1986/87.

TABLE 5.7(A)

Enrolment at the Centre

Nationality		Secondary Graduates	Intermediate	Special Students
Bahraini	M	78	81	20
	F	42	19	5
Non- Bahraini	M	19	-	-
	F	3	-	-
TOTAL		142	100	25 = 267

Source : Ministry of Information, The Hotel & Catering Training Centre.

TABLE 5.8

Enrolment in the Arabian Gulf University  
College of Medicine

Name of State	No. Male Students	No. Female Students	Total
<u>1 - 1982/83 (First Group)</u>			
United Arab Emirates	-	6	6
Bahrain	4	6	10
Kuwait	-	3	3
Saudi Arabia	1	1	2
Iraq	-	-	-
Sultanate Oman	7	1	8
Qatar	4	1	5
Other Arab States	2	1	3
TOTAL	18	19	37
<u>2 - 1982/84 (Second Group)</u>			
United Arab Emirates	1	7	8
Bahrain	5	6	11
Kuwait	-	3	3
Saudi Arabia	-	3	3
Iraq	-	-	-
Oman	4	5	9
Qatar	1	6	7
Other Arab States	-	2	2
TOTAL	11	32	43
<u>3 - 1984/85 (Third Group)</u>			
United Arab Emirates	1	7	8
Bahrain	4	5	9
Kuwait	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	1	1	2
Iraq	3	-	3
Oman	2	6	8
Qatar	1	1	2
Other Arab Countries	1	1	2
TOTAL	13	22	35

Source : Bulletin of the Arabian Gulf University Academic Year, 1985/86. pp. 26-27, (in Arabic).

for example, there were 10 premedical students from Bahrain compared with 3 from Kuwait and 2 from Saudi Arabia. Table 5.9 (see p. 243) shows that by 1986/87 there had been 33 students from UAE, 49 from Bahrain, 14 from Kuwait, 17 from Saudi Arabia, 36 from Oman, 27 from Qatar, 4 from Iraq, 1 from Egypt, 1 from Syria, 5 from Palestine and 1 from Sudan. This could be explained partly by the fact that some of these states already have medical schools at their home universities as in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait; and partly because the AGU will only accept students with the highest grades. Bahraini students enrolled at this College, for instance, had Tawjihia averages varying between 95 and 98 out of 100. The data in Table 5.9 also shows that by 1987 there had been 188 students taking medical studies in AGU.

However Bahraini officials have definite views about Bahraini students and their attitudes towards medicine and technology, as seen in the following statement by the Minister of Education:

"If we open the door wide giving full freedom of choice for Bahraini students, none of them would show interest in any specialisations except Engineering and Medicine. Imagine we have only nine places in the College of Medicine at the Arabian Gulf University; and we received 240 applications." 57

Perhaps this could also explain the low rate of enrolment, all through the years, at the Catering and Hotel Centre from 1976 to 1981 from five Gulf states: Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait as shown in Table 5.7. The data show one important feature - the number of enrolments from Bahrain and the other Gulf states for this kind of study is relatively small. This disapprobation of manual work is common not only in the Gulf but also in the Arab world at large. However by 1986/87 there had been 267 students at the Hotel & Catering Training Centre of whom 246 were Bahrainis and 22 were non-Bahrainis - as shown in Table 5.7(A). (see page 240)

Concerning post-school education, the Bahrain Minister of Education

TABLE 5.9

No. of Students in the AGU College of Medicine 1986/87

Year		U.A.E.	Bah- rain	Kuwait	Saudi Arabia	Oman	Qatar	Iraq	Egypt	Syria	Palest- ine	Sudan
5	M	-	4	-	1	7	4	2	-	1	-	1
	F	6	6	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-
4	M	1	5	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
	F	6	6	2	3	6	4	-	-	-	2	-
3	M	1	4	-	1	2	1	2	-	-	1	-
	F	6	5	-	1	5	1	-	-	-	1	-
2	M	2	5	2	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
	F	6	6	2	-	9	7	-	-	-	-	-
1	M	3	4	2	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F	2	5	3	-	1	7	-	1	-	-	-
T o t a l	M	7	22	4	12	14	7	4	-	1	1	1
	F	26	27	10	5	22	20	-	1	-	4	-
TOTAL		33	49	14	17	36	27	4	1	1	5	1

Source : State of Bahrain, Arabian Gulf University, College of Medicine (from the Office of the Dean), 1987.

observed in 1985:

"I would like to explain that out of a total of secondary school leavers of 3,233 about 35 to 42 percent will attend courses offered by academic institutions on the Islands. I think that this is a high percentage compared with European countries, where the number of students joining university education is around 20% and in India the proportion is around 5%. And in a vast country like the United States, where there are hundreds of universities only 50% of high school leavers are admitted to colleges. We, with our limited area and resources, our local colleges, namely the Bahrain University College, Gulf Polytechnic, College of Health Sciences, Catering Centre, College of Medicine, in addition to the Ministry's scholarships as well as grants offered by neighbouring states and certain business firms, can provide places for 45% of school leavers.

I am of the opinion that education must be of a high standard or should not be at all. Should we continue to send our students to overseas universities, this would be an affront to our local colleges which have a high educational standard that is far better than that of other Arab universities, which I would prefer not to mention by name. Meanwhile, I would like to say that our universities are undergoing development in spite of the scarcity of the support given to them and the high costs they have to incur."

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The last two decades witnessed a proliferation of universities all over the Arab world. Enrolment figures in higher education institutions increased from 163,000 in 1960, to 441,000 in 1970, to over 1.3 million in 1980. Following the same trends of growth, enrolments at this level are expected to reach 2.9 million in 1990 and to exceed the 6 million figure by the turn of the century.<sup>59</sup> It is expected, therefore, that the Arab world will need 540 universities by the year 2000 to cater for 10% of the university age group at that time.

#### 5.6 Teacher Training at University Level

It is reasonable to assume that part of the success of the implementation of the curriculum reform movement in Bahraini education during the 1980s, through the class-teacher approach at the primary level,

and in curricula diversification at the secondary level has depended to a large extent on the education and the training of its personnel.

This is not to say that before the 1980s there were no programmes in Bahraini education for training the teachers. Indeed there were as has been observed earlier. But each wave of reform brought with it more new curriculum documents, texts, resource books and media which in turn necessitated a change in pedagogy and teaching methods.

Over the years, teacher training in Bahrain has undergone several changes in its development, as seen in the following.

1 - The first programme for training teachers in Bahrain dates back to the 1950s. Teacher training was then a special branch of secondary education carried out in the same school.

2 - In the late 1960s it became a self-contained post-secondary course of two years' duration carried out in the two Teachers' Training Colleges - for men in 1966 and for women in 1967. Since their establishment and for almost 12 years, the Colleges have supplied the country with an increasing number of Bahraini teachers.

However, to enhance the quality of teaching, particularly for secondary level, both Teacher Training Colleges were amalgamated and up-graded in 1979 to form one new co-educational University College for Arts, Science and Education.

At present the University College has an education department comprising sections for curricula, for class teachers and subject teacher training, and for Educational Technology. Since its establishment in 1979, the University College has offered programmes that enable its students to obtain either a B.A. which qualifies them to teach literary subjects, or a B.Sc. which qualifies them to teach scientific subjects through their joint majors. Examples are Arabic Language and Islamic Studies + Education, English Language + Education,

Mathematics + Education, Physics + Education, Chemistry + Education, Biology + Education, Physical Education + Education, Social Sciences + Education, and so on.

During the past five years many teachers who were qualified only through having completed secondary education have been required to up-grade their qualifications through full-time study. Other teachers and principals who were qualified through two years from the Teacher Training Colleges have been required to pursue B.A. level degrees full-time. This continuing education through full-time study has been encouraged by a salary structure which is geared to years of education and training.

Currently, teachers in primary schools are required to possess a minimum of a first degree plus professional training in child education to become class teachers. The great majority of in-service primary teachers are required to pursue the B.Ed. degree, which usually takes four to five years to attain at the University College.

The College offers a programme leading to the B.Ed. degree for both the in-service and pre-service training of classroom teachers at the primary level. Teaching is mainly, though not exclusively, in Arabic. The students are expected to acquire a proficiency in English sufficient to read source and reference materials in English. The B.Ed. class teacher programme focuses on the first three grades of primary school. The sub-components of this programme in order of emphasis are: curricula and instruction courses both in primary education in general and in most of the core subjects of the primary school curricula; courses in educational philosophy, sociology, psychology (learning and instruction) and the educational system of the country; background courses in those aspects of the academic disciplines that are covered in the primary school curricula (these

are taught with an emphasis on pedagogical understanding by Faculty of Education personnel). Other related academic courses are available in the form of electives.

Students undertake some form of teaching practice in each of four years of study, supervised jointly by co-operating teachers and Faculty personnel. This might commence with one day a week observation and practice in the first year, continue into several blocks of teaching in various methods, and ending with one semester full-time internship in the final year. Progress in attaining teaching skills is carefully monitored throughout.

The University also offers special programmes for in-service re-training of subject teachers of upper primary, intermediate or lower secondary schools who are holders of a Bachelor's degree in particular subjects but are at present teaching a different subject. Candidates for the classroom teachers programme and the subject teachers programme must (1) be sponsored by the Ministry of Education, and (2) satisfy the admission criteria of the University College.<sup>60</sup>

In addition, the University College offers Postgraduate Diploma in Education and an M.Ed. in Science Education. The Postgraduate Diploma (PGDE) is a one-year programme offered to holders of B.A., B.Sc., or an equivalent degree from a recognised university. The programme is designed primarily for in-service training of secondary school teachers to help them acquire the necessary experience and skills for their careers. Admission to PGDE is open to a limited number of Bahrainis with preference given to the following specializations: Arabic, Islamic Studies, English, Biology, Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics.

The M.Ed. in Science Education is a one-year full-time or two-year part-time programme of study, with special emphasis on Biology or

Chemistry or Physics Education. However, a student is expected to register for a further period of one year for the preparation and submission of a dissertation, preferably on a topic of direct relevance to the teaching of sciences in schools of the Gulf. An applicant to the programme is most commonly a secondary school or tertiary level teacher, or an employee of the Ministry of Education. However this programme is open to all nationals of the Gulf.<sup>61</sup>

To achieve these goals the Department of Education at the University College offers the following courses.

- First Year Courses

- (1) Introduction to Education, (2) The School and Social Change, (3) Educational Foundations, (4) Primary School Curriculum, (5) Library and Study Skill.

- Second Year Courses

- (1) Introduction to Comparative Education, (2) Contemporary Educational Problems in the Arab World, (3) Foundations of Education, (4) Methods of Teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies, (5) Teaching Strategies, (6) Methods of Teaching Mathematics, (7) Methods of Teaching Science, (8) School Practice I, (9) Classroom Management.

- Third Year Courses

- (1) Population and Environmental Education, (2) Development of Education in Bahrain, (3) Islamic Educational Thought, (4) Children's Literature, (5) Economics of Education, (6) Crucial Issues in Primary Education, (7) Methods of Teaching II, (8) Teaching Practice.

- Fourth Year Courses

- (1) School Practice, (2) Curriculum Development, (3) Workshop in Development of Curriculum Resource Materials, (4) Development of Educational Thought, (5) Innovations in Education, (6) New Trends in Secondary Education, (7) Educational Administration, (8) Educational Planning, (9) Seminar in Methodology of Educational Research.

- Fifth Year Courses

- (1) Educational Technology, (2) Methods of Teaching I, (3) Methods of Teaching II, (4) Educational Evaluation, (5) Observation and Teaching Practice in Secondary Schools, (6) Curriculum Development. 62

With these courses offered in Education, it is possible for a student to acquire mastery of a subject and simultaneously to obtain a teaching qualification.

By Statute No. "3" concerning "The Academic Organization". the College may appoint Bahraini citizens who hold a first degree from a recognized university, with a grade not normally below the level of "very good", in posts of "Graduate Assistants" or "Research Assistants" with the primary aim of preparing them to qualify for appointment as assistant professors, in addition to assisting in instruction or research. Such appointments are, however, temporary for a period of two years and are renewable for further periods, as long as the academic assistant is progressing satisfactorily in his/her studies.

- The title of "Assistant Professor" is awarded to teachers holding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) or an equivalent qualification. They teach fifteen hours a week.

- The title of "Associate Professor" is awarded to those who have spent at least five years of university teaching or scientific research since obtaining their Ph.D. degree. They are required to teach twelve hours a week.

- "Professor" : this title is awarded to teachers who have spent at least five years at the rank of associate professor. Their position is the highest in the hierarchy. They spend ten or less hours a week teaching.

- "Instructor" : this title is awarded to teachers with a Masters Degree or its equivalent at grades which are not normally less than the level of "very good", with the objective of preparing them for obtaining the qualifications for appointment to the rank of assistant professor. They teach 15 hours a week.<sup>63</sup>

One may notice that a chairman of a department has half the nominal load of teaching. He/she is appointed from among the professors, associate professors or assistant professors by the Rector after consultation with members of the department for a period of one year

renewable for a maximum of four consecutive periods.

Teacher training in Bahrain has, over the years, undergone several changes and reforms in its development. These reforms have had, in recent years, a great impact on the position of teachers at all levels of education - as the following section will show.

### 5.7 Status of Teachers

Teachers are generally accorded considerable esteem in the Arab world. Children are socialized in the family to respect and accept the authority of the teacher, especially children in the rural areas. Students are expected to learn from the teacher not only the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also age-old moral and spiritual values. Teachers provide models of behaviour to be emulated by the young. In countries where independence was achieved recently, teachers are expected to instill students with a sense of national identity and shape their political orientations in such a way as to be consistent with the policies of the Government.<sup>64</sup>

Observation shows that the most important role is to mediate learning and inculcate a respect for authority. While teachers considered their ideal role to be one of providing social mobility, a parent surrogate, an example of professional responsibility, and a confidant, in actual practice they operated as authoritarian leaders committed to the preservation of social continuity and stability.<sup>65</sup>

However, in Bahrain, with the reforms which have been introduced into the system since 1982, the teacher aspires to move away from a somewhat specialized role performance to a more diffuse type, a role that characterizes teachers in the West.

The extent to which teachers' roles have changed in Bahrain under the impact of recent innovative practices is not yet known. However,

observation suggests that with the implementation of 'automatic promotion' and the 'banishment of punishment', reported incidents of lack of respect for teachers among some secondary students, and in particular among the boys, are not uncommon. Teachers are especially upset about the 'ease of passing exams' which, in their opinion, have influenced students rather negatively - because during the past few years, with the implementation of the reforms, some students have become irritable, disobedient and rude.

For some this change in the teachers' status has its roots in the modernization of Bahraini education. However Bahraini officials have different views on this matter. In an interview in July 1986 concerning some issues related to new developments, the Minister of Education explained:

1 - "When one talks about 'modern educational methods', one has to be cautious. It embodied the use of the findings of substantial research work in the fields of psychology, sociology and education, and the adaptation of such results and conclusions to the school situation. Modern education in a given community means the most up-to-date teaching methods of that community. What is fit for New York might not be suitable for Bahrain, since it is the cultural, economic, psychological and political conditions that determine the kind of education needed. We will adopt modern educational systems when we have more educational research. So far we are remote from achieving this goal, not only in Bahrain but also all over the Arab world."

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2 - Regarding "Student-teacher" relationship, he said:

"Those who have been giving us credit for something that we do not have must have been confusing modern educational systems with all their complexities and a number of decisions intended to give more facilities to students and to ban the use of corporal punishment. I can not personally imagine that a qualified and balanced teacher with a good background in psychology, sociology and education will ever fail in establishing a good relationship with his/her students, except in very unusual circumstances."

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3 - Regarding "home-school" relationship and its influence on behaviour at school, he said:

"Things in school are not much different from what they are

at home. So long as parents are willing to establish good relations with their children, the results in school are expected to be satisfactory. And the opposite is true - when parents lack the ability to raise their children in a proper manner, we cannot play the role of the parents, police, and other members of the community." 68

3 - Concerning violent programmes in the media and their effects on children, he explained:

"We in schools are willing to undertake our share of the responsibility, however the major task is on the functioning of the media; and this issue is much larger than the combined efforts of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information, or even the whole of Bahrain. Let us assume that Bahrain Television ceases to broadcast violent and harmful programmes and only offers cultural programmes, viewers will simply tune in other T.V. channels without feeling an obligation to watch Bahrain Television." 69

4 - Regarding "Automatic promotion", the Minister asserted:

"This system gives the teacher the right to give the student 30% of the total marks through daily assessment and evaluation. There is no doubt that when the student feels that 30% of his/her marks are governed by the teacher's assessment he/she will be very keen on establishing a proper relationship with his/her teacher as far as possible. For your information, in the year 1982 the success rate in our primary schools was not more than 84%, which is very low compared with similar levels in more advanced countries." 70

Throughout most of this period of educational planning, with its preoccupation with educational policy, curriculum diversification, pre-service education and in-service training, the practical life of teachers and children has been largely ignored: and yet it has continued. Teachers for the most part have pursued the very practical ~~eclectic~~-situational way of working using whatever was appropriate to their contexts and teaching styles. The way teachers teach in classrooms has apparently been mostly impervious to the changing policies and documents that have been swirling around in the educational superstructure. The wider problems of educational change, therefore, have recently preoccupied researchers, Ministry officials, parents, and curriculum consultants. Having tried many ways of facilitating

change and implementing their ideals, they are now beginning to focus on the practical realities for those who teach and those who learn.

One may deduce from the above interview that the quality of the teachers and their qualifications are a prerequisite to resolving most problems. In brief, emphasis must be placed on the personality, the maturity and the behaviour of the teacher. This is because with inefficient teachers and undisciplined students there will always be the possibility of having a student-teacher relationship which does not promote learning. It is recommended, therefore, that (1) the policy of qualifying and training of school personnel should be vigorously pursued; (2) the school and the teacher should have the right to handle most of the issues concerning students' affairs; (3) at the same time, there should be laws, rules, and guidelines to prevent misunderstanding by the parties involved - the school, the students, and their parents. For this reason the publication of a booklet containing the school regulations, and setting forth the rights and duties of all parties involved is necessary. Such guidelines should be distributed at the beginning of every school year and in particular after introductory changes and reforms into the system.

The inadequacy of the teachers in the past was mainly due to two factors. First, the majority of them did not have a solid background in the techniques and methodologies of teaching; and second, some of the teachers recruited from abroad to teach in the secondary schools did not fulfil their mission properly. And though Bahrainization has been achieved at the primary level, Bahrain still depends significantly on foreigners, especially in the scientific disciplines at both the secondary and the university levels.

To conclude this section on "The Teacher", one may point out

that the fastest growing body of knowledge in education at the present time is that which attempts to understand teaching realities. This knowledge makes explicit the teacher's position as an important arbiter of educational development, who given the right support and conditions, may bring ideals and realities together.

## 5.8 Conclusion

Throughout the previous sections an attempt has been made to give a picture of post-school education in Bahrain past and present. It remains to identify and analyze some problems that have emerged as higher education in the country has evolved and reached its present state of development.

### 5.8.1 Favourable Factors, Difficulties, Results

Higher education in Bahrain, compared with that in the Gulf in general, is unique in character. It grew up slowly, out of utilitarian need and was not created suddenly as in the case of Kuwait, Qatar and U.A.E.; or by the missionaries as in the case of Lebanon. It has evolved in a natural way with the evolution of the economy, the spread of general education and the expansion of post-secondary schools. The Ministry of Education needed qualified teachers; the Ministry of Industry required professionals, administrators and accountants; the Ministry of Health needed medical science technicians; and the Ministry of Development, being responsible for aviation, needed qualified chefs and caterers to prepare thousands of meals a day, hence the various colleges and training centre that grew up over the last twenty years.

What is noteworthy is that the evolution of higher education in Bahrain was accompanied by positive attitudes towards social change.

Because (1) parents accepted sending their daughters unaccompanied to foreign universities - then the only means of higher education, and (2) the Government authorities have encouraged co-education at home colleges, the stability and the spread of higher education on the Islands has been greatly enhanced.

Higher education in Bahrain compared with most universities in the neighbouring Gulf states is unique because it is (1) co-educational, (2) fee-paying, and (3) strongly geared to the needs of the country. However, tuition fees at home colleges are modest compared with the total costs of each student. In addition students who cannot afford the fees are exempted from payment; and the best students are granted scholarships. To put it another way, the development of higher education in Bahrain has been different from that in the other Gulf states because of economic limitation - hence duplication, wastage, and extravagance were avoided.

The discussion shows that higher education in Bahrain has been faced with many problems such as (1) the lack of funds, (2) the lack of qualified teachers, (3) the Bahrainization of the staff, which was not an easy task for the Ministry of Education, since it was a long term process, (4) the necessity to improve the qualitative level of teachers, and (5) the urgent need to increase the number of students in vocational training to meet the increasing demands of the country.

The Bahraini policy for qualifying and retraining the teaching staff is set out by the Minister of Education in the following statement:

"Three years ago, in 1982, we started the Bachelor Degree programme for the primary level school teacher. We sent waves of teachers who had graduated from universities in different specialisations to obtain a higher diploma in education. We also sent numbers of teachers to obtain their Masters and Ph.D.s in different educational specialisations. Shortly, we shall have a national teaching staff adequate to our needs."

The Bahraini approach to the problem of over-enrolment at university level is illustrated in the following interview.

Question : "You have already stated that higher education will absorb only 40% of secondary school leavers, so where will the remaining 60% go amidst harsh economic conditions?"

Answer : "I do not believe that Bahrain can fail to absorb the 1,600 secondary school graduates while the Island employs 85,000 expatriates in various jobs."

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In addition to these problems, one may observe many others encountered in the development of higher education at home colleges.

First, there is very little uniformity of standards among institutions of higher education in Bahrain and those in other parts of the Arab world. This had led to varying degrees of skill levels among graduates, creating obstacles for them in the labour market, as well as in subsequent postgraduate study. And though the declared aim of all the Arab countries is a much greater degree of Arab-Islamic unity, one would expect that higher education might have been a good place to initiate such unity and that the proliferation of separate national universities represent, in some sense, a missed opportunity.

Secondly, higher education in Bahrain developed slowly over the years to meet the basic needs of society: teachers, technicians, nurses, doctors, etc. It grew, therefore, separately by different organizations and through different Ministries. For a small place like Bahrain it led to wastage - the duplication of programmes and courses resulting from the existence of separate semi autonomous colleges. An example is the teacher-training programme which is practised in three colleges - in the University College, in the College of Health Sciences and in the Polytechnic.

Given the critical shortages of well-trained staff, it is recommended that the present programme of study provided at the University College must include training of technical and commercial personnel

as well as that of class teachers. The four-year course of training could be fully utilized by both the Gulf Polytechnic and the College of Health Sciences for the training of their teachers. Such co-operation would allow these Colleges to specialize and excel in certain offerings at the undergraduate level rather than offer a full programme in all areas at a mediocre level.

A third problem is highly centralized administrative apparatus that ultimately placed the control of the institution in the hands of the Government. And although some colleges have been established by Amiri Decree as an autonomous authority, higher education, being dependent on Government grants and forced by tradition to follow civil service regulations, does not enjoy much freedom to conduct its own affairs. This problem could be solved by the following.

First - High council of education for all the colleges is necessary because Bahrain is too small to have a separate Ministry for Higher Education. This council would be responsible for the allocation of resources, co-ordination of curricula and would, therefore, eliminate duplication.

Second - Control of each college should be less in the hands of its rector and more in the hands of its staff and student representatives; thus allowing for more faculty and student participation in matters that affect them directly. However this should be done without destroying the traditional lines of authority that exist in the Bahraini society.

Third - Further, the classroom climate must be liberalized so that there is more student participation in classroom activities without, however, jeopardizing the role of the instructor.

Fourth - Observation shows that because of the lack of proficiency in the English language, and because most subjects at university level are taught in English, especially science, mathematics, engineering,

medicine, business, health sciences, and catering, the majority of secondary school graduates have to spend at least one full academic year on an orientation programme, to improve their command of this language, before they can be channelled to a particular track or discipline.

Unfortunately the process of Arabization has not been without difficulties. The Arabization of technical and scientific subjects is being retarded by the difficulties of translation. As a result scientific research in most universities remains at a modest standard. Unfortunately Arab governments and companies, instead of supporting their own national universities and research centres morally and financially by encouraging them to solve this problem, have continued to turn to foreigners to obtain the needed expertise in science and technology. Over the years this policy has cost the Arabs millions of dollars. Had this amount of money been spent on research centres and on institutes of higher education already existing in the Arab world to promote scientific research, to boost creative writing, to improve translation, to provide one common modern Arabic, to publish high-level specialized scientific magazines and periodicals, and so on, there would have been more substantial progress in scientific research and in developing and simplifying the Arabic language. In addition to close and joint co-operation among all the countries to solve the problem of Arabization, it is also of great importance that Arabization and translation efforts should be accelerated and strengthened concurrently with the strengthening of foreign language teaching. In 1985, Dr. Ali Fakhro observed:

While science and technology saw rapid changes, growth in this area was of a limited nature in our countries. This requires sources to collect and classify data in science and technology for any country at its various developing stages. The existence of such sources in the national language is a vital concern for all the institutions whether public or private which are implementing the scientific and technological revolution. The experience of Japan in this field has to be mentioned. Studies conducted by Americans

searching for the secrets of the development and progress of the Japanese showed that the Japanese, immediately after World War II, began to make funds available to build a scientific and technological base to supply economic institutions with whatever knowledge was required. The Japanese insisted right from the beginning that the language used must be the national language in order to facilitate its use by all those who were concerned in economic fields.

If the Japanese did that in the 1940s and 1950s depending on the limited ways and means then available to collect, store, and classify, the Arabs today have a better opportunity with more advanced tools to achieve Arabization which could be achieved through regional co-operation.

I firmly believe that in the Arab world there will be no progress in any science unless it is tied with the national language. Arabic today is the language of almost 185 million people - but this could be achieved only through unity and co-operation of all the Arab world despite the political differences.

Let us take another example: Malaysia has rulers. They met and decided amongst themselves that the local government would remain and what is common should be shared at a federal level. This has happened in Malaysia and Malaysia today is a stable, powerful union.

We in the Arab world are not yet able to reach this stage of unity and I say that with great regret."

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Finally, another problem to be considered is the lack of libraries adequate for the needs of research. This lack of well-equipped libraries has resulted in one characteristic of Baharini students which is that they rely on the teacher all the time. The teacher is considered as the sole source of knowledge by the students. This has had a deleterious effect on the students. It kills their sense of research and the inclination for further studies. As a remedy for this situation, more funds should be allocated for the equipment of libraries in all subjects taught in Bahraini higher education.

Before leaving this topic, it is worth mentioning that the problems which have been discussed are not the only ones that higher education at Bahraini colleges is facing. There are others which are beyond the scope of this thesis. One may notice that most of the problems that have been considered are either related to or currently facing higher education in all the Arab world.

### 5.8.2 Unrealistic Expectations

In the light of the foregoing portrait of the 'Teacher', it is surprising that any change at all occurs, except perhaps that which eases the teacher's burden.

The major problem with the pedagogical changes implicit in the curriculum reform movement was that for the most part they required a major revision in what a teacher did and also of their basic philosophy of education.

The second problem was that there were few positive incentives for a teacher to make these changes - no time off for retraining or preparation, no merit pay or other such rewards. In fact, mostly disincentives were associated with attempting change - more work, the risk of failure, and criticisms, abandoning a preferred style of teaching.

Thirdly, concerning the projects for new curricula there was a persistent notion of near instant or automatic implementation of the curriculum product.

Fourthly, the conscientious primary school teachers, who were teaching many subjects, in attempting to do what was expected of them were grappling with too many new curricula at one time in an attempt to satisfy different subject consultants vying for the teacher's attention. They were suffering from innovation overload.

Some suggested solutions for these problems are as follows:

- 1 - In the absence of incentives, and to minimize alienation, it would seem useful to base the new curricula on teachers identified problems and needs. Furthermore, while providing a broad and detailed curriculum outline, the teacher should be allowed to adapt and elaborate it to suit his/her particular teaching style and situation.
- 2 - One should work with teachers on a school basis to implement and adapt curricula in a gradual step-by-step way over a period of time,

at a pace that teachers and children can handle.

3 - The focus should be on implementing only one new curriculum each year, as opposed to many.

4 - Instructional materials should be provided that embody any required integration; for example, science and language may be integrated successfully within the same text or resource book. This approach also permits science, which is somewhat avoided by teachers, to piggy-back on language arts which teachers emphasize.

And finally the in-service approach, which focuses on skills will help in the implementation of new reforms and in providing solutions to some problems related to teacher-student relationships.

To conclude, one can say that higher education in Bahrain and in particular teacher training has gone through a difficult period in its history. However, because of economic limitations, without the reforms which have been introduced into the educational system, higher education would have never succeeded at home colleges.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### PRIVATE EDUCATION

After the discussion of the different levels of education provided by the State, through which the Bahraini students passes, and the different types of education available at home colleges for higher education, it is appropriate to consider private education. This is because (1) the pre-primary level of education in the country is organised and run wholly by the private sector and (2) a large number of Bahraini children are enrolled in private schools available on the Islands.

It is significant to note that the current organization of private educational establishments in Bahrain reflects the historical, economic, social and cultural life of the people in the country. Since ancient times, Bahrain has always been a link between the Indus Valley civilization on the Indian Ocean and the civilization of Ur in Mesopotamia. Today, as in the past, the strategic location of the Islands has made Bahrain a vital centre for sea and air traffic as well as a trading centre. As a result Bahrain has become a home for many different peoples.

The human interaction resulting from commercial, social and political movements has generated a local policy of tolerance and understanding which has lead to the development of life and at the fore-front of these is education.

A modern school was established in Bahrain at the beginning of this century. What is interesting is that it started as a private school initiated by the people, specifically by the merchants of the town. But long before 1919 private schools run by the local people and others run by foreign groups were in co-existence.

The first western-style schools in Bahrain were founded by the

Arabian Mission. The school began its operation on the Islands in 1892, and was adopted by the Reformed Church in America in 1894.<sup>1</sup>

Gradually through the years, as population and towns grew, increasing attention was paid to satisfying the educational needs of various communities. Thus a one-room private school in 1894 has become multi-room schools where classes can be divided according to grade and where in some private schools modern education is provided to cover all stages from kindergarten to the end of secondary education.

In 1983 it was reported that for every ten pupils in the state schools there was one pupil in a private school.<sup>2</sup> Today a whole range of expatriate schools has sprung up, varying from those of mixed nationality such as the International American Bahrain School to those designed for particular groups such as the French School, the German School, the Japanese School, and most recently a Korean School.

By 1986 there were 112 national and foreign private educational establishments - of which 26 were private schools, 66 were nurseries and kindergartens, and 20 were international establishments such as the British Council, the Polyglot School, Aliance Français and so on.<sup>3</sup>

#### 6.1 Definition of Private Education Establishments

A private education establishment in Bahrain, according to the Bahraini Law of Private Education, means:

- 1 - A non-government educational establishment, i.e. an institution, a school, an educational centre or a kindergarten, established and conducted by Bahrain or non-Bahraini citizens.
- 2 - Nursery establishments admitting children who are not above the age of 3 years.
- 3 - A foreign educational establishment, i.e. an institution, a school or an educational centre or maintained by a foreign organization existing in Bahrain.

It should be noted that educational establishments founded by

commercial or industrial organizations exclusively for their employees for the purpose of giving such employees such instruction as is necessary for their technical or industrial training are outside the scope of this study. The chapter will discuss (1) pre-primary education offered by members of women's societies, and (2) education offered in the private schools at any stage from kindergarten to secondary.

## 6.2 Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education in Bahrain at no time was viewed as a luxury. It has always been seen as a necessary public provision to meet the demands of working mothers with children under six.

### 6.2.1 Historical Background

The first public statement concerning the establishment of a school for children of pre statutory age dates from 1943 when a primary school was founded by the Department of Education. But in those years, the stages of education were not clearly defined, and children of a wide age range attended the same school. Afterwards, between 1946 and 1948, the three-year kindergarten was reduced to a two-year infant stage called 'Al-Tahdiria'.<sup>5</sup> However, in 1960, due to cut-backs in expenditure, the Bahrain Government handed over responsibility for pre-primary education to the private sector.

So strong is the interest of Bahraini women in pre-school education that since 1961, several members of women's societies and many retired Bahraini teachers who had long experience in dealing with the young, have been establishing their own nurseries and kindergartens.

The first private nursery in Bahrain dates back to 1955 when an Egyptian lady founded a nursery in Manama for children from birth to 3 years old. It was then called 'Dar Al-Hanan'.<sup>6</sup>

The 1981 census shows that many Bahraini women joined the labour force in the 1970s. Today with even more married women working, the children are looked after at the pre-school institutions. As a result more societies are organized and consequently more nurseries and kindergartens are established.

#### 6.2.2 Current Organization

Currently nurseries and kindergartens in Bahrain are run and financed by the private organization or by individuals - Bahraini and non-Bahraini, and therefore they are fee paying. They are outside the direct control of the Government although there is a directorate at the Ministry of Education responsible for the supervision of private education. The Ministry of Education only involves itself indirectly through, for example, supervision of curriculum materials, and methods of teaching. However in financial matters and financial aid, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for both the nurseries and the kindergartens.

An important role which the nursery plays is that women do not need to give up work when their children are very young. And kindergartens are important for the development of children in that they provide them with valuable guidance and encourage them to work intelligently. In addition, children are taught the rudiments of reading and writing at an early age, in contrast to the state schools where education is provided only from six. Moreover, the drawing, singing, painting and play are very important in developing the child's personality; they stimulate his/her mind and imagination. In addition they prepare the child for more complicated subjects at the primary school.

Like all private establishments on the Islands, pre-school education acquired an autonomous administrative structure with the establishment

of the Private Education Inspectorate office in the Ministry of Education in 1961. In most kindergartens, the class teacher system is implemented where each teacher is responsible for a specific group of children, subdivided into several smaller groups according to age. The teacher supervises each child for the whole time at school. In addition each teacher has one or more assistants whenever possible.

Parents of children at nurseries and kindergartens are expected to pay fees. These fees vary from one establishment to another. In 1986, for instance, the Society for Mother and Child Care charged B.D.22 per child per month, while Al-Majid Kindergarten charged B.D. 200 per child per term.<sup>7</sup> Such variation is due to the fact that some establishments offer more facilities than others, such as meals, longer stay and so on.

Table 6.1 (see p. 271) shows that the increase in number of pre school children enrolling in nurseries and kindergartens was gradual. This is partly because not all the towns in Bahrain have pre-schooling facilities; and partly because non-working mothers prefer to look after their children themselves. In 1977, for example, the number of children who attended pre-school education was 2,403, it grew to 3,730 in 1980, to 5,053 in 1982, to 6,731 in 1984, and reached 7,608 in 1985/86. It is significant that 90 percent of the total enrolment were Bahrainis.

Regarding the qualification of the teachers, a survey conducted in 1980 by the High Council of Youth and Sports showed that 87.5% of pre-school teachers had secondary education, 6.9% had intermediate; 4.2% had university degrees; and 1.4% had only primary education. Almost 34.7% of the kindergarten staff had not received any training in child care while 55.6% had received a short training of 15-30 days in the methods of educating young children.<sup>8</sup>

The survey also showed that even when teachers of kindergarten

TABLE 6.1

Children Enrolled in Pre-Primary Schools  
1977/78 to 1985/86

School Year	Male	Female	Total
1977/78	1239	1164	2403
1978/79	1353	1268	2621
1979/80	1549	1382	2931
1980/81	1962	1768	3730
1981/82	2313	2086	4399
1982/83	2636	2417	5053
1983/84	2699	2516	5317
1984/85	3576	3155	6731
1983/84	4009	3599	7608

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain from 1977/78 to 1985/86.

had the same qualification and training as other teachers, they did not receive the same salary. The differences were a reflection of the prosperity of the organization or society providing the school.

In addition, teachers in pre-schools are not eligible for the retirement pension received by employees in the state schools. As a result the majority of them seize the first opportunity to leave their jobs as pre-primary teachers for better ones in the state schools.<sup>9</sup>

Relegating complete responsibility for pre-school education to the private sector had its disadvantages. One was that many buildings that were used as nurseries and kindergartens were old, rented and not

designed for educational purposes and therefore were unsuitable and incompatible with modern educational requirements. In addition 75% of the rented old buildings were situated by crowded busy roads which made access to the schools hazardous. Similarly a few of them were adjacent to factories or workshops which disturbed the children by noise and smoke.<sup>10</sup>

Another disadvantage was that in such buildings, there were no rooms for film-shows, for music, for drawing, handwork, libraries and first aid. The administrative and teaching staff at the pre-primary schools reported that there were insufficient educational equipment and aids. Individual games and outdoor playing facilities were also lacking.<sup>11</sup> It was also reported that 51.2% of the total number of all nurseries and kindergartens had adequate facilities for pre-primary education. However in 48.8% there were approximately 47 children in each classroom which is too high by modern standards.<sup>12</sup> Such crowded classrooms impeded the achievement of objectives and reduced the standard of services provided. And if to this is added the lack of understanding of educational methods by parents, and the lack of qualified assistants and insufficient support from official sources, it is clear why these establishments have often been unable to achieve the objectives for which they have been founded.

### 6.2.3 Improving the Quality of Pre-Primary Education

To accomplish the aims of nurseries and kindergartens the pre-primary stage must have a proper place in the educational system under the control of the Ministry of Education in co-operation with other establishments concerned.

It has been the women's societies and private enterprise that have so far been responsible for the running of the pre-primary school

education. Therefore some of the buildings and their locations, some of the furniture and the educational equipment, and some of the teachers and their assistants have been inadequate. The untrained members of women's societies, no matter how well-intentioned they may be, lack the essential knowledge necessary for the running of pre-primary schools. In addition, they have to make a profit or at least make enough to meet their expenses. For this reason the Government should have clear guidelines for establishing and running of nurseries and kindergartens, and maintain firm supervision over every aspect of these schools.

The inadequacy of the teachers at this early stage of a child's education was mainly due to two factors. First, the majority did not have any solid background in the techniques and methodologies of teaching. Second, those who had some training, the 15 to 30 days training course in the methods of educating young children, were not adequately prepared. The reason why unqualified teachers were recruited was that this was the only immediate solution to the problem of shortage of teachers. Moreover, highly qualified teachers demand high salaries which most voluntary societies can not afford. For these reasons it is recommended:

First, considerable effort should be made by the Ministry of Education to extend its reforms in the state schools to the pre-primary sphere by training the in-service kindergarten teachers, in line with their colleagues in the state primary schools, to be qualified as class teachers. If carefully implemented such an approach based on the psychology of the child at his/her early level of learning, will improve the quality of kindergarten education.

Second, fees from children coming from needy families should be subsidized by the Government either through the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Third, all forms of pre-school education, including day care

facilities, should be systematically extended as a means of increasing educational opportunities for younger children.

Fourth, the establishment and availability of nursery facilities will also be of importance to future society, where the new generation of nuclear families will have both parents pursuing careers. The cost of providing these facilities would be a worth-while investment for the future and would also improve the productivity of the education system.

### 6.3 The Private Schools

#### 6.3.1 An Overview

Recently the number of private schools that offer education other than pre-primary has increased considerably due to the increasing number of foreign communities working on the Islands. By 1986 there were 26 private schools, local and foreign.

Most private schools are administered by school boards which provide education for the major linguistic groups (English, French, German, Persian, Hindi, Urdu, Greek, etc.) or for religious groups (Christian: Catholic, Protestant; Hindu). Unlike the neighbouring countries in the Gulf, where faiths other than Islam are not allowed to be taught in schools, some of the foreign private schools in Bahrain are attached to churches that were built on the Islands. These schools reflect many cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

These schools aim at the same objectives as do the state schools in terms of conduct and acquisition of knowledge but in addition particular attention is given to the national language of the country to which a private school belongs.<sup>13</sup>

Gradually as the population of foreign communities in the Gulf

region grew, the number of pupils attending private school in Bahrain also grew. It was 7,593 in 1977/78; it became 10,241 in 1981/82; and reached 17,762 in 1985/86 (Table 6.2).

TABLE 6.2

No. of Students in Private Schools 1985/86

Level	Male	Female	Total
Pre-primary	4,009	5,599	7,603
Primary	3,393	3,001	6,394
Intermediate	1,032	992	2,024
Secondary	61	875	1,736
TOTAL	9,295	8,467	17,762

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain, 1985/86.

### 6.3.2 Government Legislation and Responsibilities

The modern 'co-educational and fee paying' private schools have attracted many Bahrainis. Growing numbers of children from well-to-do families left the state schools to join the private schools. This was mainly because Bahraini graduates from these schools find it easier to follow their education in Western universities than do graduates from the state schools because of their better command of the language of instruction, and their acquaintance with the Western system of education and thought.

But it was also noticed more than 25 years ago that many of these children became strangers to their own culture, language and religion. This development was a matter of concern to parents and to the more orthodox and conservative among the people. The matter was brought

to the attention of the then Council of Education. They discussed it with the Amir, and in October 1961 the Government of Bahrain issued the first decree of the Law of Private Education, which was passed to all private schools in Bahrain. By this decree a set of rules was issued among which were the following:

"Private education establishments shall abide by the syllabuses and textbooks approved by the Council of Education in respect of teaching the Arabic language for Arab pupils and Islamic education for Moslem pupils and the history and geography of Bahrain for all pupils."

14

"Where a private educational establishment teaches a religion other than the Islamic faith, it shall not allow the Muslim pupils at the various educational stages to attend such studies or participate in such activities as religious exhortation, spiritual guidance and prayers."

15

Since then the Ministry of Education has provided Bahraini teachers for every private school to teach the Arabic language to all Arab students, Islamic studies to all Moslem children and the history and geography of Bahrain to all pupils attending these schools in Bahrain. The Bahraini Government has borne all the expense of teaching such courses including teachers' salaries, transport and textbooks.

It later became clear to those interested in education that leaving the private sector of education to be entirely responsible for its own affairs had its disadvantages. One was the alienation of Bahraini pupils from their own culture. Another was that some texts and resource books used in some foreign schools contained information or statements which were opposed to the religious, political and national values of the Arab countries. Moreover, the expansion of private schools also created some problems. As the number of classes increased, the schools needed more teachers, texts, curriculum materials and so on. This increase in school expenditure was paralleled by a vast increase in school fees. This sharp increase took place in the 1970s. Tuition fees, in some private schools, almost trebled from one year to the next.

This high increase in school fees was a matter of concern to both foreign and Bahraini parents. Other problems concerning the quality of teaching, classrooms, buildings, land and school premises were also brought to the attention of the Government. For these reasons together with others, a further decree was passed in 1977.

By the decree of 1977, for the establishment of a private school the authorization of the Government became necessary. The Ministry of Education could accept or reject the project for establishing a school depending on whether it was well equipped and whether it had sufficient and competent staff. The teachers were required to hold "an academic qualification appropriate to the state in which he/she teaches as may be determined by the Ministry concerned".<sup>16</sup> And regarding school fees the law stated that "a private education establishment shall:

- (a) maintain an account book in which shall be entered regularly all revenues such as fees, donations and the sources thereof; and current expenditure of the academic year which shall be supported by clear documents to facilitate the examination thereof;
- (b) maintain a statement of the annual budget indicating the revenues and the sources thereof and expenditure;
- (c) abide by the established school fees and expenditure as approved by the Ministry concerned and any adjustment shall be subject to the approval of the Ministry concerned." 17

By the decree of 1985, a set of rules, in addition to the previous rules of 1961 and 1977, was issued to clarify some matters concerning private education. For instance, the previous decrees limited the definition of a school to "any school which caters for more than 10 students". This allowed housewives to open schools for 7, 8 or 9 children and they were exempt from the school regulations and qualification of teachers required by the Ministry. The new law stated that anyone who taught even one pupil was considered a "school". Regarding teachers' qualifications, it was stated that (1) a kindergarten teacher was required to hold at least a certificate of secondary level plus

a Diploma in Education, (2) a primary school teacher was required to hold the Baccalaureat as a class teacher and (3) a secondary school teacher was required to hold a B.A. or B.Sc. together with a Teacher Training Diploma in the subject being taught.<sup>18</sup>

The above laws and others concerning school buildings, teaching staff, registers and files, curricula and syllabuses, penalties, and general provisions, were the main laws and rules laid down by the Government of Bahrain regulating the establishment of a private school on the Islands.

It would be wrong to give the impression that private education in Bahrain has serious problems or lacks the support of either the authorities or the general public. The Amir, parents and the people of Bahrain have always given their support in different ways to promoting the quality of education in these schools. Thus it is not surprising to find that what were one-room kindergartens in the 1940s have become multi-room schools in the 1980s, where classes can be divided into grades, and schools into stages - kindergarten, primary, intermediate, secondary and in a few cases post-secondary education. Today some of the private schools in Bahrain rank with the best in the country of origin.

Most of these schools started with one level of education, usually primary, and in a single building, usually in the capital, Manama. But gradually through the years, the large increase in the number of pupils who passed the end of year examinations of one stage, has made it necessary to develop education to further stages of learning. As a result new schools, in addition to the main school in the capital, were built in other parts of the country. This is particularly true of the oldest foreign schools where kindergarten and primary education are provided in one school building in one town, while intermediate and secondary education are provided in another town.<sup>19</sup> At present the

majority of foreign private schools offer education from kindergarten to secondary. The most recent foreign private schools in Bahrain are the German school, founded in 1983, followed by a Japanese school in 1984, and by a Korean school in 1986.

It is worth noting that some private national schools catering for kindergarten and primary education have since their establishment in the 1980s, introduced the learning of the English language at an early stage. The instruction is given in both Arabic and English as in the case of Bayan School and Ibn Khaldoun School. However, foreign private schools in Bahrain follow the system of education derived from the country of origin - hence the different systems of education require different subjects to be taught and different methods of pedagogy, pupil evaluation and fees.

### 6.3.3 The Education System

As a result of their different countries of origin, private schools in Bahrain follow different systems of education basically similar to that of the mother country. Thus some apply exactly the same system; and others follow the system of origin but with slight variation; and some encompass two systems of education in the same school as in the case of the American Bahrain School which provides the British system of education and the American system. The following are examples of the different systems in the private schools in Bahrain.

#### 6.3.3.1 The State School System

Some private schools follow exactly the state system of education regarding the curricula and its implementation but with particular emphasis on the teaching of the English language from kindergarten to graduation. Another feature of these schools is that they are co-educational at

all levels of learning. An example of these is the Al-Raja School, formerly known as the American Mission School, Ibn Khaldoun School and Bayan-Al-Bahrain School.<sup>20</sup>

#### 6.3.3.2 The British School System

The British education system starts with the nursery followed by the infant school, the junior level, and ends with the secondary where pupils sit for their 'O' and 'A' level examinations. This system is operated in St. Christopher's School, Delmon School, Habara School, Nadeen School, Awali School, Sacred Heart School, and Bahrain School.<sup>21</sup>

#### 6.3.3.3 The American School System

The American education system is composed of pre-school level, elementary school level, junior high level, high school, and higher study courses. A student is awarded the High School Diploma at the end of the whole course of study. This system of education is implemented in Bahrain School which offers a K-12 American Curriculum, and forms I-V of the British Curriculum at secondary level.<sup>22</sup>

#### 6.3.3.4 The French School System

The French system of education commences with the Ecole Maternelle followed by preparatory course, course de elementaire, higher elementary courses, and secondary school level, where a student chooses between (1) vocational stream - taking two years to qualify for a technical job; or (2) at the end of the third secondary class to sit for the first formal examination organized by the French Ministry of Education, called the Brevet de College Examination after which the student is awarded the Ministry Certificate. This is called the Short General Stream. However a student can also opt to enrol in the Long General

Stream and specialise in one of the following: (a) Literature, (b) Economics, (c) Science, and (d) Natural Sciences. This stream lasts for a total of three years. The French school system is operated in the French School in Bahrain.<sup>23</sup>

#### 6.3.3.5 The Indian Education System

This system starts with (1) the pre-school level lasting for two years, (2) primary school level consisting of five years (3) intermediate level, covering three years, (4) secondary school level, covering a two-year period and (5) higher secondary school level covering another period of two years. This makes a 2+5+3+2+2 pattern of study. This system is operated in the Indian School in Bahrain.<sup>24</sup>

#### 6.3.3.6 The Pakistani Education System

This system comprises the following levels of learning: (1) primary level starts from the age of five and lasts for five years, (2) intermediate level starts from the sixth class and continues to the eighth, (3) secondary level comprises the ninth and the tenth classes and (4) higher secondary level covers the eleventh and twelfth classes. This system of education is adopted in Bahrain by both the Urdu School, founded in 1956, and the Pakistani School, established in 1968. Graduates from both schools are granted the Secondary School Certificate from the Federal Board of Secondary Education in Islamabad, Pakistan.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to these educational systems: American, British, French, Indian, Pakistani and Persian, there is also the Greek system of education adopted by the Cypriot School founded in 1970; the Dutch system of education adopted by the Um-Salleyyem School, opened in 1982; the German School, established in 1984; and the Japanese system of education adopted by the Japanese School, founded in 1984. There is also the Korean

School, established in 1986, and there are schools of other nationalities.

The names of these schools, years of establishments, systems of education followed and the number of students in each school are shown in Table 6.3 (see p. 283).

The data shows that by 1986 the Indian School had the highest enrolment with 3,467 students, followed by the Urdu School 1,863 students, by Sacred Heart School 1,472 students, by the Pakistani School 1,376 students, by St. Christopher's School 1,307 students, by the American Bahrain School 893 students, by Al-Raja School 667 students, by Ibn Khaldoun 375 students, by Aisha School 281 students, by Bayan Al-Bahrain School 233 students, by Awali School 192 students, by Habara School 166 students, by Nadeen School 132 students.

The data in Table 6.3 also shows that among the 26 private schools, the Al-Raja School had, in 1986, the highest number of Bahraini children compared to only one Bahraini pupil in the French School. There are many reasons for enrolment in private schools in Bahrain - but the language of instruction and the fees required by each school are the most important for the enrolment of Bahraini children.

The data in Table 6.4 (see p. 284) shows that most of these private schools were established on a fee-paying basis; and the fees vary from school to school. For instance, Bayan Al-Bahrain charged, in 1986, B.D. 1000 per child per year at kindergarten level and B.D. 1250 (U.K. £2,500) per child at primary level. The French School charged B.D. 260 per child per term at kindergarten level, B.D. 315 at primary and B.D. 450 at secondary. Table 6.4 also shows that some of these schools are free of fees. This is because such schools are either financed by the state in the country of origin, as in the case of the Persian School; or by a particular company operating in Bahrain to serve the children of its employees, as in the case of the German

TABLE 6.3

Private Schools in Bahrain (1985/86)

Names	Year of Establishment	System Followed	No. of Students		
			Bahrainis	Others	Total
Al Raja	1892	Bahrain	540	127	667
Al Iltihad	1910	Persian	30	15	45
Awali	1936	British	23	169	192
Sacred Heart	1940	British	364	1108	1472
The Indian School	1950	Indian	58	3409	3467
Urdu	1957	Pakistani	207	1601	1863
St. Christopher's	1961	British	79	1228	1307
Pakistan School	1968	Pakistani	27	1349	1376
Bahrain International	1972	American + British	120	743	863
Habara	1975	British	8	158	166
Delmon	1976	British	7	77	84
French School	1976	French	1	73	74
Nadeen	1977	British	24	108	132
Cypriot School	1979	Greek	-	20	20
Bayan Al Bahrain	1982	International	192	41	233
Dutch School	1982	Dutch	-	58	58
Ibn Khaldoun	1983	International	307	68	375
Al Ahdath	1983	Delinquency	33	-	33
Al Irshad	1983	Bahraini			
Asia School	1983	Pakistani	12	266	281
Al Naseem	1984	Bahraini	47	65	112
Al Amal	1984	Bahraini	12	-	12
German School	1984	German	-	21	21
Japanese School	1984	Japanese	-	87	87
Islamic Society School	1984	Bahraini			
Korean School	1986	Korean			

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Directory of Private Education 1986, (in Arabic)

TABLE 6.4

Names of Private Schools, Levels of Education  
and Fees 1985-1986

Schools	Levels of Education	Fees
Al-Raja	Kindergarten	BD 550 per year
	Primary	
	Intermediate	
Sacred Heart School	Kindergarten	BD 200
	Primary	BD 220
	Intermediate	BD 240 per year
	Secondary	BD 280
The Indian School	Kindergarten - 4th Year	BD 140
	5 - 8 classes	BD 160
	9 - 10 classes	BD 170 per year
	11 - 12 (Science)	BD 320
	(Commercial)	BD 270
The Pakistani School	Nursery	BD 20
	Kindergarten - 5th class	BD 11
	Primary 6 - 8 class	BD 12 per month
	9 - 10 classes (Arts)	BD 15
	11 - 12 classes (Science)	BD 20
IbnKhalidoun	Kindergarten	BD 950
	Primary	BD 1200 per year
International Bahrain School	Kindergarten	US\$ 5586 per year
	Primary	
	Intermediate	
	Secondary	
St. Christopher's School	Kindergarten	BD 201
	Lower Primary	BD 284
	Primary	BD 320 per term
	Intermediate	BD 400
Bayan Al-Bahrain School	Kindergarten	BD 1000
	Primary	BD 1250 per year
Awali School	Kindergarten	BD 290
	Primary	BD 320 per term
French School	Kindergarten	BD 260
	Primary	BD 315 per term
	Secondary	BD 450

Table continued .....

(Cont'd Table 6.4)

School	Level of Education	Fees
Naseem School	Kindergarten Primary	BD 200 BD 320 per term
Delmon School	Kindergarten Primary	BD 150 BD 190 per term
Habara School	Lower Kindergarten Higher Kindergarten Primary	BD 150 BD 185 per term BD 200
Nadeen School	Kindergarten Primary	BD 150 BD 180 per term
Asia School	Kindergarten Primary	BD 20 BD 20 per month
Cypriot	Primary	BD 50 per month
Japanese	Primary Secondary	BD 80 BD 80 per month
Dutch School	Kindergarten Primary	free free
The Persian School (Al-Itthad)	Kindergarten Primary Intermediate	free free free
German School	Primary	free
Al-Ahdath	Primary Intermediate	free free
Al-Amal for the Handicapped Children	Kindergarten Primary	free free

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Directory of Private Educational Establishments, 1985-1986.

and the Dutch Schools.

Each of these private schools, whether national or foreign, plays some part in developing education in Bahrain. In the next section an attempt will be made to trace the development of education in some private schools.

#### 6.4 Historical Development of Some Pioneering Schools

##### 6.4.1 The American Mission School 1892-1986

###### 6.4.1.1 Background

The earliest written records available as a source of information about the oldest private Western-style school in Bahrain are the Historical Archives of the Arabian Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church of North America. The collection was initially composed of letters and correspondence exchanged between the Field Secretary appointed by the Board of Foreign Missions and the Resident Correspondent Secretary in New York. The establishment of stations in Busrah, Bahrain, Muscat and later in Kuwait, between 1882 and 1911, saw a continual flow of correspondence between these stations and the Board of Foreign Missions.<sup>26</sup>

Interestingly, Bahrain was chosen to be the main site through which these stations directed their correspondence. The Field Secretary who handled the reporting of all affairs was located in Bahrain where annual meetings were often held.<sup>27</sup> The choice of Bahrain as a centre was determined by the fact that it was located in the middle of the Gulf almost halfway between Shatt-Al-Arab in the north and Muscat in the south. Most of the information covering the Gulf states was despatched from Bahrain.

The accounts and comments of various members of the American Arabian Mission as eyewitnesses who were outsiders observing events and happenings

are very valuable. Although the motive of their writing was religious zeal, the intellectual curiosity of these missionary reporters led them to discuss all sorts of phenomena so that many readers have found the documents a valuable source of information. Their principal appeal is that they present first-hand accounts and contemporary observations. It is also highly significant that the authors lived in Bahrain as early as 1892 and witnessed events taking place as Bahrain entered the 20th century.<sup>28</sup>

Documents on the Arabian Mission cover the four Missionary stations established in Eastern Arabia. The first station was established at Basra in 1892. This was followed by one in Bahrain in the same year; and a third at Muscat a year later. The final station was established in Kuwait in 1911.<sup>29</sup>

Correspondence to and from these four stations, despite the fact that they followed a special format, were divided into four distinctive sections - (1) evangelistic, (2) medical, (3) touring and (4) education; and always contained articles of a political and social nature. Evangelism was the area in which the Arabian Mission was least successful.<sup>30</sup>

From these records, it is clear that members of the Arabian Mission gave education a prominent place in their activities. By the late 1890s a modern school in Bahrain began on a modest scale. Most of the teaching was carried out by university graduates who were not necessarily trained teachers. It is interesting that the language of instruction at the American schools (boys' and girls') was Arabic from their inception despite the fact that the teachers were American - hence all newly appointed members were required to study Arabic and pass a difficult examination within a two-year period.<sup>31</sup> The role of these schools in the establishment of modern education in Bahrain can be traced quite clearly.

#### 6.4.1.2 The School

It was Mrs Zwemer, wife of a well-known missionary doctor who started the Mission's education work and opened the first girls' school in Bahrain and in the Gulf. The exact date has not been determined, but in the late 1890s Mrs Zwemer wrote:

"The little Day School has two sessions each day. Slowly and irregularly a few girls are coming."

32

The School progressed slowly and writing in 1904 Dr. van Peursesem stated:

"The mission school is in a stone building away from the filth of the bazaar. Light and fresh air enter from all sides. The school admits all classes - rich and poor, Jew, Christian and Moslem. All recite the same lessons together.

The aim of the school is an all round development of body, mind and soul. Instead of teaching a boy to read only one book, we teach him to read English and Arabic, ... We impress the teaching of the lowly Nazarene upon the pupil and make Him known as the Saviour of the world."

33

In 1901 there are reports that nearly a dozen pupils attended "a morning session" and that Mrs Zwemer "still" directs the "kindergarten". By 1903 there were morning and afternoon sessions for girls, and an average of 15 pupils.<sup>34</sup> The school progressed slowly and writing in 1904 Dr. Zwemmer wrote:

"I had hoped to put our little day school beyond the experimental stage this year. ... Our language teacher gave a couple of hours of his time to teaching English, Arithmetic, and higher Arabic Grammar to the older boys, of whom there were sometimes a dozen, though the attendance was irregular and dropped to 4 sometimes. ... The school for younger children was conducted by Miss Lutton. There was an average attendance of 20 during the eight months since it was open. Ten of the pupils were Jews and Christians, the rest were Moslems. They were taught Arabic primer, the book of Psalms and elementary arithmetic with kindergarten drill. Christian hymns were sung with great gusto."

35

The situation did not improve very much before the end of the First World War, although from 1905 on there were separate reports for boys' and girls' schools. Most of the girls were Persians "of the poorest and most ignorant class". In 1908 four boys from the ruling family

attended the school, but there was opposition on religious grounds, and from 1910 to 1914 enrolment in the boys' school declined because many students began to go to Moslem schools in Karachi and Aligarh. In 1910 the Islands' Jews had opened a school of their own. In 1911 a new feature, which also anticipated later developments, was the opening, by the Americans, of a night school. Fifteen young businessmen from such diverse points as Bushire, Lingah, and Kirman enrolled. The problems of the schools can perhaps be realized by noting that in 1907, although a total enrolment was 46, average attendance was only 16. In general the reports speak of difficulties. Gifts were given in the girls' school to induce attendance. The basic problem of both boys' and girls' schools was that they were a sideline to the main activity of the Mission in Bahrain.

The missionaries commented on the opening of the first public school, in Bahrain in 1919, as follows:

"... As a result of a visit to London of one of the ruling Sheikhs, a municipal school has been opened with a good equipment and quite a staff of teachers from Basrah and Egypt. The school, however, specializes in religious rather than secular subjects and so is not likely to do away with the need for our own institution."

36

In 1920, another report commented:

"Rival schools are being started and unless we offer something far better than these schools, we might as well give up trying to attract Moslem boys.... The conviction is forced upon us that we cannot expect to have a first-class school as long as we have to teach in one room from 30 to 50 boys, of different grades, three languages by as many teachers."

37

After the opening of the first state school in Bahrain in 1919, the need to improve conditions at the American Mission School was apparent. Around 1922 the Reverend Bernard D. Hakken was put in charge of the boys' school and Mrs Dame, the first licensed teacher, took over the girls' school. Improvement was immediate and marked in both.

Mrs Dame reported on the girls' school in 1923:

"The school opened on October 15th with an enrolment of 18 girls. ...Our attendance increased so that we had twice as many girls as we could accommodate with seats. ...

I was doing all the teaching myself, the curriculum planned is an extensive one embracing reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography taught in Arabic and classes in English covering conversation and reading, and vocal music in both languages. Friday was made an Arts and Crafts day with drawing, construction, physical exercises and serving to help keep the interests of the students."

38

For the boys' school progress was shown in this report in 1929:

"... An evening department for boys and young men desiring advanced work in English has begun ... Bahrain has witnessed a change in the attitude of the people toward education. To quote one of the teachers, 'As to the future, it is certain that education is in the air in Bahrain'... Native schools have been replaced by well-conducted schools backed by the British - advised by the Government and taught by intelligent teachers imported from Syria. And one who attends their examinations must conclude that they do some excellent work. In fact, there is a demand for higher education ... Where there is such a growing desire for education, there will be an increasingly large number of fathers who desire that advantage for their sons, and sons who are willing to study."

39

By 1934-35, the boys' school had grown to an average attendance of 89, but the world-wide depression and the urgent need for financial retrenchment on the part of the Mission compelled the closing of the boys' school.<sup>40</sup>

Mrs Dame reported on the girls' education work at the Annual Guest Day in 1935:

"Enrolment was 113 for this year. The curriculum remains the same. This summer we had printed our own Arabic primer for use in the first grade. In the spring, for the Annual Guest Day the members presented two plays in Arabic and in English."

41

Mr. Hakken wrote:

"Our total attendance this past year was 156, the highest we have ever recorded. ... From the beginning the Arabs have been influenced by practical reasons in the education of their children. A job was and is the guiding principle behind sending the boys to school. By this standard our school has been successful for we have placed a great number of boys in good positions. ..."

42

Despite World War Two, the school continued to operate in Bahrain. During the academic year 1956/57, it had two levels of education:

kindergarten and primary - classes one through six. It also had a seventh grade specializing in elementary teacher training.<sup>43</sup>

By 1960, the boys' and the girls' schools were amalgamated to form one co-educational school. Recently the school has changed its name from the American Mission School to Al-Raja to indicate the change in administration.

At present the school offers three levels of education: pre-primary, primary and intermediate. The aims and the curriculum at all levels are similar to those of the state schools - but with more emphasis on learning the English language at an early stage. In addition, Christian education is given to Christian children. Consequently, graduates from this school wishing to continue their education in the state secondary schools must sit the Ministry's General Intermediate examination in the month of June.

In 1986/87 the school catered for almost 700 pupils and charged B.D. 550 per child per year - as Mrs Leila Rumman, a Christian Lebanese and the present Principal of Al-Raja School explained:

"Al-Raja is a private school; and to maintain good standards of education, we have to limit the number of enrolments. Our difficulty is not lack of attendance as our predecessor's but rather finding adequate places for the increasing numbers on our waiting list. Most of them are the children of former students and they are so many."

44

Yet in spite of the difficulties of the past and the present, the Church, the Hospital, and the School of the American Mission stand elegantly in the heart of Manama town, to witness the rise of modern medicine and modern education in Bahrain nearly a hundred years ago. In time of unprecedented change and the erosion of moral standards, this school has provided, since 1892, a constant element in the steadily evolving education, and a beneficial influence on the stable traditional society which the Bahraini people endeavour to promote.

#### 6.4.2 The Persian School 1910 - 1986

The first Persian School to be opened in Bahrain was Al-Ittihad. About 1910 the proposal for establishing a 'proper school' that would teach the Persian language and culture was put forward.<sup>45</sup> It was initiated by the Persian minority residing on the Islands who took the matter up and started a campaign to raise funds to build a school. Considerable sums were collected from the wealthiest among the Iranian merchants living in Bahrain; and as a result it was possible to build and equip the school in Manama.<sup>46</sup> The other source of income came from fees paid by the pupils when they first joined the school.<sup>47</sup> It started as a one-room school but gradually it became multi-room schools.

Between 1914 and 1921 another school, catering for the learning of the Persian language, was founded in Bahrain. It was called 'Tarbiat' (meaning education). It is worth noting that during the establishment of the state schools in Bahrain in the period between 1919-1923, members of the Iranian community asked the Bahraini Government to require the teaching of the Persian language as part of the curriculum in all state schools. This demand was rejected.<sup>48</sup> Consequently the Persians decided to reform their schools; and in 1923 both schools founded in 1910 and 1921 respectively were amalgamated to form a bigger and modern school which was called Al-Ittihad (meaning the union). Until 1956 the school continued to function as a primary school with an enrolment of some 150 boys; and it accepted children of communities other than the Persian.

The purpose of Al-Ittihad School, as stated in the prospectus of 1965, was to provide primary education in the Persian language for the children (boys only) of the Persian minority in Bahrain.

In the 1970s, kindergarten and intermediate education were offered in Al-Ittihad. Later secondary education was introduced. And in

1972, a second school was opened in Adari. Both schools were run and administered by the Ministry of Education in Iran. The aims and the curricula at all levels are similar to those in Iran but slightly adapted to Bahraini society, as, for example, the teaching of the Arabic language, and the history and geography of Bahrain to all students as required by the Law of Private Education.

At present, the school offers kindergarten, primary, intermediate and secondary education; and graduates from these schools usually follow their higher education in the universities in Iran.

The enrolment of pupils, over the years, increased from 150 boys in 1956 to 335 in 1971. But after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the enrolment in 1985/86 dropped to 45 students of whom 30 were Bahrainis and 15 were non-Bahrainis.

TABLE 6.5

Enrolment in the Persian School

Years	No. of Students	Classes	Teachers
1 ( 1956	150	6	9
( 1965	210	6	9
2 ( 1968	295	6	9
( 1971	335	6	12
3 ( 1985	72	12	12
( 1986	45		

Source : 1 - Al-Hamar, p. 105

2 - Rumaihi, p. 153

3 - Statistical Data of Al-Ittihad School - 1985/86.

Ministry of Education, Directorate of Private Education.

Today the Al-Ittihad School is financed and run by the Iranian Ministry of Education. Information about the school was difficult

to obtain from the school's authorities. However it is significant to note that this school has, over the last seventy-five or more years, provided education for generations of pupils in Bahrain. It had contributed to the development of modern education, especially between 1910 to 1919, when the lack of state schools on the Islands made it necessary for some Bahrainis to enrol in this school.

It should be observed that the Islamic Revolution of 1979 has brought to Iran as well as to this school a change in ideology and in conception. The school curriculum for almost 70 years (before the Revolution) was influenced by the secular ideology of the Pahlavi dynasty. But that approach was changed by the recent Revolution. And the impact of this change for modern education in the Al-Ittihad School remains to be seen.

#### 6.4.3 Sacred Heart School 1940-1986

Sacred Heart School was founded in Bahrain in 1940 by Bishop Luigi Magliacni, resident in Aden. At present the school is administered by the Roman Catholic Church in Bahrain. It started with two grades and was staffed by lay teachers for several years. In 1949 a new school and house were built; and in 1953 four nuns who were trained teachers arrived and took over the responsibility. Since then a number of trained teachers of the Missionary Sisters of Verona has taught in the school.<sup>49</sup>

The enrolment of pupils has, over the years, grown from 85 students in 1943 to 1,472 in 1985 as shown in Table 6.6 (see p. 295).

During the 1950s, the school had 3 levels of education: kindergarten, primary and intermediate which followed the pattern of 2-4-4 years. Secondary education was introduced in the late 1960s. Since its establishment in 1940, the school has been co-educational; and has followed the British system of education. However, in addition

TABLE 6.6

Enrolment in Sacred Heart School

Years	Number of Students
1949	85
1954	120
1958	500
1960	850
1971	900
1986	1,472

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Directorate of Private Education, 1985/86.

to French and Arabic as second languages, the school in the 1950s and 1960s also offered private lessons in Italian, piano, painting and needlework.<sup>50</sup>

At present the school is owned by the Catholic Church in Bahrain, and is run by nuns and lay teachers, providing educational facilities for children aged 4-16 years, of all faiths and nationalities.

There are two courses of studies after the two-year kindergarten:

1. Junior course : seven classes
2. Senior course : four classes.

The school provides general education up to G.C.E., London University 'O' level in the following subjects:

Religious Studies	Biology
English Language	Chemistry
English Literature	Physics
Geography	Mathematics
French	Art
Classical Arabic	Modern History

In addition, the school prepares students for the R.S.A. exams in:

English	Typewriting
Maths	Shorthand
	Book-keeping

Students follow the same broad curriculum up to Junior 7. In

Senior I, students are allowed to choose between:

History	or	Chemistry	
Typewriting )			
Book-keeping )	or	Physics	51
Shorthand )			

Students are encouraged to join the school clubs; some of which provide an opportunity to develop dramatic, debating and musical talents. Both club activities and sports such as football, and basket-ball take place in the afternoon.

Teachers report to parents twice during the academic year; and parents' days are arranged after examinations held in the spring and summer terms. The school year begins in mid-September and ends in mid-June; and the school observes both Sundays and Fridays as holidays as well as major Christian and Moslem holidays. School-work begins at 7.30 am and ends at 12.40 pm.<sup>52</sup>

The revenue of the school, today, depends on the fees paid by the students; and the fees in 1986 were B.D. 200 per child per year at kindergarten level; B.D. 220 at primary level; B.D. 240 at intermediate; and B.D. 280 (£560) at secondary level (Table 6.4).

In an interview with Sister Giecinta Vanotti, the headmistress of the school in 1986, she said:

"The total number of pupils enrolled at the Sacred Heart School at the moment is 1,476; and the number of Bahraini children is 399. The number of our staff is 64."

53

Forty years ago in 1948 the number of pupils at Sacred Heart School was 40. That it would grow to such a considerable size was not anticipated when the school was opened forty-five or more years ago. The real driving force behind establishing a Catholic Church and a Catholic School in Bahrain was religious zeal. Originally this school began as a church school accepting European, Indian, and other children who

followed, or were willing to follow, the Catholic faith. However, over the years as the pressures on the state schools increased after the Second World War, and following the stringent rules of the Law of Private Education which required the Islamic religion to be taught to all Moslem children in private schools, the evolving, yet stable, traditional education at Sacred Heart has attracted more and more Bahraini parents to send their children to the school.

As a result of an immense amount of donated time, energy and money, Sacred Heart School has emerged today as a school of nearly 1,500 pupils in grades from kindergarten to secondary. Both the Catholic Church and the Catholic School stand on the original site in Bahrain. The continuing generosity of the parents and friends is an eloquent testimony to the affection which the people of Bahrain hold for education and learning.

#### 6.4.4 The Indian School 1950-1986

##### 6.4.4.1 Background

People from the Indian Sub-continent, including the Pakistanis, constitute the largest foreign community in Bahrain.<sup>54</sup> They have been established in the Islands for several centuries.

Since ancient times, owing to its central position in the Gulf, the Islands of Bahrain, known first as Dilmun, then, Tylos, Awal and finally as Bahrain, have been one of the main transit sea ports and a stopping place linking the Gulf with the ancient East.

Sea traffic from the Gulf to Mesopotamia, carrying copper, gold, precious stones, ivory, teak wood and spices also linked the Islands of Bahrain with the Sub-continent of India.

By the middle of the 19th century a new economic order, born of

the industrial revolution, gradually began to emerge in Europe. The old trading system which in the East had flourished on the spice trade, gave way to a new industrial capitalism concerned mainly with markets and supply of raw materials. In Bahrain, pearl fishing became the main occupation of the people, enjoying an evergrowing international market.

The shift from subsistence economy to cash crops created a world wide demand for labour, which was initially met by the slave trade. After this trade was abolished in the first half of the 19th century, the demand was met by 'coolie trade'. Cheap labour was transferred from the Sub-continent of India to Ceylon, Aden, East Africa and South Africa. From Aden, some Indian workers were also sent to Bahrain.<sup>55</sup>

All these factors increased the presence of Indian families in Bahrain. It is through commerce and trade that groups of Indian merchants have been long established in Bahrain. As a result, they hold Bahraini nationality; and some of these merchants have, over the years, built prosperous businesses in all the Gulf States as in the case of the Ashraf family, the Jashinmal and many others who have built huge chains of supermarkets in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Dubai.

The number of the Indian and Pakistani workers in Bahrain, has, over the past fifty or more years, increased rapidly. First in the 1930s with the discovery of oil; and second in the last decade or so when the country has gradually evolved from a bustling Gulf State to an international banking and business centre. As a result there has been a large influx of Indian and Pakistani workers to Bahrain to meet the need for semi-skilled and clerical workers.

Members of the Indian and Pakistani communities in Bahrain enjoy today all the services provided by the Government of Bahrain in addition to having their own clubs, societies, social events, sports and schools.

It is significant that the Indian School, founded in 1950, has, today, an enrolment of 3,476 pupils - the highest of all foreign private schools in Bahrain, as shown in Table 6.3.

#### 6.4.4.2 The School

Members of the Indian community living in Bahrain considered it necessary to establish a school for their children where the system of education is similar to that in India. The school was founded in 1950 and started as an infant school in a hired building outside Manama, the capital of Bahrain.<sup>56</sup>

In 1953 the school was extended to include a primary in addition to the infant section. The primary school started with 50 pupils and 3 teachers. In 1965 the enrolment of the pupils grew to 170. The school was (and still is) co-educational; and the medium of instruction was, then, Hindi. The curriculum included, then, the following subjects: Hindi language, English as a second language, arithmetic, social studies and general science. Later the levels of intermediate and secondary education were introduced.

The year 1969 was a landmark in the history of the Indian school. In that year there was a sudden increase in the enrolment of pupils which reached 600. Further the school was recognized by the Central Board of Secondary Education in New Delhi. In that year the language of instruction was changed from Hindi to English, a policy which has been adopted in most Indian schools in New Delhi.<sup>57</sup>

In May 1975 the Indian School in Bahrain followed the new educational pattern of India. Under this system there are two distinct stages; one up to class X, and the other up to class XII - both forming part of the school education. The scheme of studies for class IX and X under the new ten-year pattern has been as follows:

1. and 2. Two Languages (English & Hindi)
3. Mathematics
4. (a) Physics  
(b) Chemistry  
(c) Life Sciences
5. (a) History & Civics  
(b) Geography, Economics & Commerce
6. Work Experience:
  - (i) Tailoring & Embroidery
  - (ii) Typewriting
7. Health & Physical Education
8. Additional Language (optional)
9. For higher secondary classes (XI-XII) Science and Commerce streams are introduced

58

Since 1975, the Central Board of Secondary Education in New Delhi has conducted the secondary school examination at the end of class X in the subjects languages, mathematics, science, social studies and additional language (Arabic). However all other subjects have been assessed internally by the school.<sup>59</sup>

Another significant year in the history of the Indian School was 1979; first the enrolment of pupils jumped to 1,140; and secondly the school moved from its hired building to a new spacious school in Isa Town.

Promotion of the pupils at the end of the each academic year is based on his/her achievement on (1) the periodic tests, (2) half yearly and annual examinations and (3) class tests. The weighing for the final assessment is as indicated below:

1.	Periodic tests	10%
2.	Class tests	20%
3.	Half yearly	30%
4.	Annual examination	40%

The revenue of the Indian School, as Mr. Atma Jashinmal, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, stated in 1985 is derived largely from

contributions made by individuals and institutions, and also from the tuition fees paid by the pupils. The level of these fees continually increases.<sup>60</sup> In the year 1986 the tuition fee per child, per year, in kindergarten was B.D. 140; and in primary, it was B.D.160; in intermediate, it was B.D. 170; in the science stream at secondary level it was B.D. 320; and in the business stream it was B.D.270. In addition there were other fees for admission B.D.10/-, registration B.D. 2/-, membership B.D. 5/-, games B.D. 10/-, and laboratory fee B.D. 10/- for IX and X classes, (Table 6.4).

The school has grown rapidly in the last two decades. In the year 1980/81 there were 1,495 students and 62 teachers. The number of students had increased by the year 1982 when 1,384 students attended the morning shift and 731 attended the afternoon shift. By 1986, the total enrolment reached 3,467 students.

At present the school is recognized by the Central Board of Secondary Education in New Delhi and is managed by a Board of Governors. The school caters for CBSE Exam. based on the educational pattern 10+2+3 similar to the All India Central School Organization, with a syllabus recommended by them. The school authorities offer no explanation why the language of instruction was changed from Hindi to English. However both Hindi and Sanskrit are taught as a second language. The school has, since 1977, introduced an option of Arabic as a third language to meet the requirement of the Law of Private Education in Bahrain.

It is interesting to note that in 1987, students at the Indian School in Bahrain won the highest marks in the All India Secondary School examination out of 12 Gulf Indian schools.

As well as the Indian School, catering for children from the Sub-continent of India but living in Bahrain, there is also the Urdu School founded in 1956 which follows the syllabus of the Punjab University;

and the Pakistani School founded in 1968. The three schools provided education, in 1986, for nearly 6,706 students - at all grades from kindergarten to secondary.

Today both the Sacred Heart School and the Indian School, different in religious faith, origin, development and regulation, stand close to each other in Isa Town, a newly built town on the Islands of Bahrain - a testimony to many years of continuous effort and achievement.

#### 6.4.5 St. Christopher's School 1961-1986

St. Christopher's is a co-educational school which takes children from the age of 4 to common entrance at age 13. It is the only school in the Gulf to have been elected to the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (I.A.P.S.) of which it has been a member since 1979.<sup>61</sup>

The school started in 1961 with small classes in private houses and owes its existence to St. Christopher's Church in Bahrain and to those in the business and commercial community who provided financial backing for its foundation and continued growth. Until 1972 the school was accommodated in the Church compound but since then there has been a continued programme of expansion resulting in four schools in three different premises with a total provision for over 1,600 pupils.<sup>62</sup>

Although most of the pupils are British or have English as a first language, up to 20% are children of other nationalities.<sup>63</sup> Since 1977 with the passing of the Private Education Law, more and more Bahraini pupils have joined the school.

The school is staffed by qualified teachers and organised according to current British methods. The principal and head teachers are appointed from the United Kingdom; and about one third of the teachers are recruited on contracts from the U.K. The remainder are recruited locally.<sup>64</sup>

Within the framework of modern educational practices the basic subjects of English, mathematics, environmental studies, geography, history, and science are given a great deal of attention. Emphasis is also placed on arts, crafts and music, and computers are used in all sections of the school from the age of six; and French is taught to children of 8 years and over.<sup>65</sup>

In the Middle School, specialist subjects taught are mathematics, English, French, sciences, humanities (history and geography), art, music, physical education, computer studies, home economics, drama and craft design and technology.<sup>66</sup>

A full programme of physical education and sport is provided and children are strongly encouraged to take part in swimming activities. The extra curricular activities include art, drama, Arabic for non-Arabs, guitar, handicrafts, football, basketball, computers, chess, netball, hockey, rugby, music, and country dancing.

The school uses several standardised tests to assess pupils' progress, to seek diagnostic information and to compare their results with those of children of a similar age in the U.K.<sup>67</sup>

In 1975 the constitution of the school was revised as the school was formally licensed under Bahraini law; and in 1979 registration was effected under the Societies and Clubs Ordinance 1959. Currently the constitution provides for the election of between 3 and 8 members to the Board of Governors by the founders, (commercial interest in Bahrain) who sponsored the revised constitution. Four parent members of the Board are elected by the parents at an annual general meeting, and the Vicar of Bahrain or his representative is, ex-officio, a member of the Board.<sup>68</sup>

In an interview with Mr. Wrench, the headmaster of St. Christopher's School, he explained in 1986:

"The school is a non-profit making organisation, entirely dependent on school fees as the sole source of income. The fees are determined by the Board of Governors, subject to the approval of the Ministry of Education and are liable to revision."

69

In 1985/86, the tuition fees at St. Christopher's are as shown below:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Term Fee</u>
Nursery	BD 75	BD 201
Infant	BD 75	BD 284
Junior	BD 75	BD 320
Middle	BD 75	BD 400 (£800)

The headmaster of the school also said:

"Members are now conducting a market survey to decide whether they should increase the facilities offered by the school to take children to their GCSE exams at the age of 16."

70

It is significant that nowadays, graduates from St. Christopher's School can continue their secondary education at the American Bahrain School - to which we now turn.

#### 6.4.6 Bahrain School 1972-1986

##### 6.4.6.1 Background

On 17th January 1968 the British announced their intention of withdrawing from the Gulf. Aware of the risks and responsibility involved in independence, Bahrain began to prepare itself for the new stage. Independence was formally celebrated on 14th August 1971. But long before that date, other factors had exerted an influence on the future development of the Islands.

In 1965 the Government of Bahrain set up a section at the Ministry of Finance with responsibility for the economic development of the Islands. This small section was called The Development Bureau and for two years, in conjunction with foreign consultants, it prepared

a detailed report which was submitted in 1967. Six months later, in June 1967, the report was adopted by the Government. One of the recommendations was that there should be opened a school for foreign expatriate children. The rationale behind this recommendation was that the other Gulf states were full of service companies connected with the oil industry operating off shore but with their headquarters established in Bahrain. More American companies would be attracted to Bahrain if a school teaching the American curriculum was available on the Islands.<sup>71</sup>

Besides, the American Government, interested in the location of the Islands - in a central position in the Gulf - had a small station and supply base in Bahrain. As a result many Americans were in favour of the proposed school.<sup>72</sup>

In August 1968, the United States Department of Defence opened, in Awali, a Bahrain American Elementary School which was run by the Mission of the United States Dependents Schools, European Area. Until 1970, the school provided educational opportunities from one to twelve years, and was open to eligible dependent children of U.S. military and civilian personnel in those locations where the education of dependents programmes was a responsibility of C.I.M.C.U.S.A.R.E.U.R. The school was supported by the Bahrain School Trust and the United States Naval Commander of the Middle East Force.<sup>73</sup>

The school was called the Bahrain School and was funded by the U.S. Navy in respect of books and teachers. These funds were supplemented by fees from students. At the compound of the Bahrain Petroleum Company some training centres and laboratories were made available to the school.<sup>74</sup>

In 1970 upon the departure of the British Forces from Bahrain,

many areas previously used as camps became available to the Government which subsequently turned them over to the Bahrain School. Thus the Bahrain School moved its headquarters from Awali to Jufair in 1972. In the early years the school provided a full American High School syllabus and also furnished a programme for English children.

With the passage of time increasing numbers of Bahrainis felt that such a system was better than that available elsewhere on the Islands, and gradually, the percentage of Bahraini children in the school increased.

At present the school education system is basically similar to that in the U.S.; but encompassing both the American and British curricula.

#### 6.4.6.2 The School

The Bahrain School began in Awali, Bahrain, in August, 1968 as the Bahrain American Elementary School with a staff of one teaching principal and three teachers providing for 40 students in grades one through eight.<sup>75</sup>

By 1970, the school was accepting English-speaking Bahraini students and other non-Development of Defense sponsored students. With the addition of students in these new categories, the school experienced very rapid growth, and by 1972, had an enrolment of approximately 200 elementary students and correspondence course high school students.<sup>76</sup>

In January 1972, the school was moved from Awali to a much larger building in Jufair, in expectation of a significant expansion the following year. By 1986, the school enrolment reached 893 students - at all levels from kindergarten to secondary (Table 6.3).

Currently Bahrain School offers a K-12 American curriculum and forms I-V of the British curriculum at the secondary level, including London University's GCE 'O' Level examinations, in addition to the International Baccalaureate as shown below.

- Graduation requirements for the American High School Diploma are: English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Health Education, Aesthetics, Career Education and Physical Education. The total minimum credits in grades 9-12 is twenty.<sup>77</sup>

- In the British curriculum, the first three years of secondary education are general preparatory years. At the end of the third year subjects are selected for examination courses which are then followed for two years. Pupils sit the G.C.E. 'O' Level or C.S.E. examinations in May and June of the second year.<sup>78</sup>

- The International Baccalaureate (I.B.) is a two year diploma programme designed for students to become proficient in languages and mathematics - the two most important tools of communication and analysis. It also requires the study of at least one subject that exemplifies the study of human behaviour and one other that exemplifies the process of scientific enquiry. The I.B. Diploma candidate is also required to participate in a course that reflects upon the value of scholarship and upon the knowledge gained from the subjects being studied.<sup>79</sup>

- The I.B. Diploma programme covers the last two years of secondary education and incorporates standards that assume a high level of achievement during the previous years. The I.B. curriculum consists of six areas. The six areas offered at the Bahrain School in the I.B. programme are as follows:

1. Language A  
Includes a study of world literature - English Higher Level and English Subsidiary Level.
2. Language B  
Includes French, Arabic; a student's mother tongue or first language - example Japanese.
3. Study of Man  
One of the following options: a) History, b) Economics.
4. Experimental Sciences  
One of the following options: a) Biology, b) Chemistry, c) Physics.

5. Mathematics
6. The sixth subject  
one of the following: a) a second language (French, Arabic),  
b) a second Study of Man subject (History, Economics)  
c) a second Science subject (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)  
d) Computer Studies.

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Examinations are held twice a year. One is held in the last week of the first semester covering the first semester's work and material. The second examination is held in the fourth quarter on the work and material covered from the beginning of the year.

Report cards are issued four times a year - and they reflect the student's efforts as well as a teacher assigned symbol:

- A - Excellent
- B - Good standard
- C - Satisfactory competence
- D - Minimum acceptable standards
- E - Below passing grade
- F - Failure.

However, a notice of unsatisfactory achievement is sent any time during the marking period whenever the situation warrants it.<sup>81</sup>

In 1985, Dr. Wannebo, the Principal of Bahrain School stated:

"Our School is a multi-national school representing more than sixty nationalities, unique among other schools. This singularity provides the opportunity to develop programmes that allow for the continuous flow of ideas and mutual involvement between school, home, and host nation."

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The Bahrain School has over the last fifteen or more years attracted many children from Bahrain, from the Gulf and from other parts of the world. It has shown remarkable success in building up a good reputation for its high standards. The school has grown from 40 American pupils in 1968 to 863 students from different nationalities in 1986 (Table 6.3).

The gradual increase in fees in Bahrain School for the years 1980/81 to 1986/87 is shown in Table 6.7 (see p. 309). The data shows that there has been an increase of US\$ 25.3 percent. The tuition fee per child per year in 1986 was US\$ 5586 (Table 6.4).

TABLE 6.7

Bahrain School  
BISA BUILDING LEVY & SCHOOL TUITION FEES (DODDS-M) (US\$)

Academic Year	BISA Bldg. Levy	Tuition Fees (DODDS-M)			
		KG	1-12	Increase (1-12)	% Incr.
1980/81	1170	2300	4600	-	-
1981/82	1170	2431	4863	+ 263	+ 5.7
1982/83	1330	2300	4759	- 104	- 2.1
1983/84	1330	2361	4720	- 39	- 0.8
1984/85	1330	2687	5374	+ 654	+ 13.8
1985/86	1463	2793	5586	+ 212	+ 3.9
1986/87	1463	2448	5767	+ 181	+ 3.2
				+1167	+ 25.3

Source : Bahrain School, Bahrain. (From a letter sent to the researcher in March 1987.)

The Bahrain School, like all other schools on the Islands, is filled daily with a myriad of activities and through all, the emphasis is on sound learning and high personal standards. This goal would be hard to achieve without the friendliness of the host nation and the warm atmosphere that prevails over the whole Islands of Bahrain.

#### 6.5 Conclusion

A remarkable feature of education in Bahrain that distinguishes it from most countries in the Gulf region is the presence of many private

educational establishments - national and foreign. Before the turn of the century, there was only one American Dutch mission school - an extension of a church and a hospital established in 1892 in the heart of the capital. Today there are more than one hundred different private educational establishments spread all over the Islands - ranging from a small national private nursery to a fully developed foreign school with kindergarten, primary, intermediate and secondary levels. And though the majority of these schools are secular, Western or Asian, a few are church schools.

One might ask why there are so many private schools in Bahrain in spite of the early establishment of the indigenous education system and the spread of state schools all over the country.

Many factors have interacted with each other to produce these schools. The geographical position of the Islands located in the centre of the Gulf, the historical factor which led to frequent contacts between the Islanders and various ethnic groups all over the world, and the economic factor which contributed to the settlement of various foreign communities, have all gradually built up an acceptance and then an understanding and later an approval of a variety of religious beliefs, different life styles, customs and values. Gradually through the years, these have promoted cultural toleration - a concept in which all cultures are seen as valid. Subsequently foreign communities in Bahrain wanted to educate their children in their own mother tongue, by the same system of education as in the country of origin and with the same standards - hence the establishment on the Islands, of many private schools.

Pre-primary education in the country is wholly run by the private sector and therefore the presence of private nurseries and kindergartens, whether national or foreign, is explained by the lack of state education.

Our study of private education showed the following facts.

First, foreign private schools, when they were founded in Bahrain between 1940-1980 were not expected by Government authorities to provide education for the local population. They were established mainly to fulfil the needs of linguistic groups (Persian, Indian, English, French, German, Greek, Japanese) or the needs of religious groups (Christian: Catholic and Protestant; Orthodox or Hindu). At present, there is a significant number of private schools that fall into the category such as the Persian School, the British School. As is true of the economy generally, the foreign schools in Bahrain reflect the many cultural, religious and ethnic groups living on the Islands.

Secondly, over the years, some private foreign schools became popular and despite the high fees, an increasing number of Bahraini children, particularly from the richest among the merchants, joined the British and the American schools. This has, since the 1970s, become a matter of concern to both parents and the Government of Bahrain because it was felt that such education would separate the children from their heritage: in language, religion and values. The Private Education Law has required the learning of the Arabic language, the principles of Islam, and the history and geography of Bahrain. But the lack of competence in these subjects, particularly in the mastery of the national language, still prevails.

The argument as to whether the Government should support foreign schools will continue to be a matter of concern to the more conservative among the people of Bahrain. The key policy issues regarding foreign private schools can be presented in the form of questions. (1) In what ways can these schools contribute to education in Bahrain? (2) Should Bahraini children be encouraged to join these schools at an early age? (3) What is the role of the Ministry of Education in relation to foreign private schools?

First of all, observation based on visits to various foreign schools on the Islands, and on personal interviews with some parents, school principals, and Government officials suggest the conclusion that with certain restrictions, the Government of Bahrain should continue to support foreign education in the country for the following reasons.

1 - That for the Bahraini system of education to be exposed to comparison with other systems of education particularly with those noted for their advancement in science and technology, such as the German, the American, and the British, is important in improving the quality of education in the state schools.

2 - That parents have the right to choose and buy, if they can afford the fees, the type of education they consider the best for their children.

3 - That the enrolment of some Bahraini children in foreign schools lessens the pressure on the state schools.

4 - That competence in a foreign language from an early age makes it easier upon graduation to join universities in countries abroad for the study of subjects not available in Bahraini colleges of higher education such as: architecture, library science, psychology, special education, pharmacy, and some fields in medicine.

5 - That chemistry and physics are taught from the 4th grade in some foreign schools which gives the pupils considerable advantages if they wish to pursue scientific studies, at the level of higher education.

6 - That a variety of programmes and syllabi - different to the Bahraini system of education - should be preserved in a country which, throughout its history, has been known for its tolerance.

However, the presence of foreign schools in Bahrain has its disadvantages as well. One, as already mentioned, is the danger that

the pupils will become estranged from their country's customs, traditions and beliefs. Another is their relative lack of competence in the national language - the mother tongue. The third is the social division created between Bahraini children by the rich going to fee-paying private schools; and those who cannot afford the fees going to the state schools. The fourth is the possibility that foreign students might introduce principles, behaviour, and habits alien to the host country.

For the Ministry of Education to overcome these disadvantages it is desirable that the following recommendations should be implemented.

1 - There should be supervision of these schools by understanding qualified inspectors, to ensure that the quality of education and the conduct of the pupils are acceptable by Bahraini standards and principles.

2 - Bahraini students should be encouraged to follow an education that is relevant to their interests and aspirations and therefore the system in Bahrain should be flexible enough to provide transfer from the state schools to the foreign schools and vice versa.

3 - To make this transfer possible, more emphasis should be placed in the state schools on the subjects of science and foreign languages (English and French). On the other hand, in the foreign schools, subjects that deal with the Arabic language and Arab culture should be given more emphasis, particularly for Bahraini students.

4 - The teaching of the Arabic language and the Arab culture in foreign schools should be given by qualified teachers who have been specially trained to teach the Arabic language as a second or foreign language.

5 - Finally co-operation and harmony between all schools in Bahrain, whether national or foreign, should be maintained. If this is achieved, there is every reason to hope that the quest for educational modernity will succeed and that children born and raised in Bahrain will have

an education that combines the cultural richness of the past with the efficiency and sophisticated knowledge of the present and the future.

Before leaving this chapter, it is worth noting that private education is under discussion in Britain; and a similar debate as to the advantages or disadvantages of private education is vigorously conducted in most western countries.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE PROBLEM OF ILLITERACY AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

This chapter will deal with two topics: the eradication of illiteracy and special education for the blind, the deaf, and the mentally handicapped. Each topic will be treated under a separate subheading.

#### 7.1 The Problem of Illiteracy

Illiteracy is a complex phenomenon. It is far more than the ignorance of the rudiments of reading and writing, though it is this narrow definition on which this section will concentrate.

##### 7.1.1 Illiteracy in the Region

In all the so-called developing countries, illiteracy is a problem. In the Arab states it is still a challenge to the societies. Those engaged in combating illiteracy face formidable difficulties that are the result of progress and backwardness alike, from the cultural explosion and scientific technological and social revolutions on the one hand and the population explosion and economic underdevelopment, on the other hand.

Today there are communities in the Arab world that are financially incapable of supporting universal compulsory education for all children. There is also the problem of drop-outs and wastage. There are those in villages and nomadic communities who miss education, especially girls and the elderly. Even though those problems are gradually diminishing they have all contributed to the phenomenon of illiteracy.

On the other hand, there are some countries in the Arab world that have the necessary financial resources and whose citizens are making

use of the available educational provision. But illiteracy among those who have not benefited from the new situation is still high. It is therefore important that primary, intermediate and, if possible, secondary education should be made compulsory, otherwise without such a law, illiteracy will continue to be a problem in those countries for a long time to come.

Accurate and scientific statistics concerning literacy rates are yet to be established for most states. The statistics that are used are either taken from projections based on an enrolment of children in schools or deduced from the general population census. However, one of the available statistical studies made in the late 1970s covering all people aged 15 and over shows that illiteracy in the fourteen Arab states which were studied ranges from 20% to 60% and that the rate is far higher among females and those who live in rural areas.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to literacy programmes outside the formal system of education a study carried out in 1983 revealed that since the 'Baghdad Conference on Compulsory Literacy in 1979' there has been much concern, co-operation, and extensive campaigns among all the Arab states to eradicate illiteracy from the region.<sup>2</sup> Today some of the literary programmes (or non-formal education) go beyond providing simple skills in reading, writing and arithmetic and include technical skill training for people aspiring to get a job or, if they have one, to move up the ladder. The programmes also include health education such as child care, nutrition, family planning, and so on. Other programmes include generally community development and agricultural assistance for rural population. However, relevant programmes initiated in the area vary from country to country depending on their need. For instance in Iraq, it is Cultural Literacy; in Saudi Arabia, it is Accelerated Literary programme; in Egypt, it is Population-Related programmes; in the Sudan it is Literacy and Adult

Education; and in Tunisia, it is the Use of Broadcasting in Non-Formal Education.

#### 7.1.2 In the Case of Bahrain

It was not until 1937 that the Bahrain Nationality Law was introduced. Before then movement to and from Bahrain had not been restricted.<sup>4</sup> In the circumstances, it is not surprising that the majority were illiterate. The first population census in Bahrain, which was the first to be held in the whole Gulf area, took place in 1941, followed by a second census in 1950, a third in 1959, a fourth in 1965, a fifth in 1971 and the last one was in 1981.<sup>5</sup>

The growing population of non Bahrainis over the last four decades is shown in Table 7.1 (see p. 322). The growth in the foreign population from 15,930 in 1941 to 112,378 in 1981 was due to the discovery of oil and the establishment of many industries such as Aluminium Bahrain. This influx of workers created some social problems. The majority of them after living on the Islands for a certain number of years claimed Bahraini nationality; and the majority of them were illiterates.

The most recent census of 1981 shows that among the total non-Bahraini population of 112,378, there were 20,078 illiterates. In other words more than one-sixth of the non-Bahraini are illiterates.

The magnitude of the problem of illiteracy among the people living in Bahrain was not revealed until 1972. To make this clear some explanation is necessary.

In 1972 the Government of Bahrain initiated a series of measures, in particular the setting up of the Constitutional Assembly, to achieve some degree of popular participation in the process of government. It was the election to this Assembly that revealed that though the educational system was then 50 or more years old, it had not reached as many citizens

TABLE 7.1

Population Increase in Bahrain, 1941-1981

Years	1941	1959	1959	1965	1971	1981
Bahrainis	74,040	91,179	118,734	143,814	178,393	238,420
Non-Bahrainis	15,930	18,471	24,401	38,389	37,910	112,378
TOTAL	89,970	109,650	143,135	182,203	216,303	350,798

- Source : 1. Bahrain Census of Population and Housing, 1981, State of Bahrain, Cabinet Affairs, Directorate of Statistics, November, 1982.
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as had been believed. In fact the level of illiteracy among the 40 to 65 years old, in rural areas, negatively influenced the country's first national election in that rural representatives in the Constitutional Assembly were generally underqualified for serving in such a body.<sup>6</sup>

This indicates that, in spite of the fact that over 25 percent of the entire population were enrolled, at that time, in the state school system, the schools had failed to halt the growth of illiteracy. One possible explanation is that the schools, until 1972, had existed mostly in the towns and cities. Also state education was free but not compulsory. A third factor is that the prevailing cultural view against women's education had kept many school-age girls out of the educational system. The reasons usually given by parents (typically of low incomes) for

not sending their daughters to school include:

- 1 - girls learn all they need to know from their mothers;
- 2 - girls need more 'protection' than boys and therefore need to be kept closer to home;
- 3 - girls' help around the house is necessary to the family welfare;
- 4 - girls may learn 'new ideas' in school of which parents would disapprove;
- 5 - it is expensive to send children to school so it is better to invest in boys, who eventually bring some return. Girls only 'enrich' their husbands' households. 7

These three factors together with others contributed to illiteracy in the past; and by 1981 with the last population census, more details about illiteracy in Bahrain had been revealed.

First, Table 7.2 (see p. 324) shows that even among school age groups (10-19 years old), the percentage of illiteracy was greater than 8 percent. Also, the older the age group, the higher the percentage of illiteracy. For instance, it was 63% for the 40 to 44 years old, 70% for the 45 to 49 years old, and 82.7% for the 50 and over.

A comparison of the percentages of illiteracy between males and females shows a marked difference between the two groups. For the boys in school age group (10-19 years old) illiteracy was 3 percent; but it was more than 13 percent for the girls in the same age group. Figures in this table also show that more than 40 percent of the total female population in Bahrain were illiterates compared to 21 percent for the male population.

Secondly, Table 7.3 (see p. 324) shows that by 1981 there were 39,040 illiterates among the Bahrainis in the urban division compared with 14,199 in the rural division. And among the non-Bahrainis there were 17,143 in the urban division compared with 2,935 in the rural division.

A comparison in the numbers of female illiterates in urban and rural

TABLE 7.2

Percentage of Illiterate Population by  
Age Groups and Sex 1981

Age Groups	Male	Female	Total
10 - 14	2.7	10.8	6.7%
15 - 19	4.4	15.4	10.0%
20-24	6.2	22.8	14.7%
25 - 29	7.8	32.7	19.8%
30 - 34	11.5	51.6	30.3%
35 - 39	23.9	70.7	48.9%
40 - 44	41.6	81.8	63.0%
45 - 49	53.9	86.6	70.4%
50 & over	72.9	93.8	82.7%
National Mean	21.2	41.4	31.3

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics 1984/85, p. 15.

TABLE 7.3

Distribution of Illiterates by Major Civil  
Division, Nationality and Sex 1981

		Bahraini			Non-Bahraini			Total	
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Illiterates	Urban	13474	25566	39040	14090	3045	17143	27572	28011
	Rural	4651	9548	14199	2644	291	2935	7295	9839
	Total	18125	35114	53239	16734	3336	20078	34867	38450

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational statistics 1984/85, p. 16.

areas shows that there were 25,566 female illiterates among the Bahrainis in the urban division and 9,548 in the rural division. Among the non-Bahrainis, there were 3,045 female illiterates in urban Bahrain compared with 291 in rural Bahrain. This is because most of the non-Bahraini workers were either not married or left their wives behind in their own countries.

Further analysis of the data in both tables 7.2 and 7.3 indicates that 80.7% of the Bahrain population live in urban areas. In fact, because of the small size of the Islands, a visitor to Bahrain does not notice major differences between the rural and the urban areas in terms of development, urbanisation and economic activities. Perhaps the basic difference, as indicated by the results of questionnaires applied in a recent study concerning "Adult Education in Bahrain"<sup>8</sup> may lie in certain conservative attitudes as reflected in the reluctance to allow girls to be enrolled in schools. Such reluctance is greater in rural areas than in urban areas.

Figures in both tables also reveal that by 1981 the illiterates as a percentage of the total population in Bahrain were 31.3.

### 7.1.3 Broad-Based Training Considerations

The first anti-illiteracy campaign in Bahrain dates from 1940 when members of a national club in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, opened evening classes for illiterate men, particularly for the parents of the members. Gradually, several classes were opened; each had nearly 20-25 elderly students. In addition there were follow-up classes for other citizens as well.<sup>9</sup> A few years later in 1948, a group of Bahrainis, who were students at the American University in Beirut (AUB), offered lessons of Arabic and arithmetic to the public during their summer holidays in Bahrain. Classes were conducted in Muharraq, the second city

in Bahrain. Some 700 elderly citizens attended the classes which were free of charge; but these efforts were discontinued in 1950.<sup>10</sup>

Another attempt was made in 1952 when educated Bahraini individuals gave lessons in the evenings; and with the help of the Ministry of Education, classes were opened in the major towns. A fourth attempt was made in 1960 when members of well-known national clubs started classes. However, these efforts, though successful, were exclusively for men.

The first movement to eradicate illiteracy among women started in 1960 when members of "Nahdhat-al-Fatat" voluntarily opened classes in their clubs. Basic lessons in reading and writing were given to elderly members in addition to follow-up classes for others.<sup>11</sup>

Individual anti-illiteracy efforts continued to grow separately but it was not until 1971 that a committee was elected from all men's and women's societies under the supervision of the Alumni Club. Then all private initiatives to eradicate illiteracy were co-ordinated. The new joint committee started by opening 8 classes for 280 women and 5 classes for 125 men. The curriculum of the Kuwaiti School for eradication of illiteracy was adopted; and teaching was voluntarily undertaken by educated members. Financial assistance to the committee including books, stationery and the use of the state school buildings as evening centres for the eradication of illiteracy were provided by the Ministry of Education.

For the period between 1940 and 1970 no proper records are available of the number of Bahrainis who benefited through the work of individual clubs and societies in the eradication of illiteracy. What is noteworthy is that the first anti-illiteracy campaign in Bahrain was initiated by the people and the idea for establishing it originated with Bahraini students abroad. This concern by the people for the eradication of illiteracy has continued until the present time.

But relegating complete responsibility for the eradication of illiteracy to the private sector has its disadvantages as well. One was the slow development. Another was the failure of such efforts to reach illiterates in remote parts of the Islands. This was clearly illustrated in the 1971 census when the percentage of illiterates was 52.9% compared with 31.3% in 1981 as a result of the Ministry of Education assuming responsibility for the campaign in 1973.

Bahrain first began to implement a far-reaching programme to eradicate illiteracy in 1973. Since then about 70 centres for teaching Arabic to men and women have been set up and 12 for teaching English. Several of these have been opened for evening sessions of vocational training and instruction in office administration.<sup>12</sup> To hasten the eradication of illiteracy, the Ministry of Education in 1971 invited experts from UNESCO to study the situation and recommend a plan to be adopted in the implementation of all programmes in this field. The experts, aided by a technical committee formed for this purpose, carried out a thorough investigation of illiteracy in Bahrain for nearly a month; and later that year submitted their report. However the Ministry of Education was unable to implement their proposals until 1973/74.

In their report, the experts recommended that measures to eradicate illiteracy in Bahrain should be based on a five-year plan. They calculated that even if 30 new classes were opened each year, the process would still take more than 80 years. Therefore a new approach was proposed. It consisted of opening first 100 classes per year for a period of 5 years for both males and females with an average of 40 students in each class; and secondly, after the first period of 5 years a new schedule for the next 5 years should be planned depending on the number of remaining illiterates, and so on.

To achieve the best results from the five-year plan, the Directorate

of Adult Education and Eradication of Illiteracy made the following recommendations:

- 1 - to make education compulsory for all illiterates in the age group 10-44 years old;
- 2 - to set up a national council for the eradication of illiteracy comprising representatives of all the Ministries and other private organisations (clubs, societies, etc.) under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Education;
- 3 - to assess the quality of teaching by developing training programmes for all those involved in adult education, either teachers, students or administrators;
- 4 - to obtain the co-operation and participation of the mass media (particularly T.V.), mosques and clubs.

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Most of these recommendations were put into effect. The Ministry of Education set up a national literacy committee at the highest level, headed by the Minister of Education and with members drawn from the public and private sectors. Two sub-committees were also set up, one for information and the other for training. They assisted the parent body in the implementation of the campaign. The Ministry also established a special directorate to supervise the literacy and adult education programmes. This directorate consisted of specialised sections for literacy supervision and adult education, together with units for curriculum, research, aids and information. Centres for learning and the eradication of illiteracy were established in all major towns and villages. Courses for training the teachers were conducted under the supervision of experts from UNESCO.<sup>14</sup> And finally the Ministry of Education prepared a comprehensive plan to achieve total literacy within a definite period and also to improve the quality of literacy teachers. The Ministry has set the ambitious target of eradicating illiteracy from the Islands by the year 1990.

The present organisation of the literacy programme is as follows.

- 1 - Literacy Stage : The duration of study is two academic years, each of eight months. It is an evening programme for four days a week

(9 hours per week). The curriculum consists of Arabic language, arithmetic, religious education, general culture and activities.

- 2 - Follow-up Stage : This lasts two academic years, each of eight months. It is an evening programme for four days weekly (9 hours per week). The curriculum consists of Arabic language, mathematics, English language, religious education, social studies, science and health.
- 3 - Consolidation Stage : This lasts one academic year. It is an evening programme for four days weekly. The curriculum consists of the subjects studied by sixth year pupils in primary schools.<sup>15</sup>

The programme began in 1973-74 with 30 classes enrolling 1,154 students including 578 females. The following year saw an almost 150 percent increase in both the number of classes which reached 80, and students which reached 2,858. In 1975/76 the number of classes further rose to 136 and the number of students increased to 4,168 including 2,899 females. In other words while male students registered only an increase of 19%, the female students rise was phenomenal at 63.3%. The percentage of the rise in classes was 83.3. The programmes continued to attract both male and female students at the average increase of about 23.6% annually.<sup>16</sup>

The year 1981-82 saw the highest number of students - 4,696 - participating in this programme. While the numbers of both male and female students had fluctuated a large number of male students had been consistently dropping out, reaching as many as 595 in 1979-80, it progressively increased to a total of 697 in 1980-81 and 1,076 in 1981-82. It, however, showed a slight decline in the following year with the total reaching only 1,029.<sup>17</sup>

During the same period women students reached the highest number at 3,620 in 1981-82 from 3,030 in 1978-79. There was a drop in female students in 1979 and 1980 when their numbers fell to 2,423 and 2,428

respectively. While 1982-83 again saw a jump in the female numbers when they increased by almost 150 percent, but numbers again fell by 25 percent in 1982-83.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, the number of literacy centres had been fluctuating reflecting the number of students in different years. While the total number of centres in 1978 was 46, it fell to 29 after remaining almost static during the intervening period. There was a total of 99 classes in 1978/79 which rose to 161 the following year but declined to 146 in 1980/81 and to 98 in 1981/82; and further down to 81 the following year.<sup>19</sup>

The process of eradicating illiteracy in Bahrain within the framework of the five-year plan has been continued through the following years and will be maintained until 1990. The following tables show the situation of illiteracy in Bahrain for the years 1982/83 to 1985/86. The main obstacle in achieving the goal of the plan seems to be the drop-out problem among the adult illiterates - both males and females, Bahrainis and non-Bahrainis.

1 - Table 7.4 (see p. 331) sums up facts about the drop-out problem. For instance, in 1982/83 the drop-out rate was 19.6% for the anti-illiteracy stage, and 19.9% for the follow-up stage. In 1984/85 it became 26.1% for the anti-illiteracy stage, 27.1% for the follow-up stage, and 21.3% for the remedial stage - or a total of 2,403 students of whom 1420 were females and 983 were males.

2 - Table 7.5 (see p. 332) presents information on examination candidates and the number of successful students at each stage. For instance, in 1984/85 out of 3,514 students who sat the end of year exam of the anti-illiteracy stage, 3,425 students passed and were promoted to the next stage. At the follow-up stage out of 1,773 examinees, 1,625 passed the final exam. And at the remedial stage out of 1,502 examinees,

TABLE 7.4

Registered Learners, Drop-outs and Drop-out Rate According to  
Adult Education Stage and Sex (1982/83 - 1984/85)

School Year	Stage	Registered			Drop-outs			Drop-out Rate		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1982/83	Anti-illiteracy Follow-up	393	2038	2432	161	316	447	41	15.5	19.6
		473	1265	1738	204	142	346	43.1	11.2	19.9
1983/84	Anti-illiteracy	1006	3028	4034	481	663	1144	47.8	21.9	28.3
	Follow-up	698	1992	2690	304	394	698	43.6	19.8	25.9
	Remedial	464	564	1028	163	94	257	35.1	16.7	25
1984/85	Anti-illiteracy	1048	3833	4881	416	856	1272	39.7	22.3	26.1
	Follow-up	794	1799	2593	333	369	702	41.9	20.5	27.1
	Remedial	774	1236	2010	234	195	429	30.2	15.8	21.3

Source : Melika, Louise Kamel, Proposed Strategy for Follow-up Stage in Adult Education in Bahrain.  
UNESCO, 1986, p. 60, (in Arabic).

TABLE 7.5

Examination Candidates and Number of Successful Learners According  
to Adult Education Stages and Sex \* (1982/83 - 1984/85)

School Year	Stage	Examination Candidates			Successful Learners			Success Rate		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1982/83	Anti-illiteracy	204	1686	1890	195	1501	1696	95.6	89	89.7
	Follow-up	248	1106	1354	216	908	1124	87.1	82.1	83
1983/84	Anti-illiteracy	481	2282	2763	424	2041	2465	88.1	89.4	89.2
	Follow-up	364	1497	1861	316	1356	1672	86.8	90.6	89.8
	Remedial	318	452	770	257	435	692	80.8	96.2	89.9
1984/85	Anti-illiteracy	599	2915	3514	588	2837	3425	89.2	97.3	97.5
	Follow-up	385	1388	1773	367	1258	1625	95.3	90.6	91.6
	Remedial	487	1015	1502	457	978	1435	93.8	95.3	95.5

\* The figures shown in this Table opposite each stage cover the total number of learners in the First and Second Classes.

Source : Melika, Louise Kamel, Proposed Strategy for Follow-up Stage in Adult Education in Bahrain, UNESCO, 1986, p. 60, (in Arabic).

1,435 graduated. In other words the success rates for the three stages of learning at the literacy centres were 97.5%, 91.6% and 95.5%.

3 - Table 7.6 (see p. 334) gives information about the number of graduates from this programme for the years 1977/78 and the following years until 1984/85. In the academic year 1977/78 the total number of the graduates was 1,370; it increased to 1,188 in 1978/79; and decreased to 1,100 in 1979/80, to 889 in 1980/81, to 901 in 1981/82; but increased again to 1,085 in 1982/83, to 2,119 in 1983/84, and fell to 1,596 graduates in 1985. Thus, by the year 1985 the total number of graduates was 11,238.

4 - Table 7.7 (see p. 335) shows the breakdown of classes and learners at the adult education centres in 1986 according to sex. Figures in this table show that by the year 1986 there were 2,076 male students in 94 classrooms; and 5,409 female students in 282 classrooms.

To summarize, figures in the four tables (7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7) indicate that by 1986 the programme had been a success as far as the enrolment of the students at the beginning of each year, and the passing the end-year examination were concerned. But unfortunately, all the aims of the five-year plan were hindered because of the drop-out problem. This creates problems not only for the Ministry of Education but also for the country as a whole - as the number of illiterates will continue to increase in Bahrain.

There are many reasons for dropping out from literacy courses - some are universal, some are local and some are personal. However the reasons for dropping out from the literacy courses in Bahrain as given in 1986 by the students were: first, domestic responsibilities and female problems such as pregnancy, childbirth, child care, illness, and so on. Secondly, conflict between hours of courses and hours of work for shift workers. Thirdly, remoteness of literacy centres from

TABLE 7.6

Graduates of Adult Education Centres According  
to Stage and Sex from 1977/78 to 1984/85

School Year	Sex	Stage			Total
		Anti-illiteracy	Follow-up	Remedial	
1977/78	Male	189	62 (1)	-	251
	Female	752	367 (1)	-	1119
	Total	941	429 (1)	-	1370
1978/79	Male	115	60 (1)	-	175
	Female	567	360 (1)	86 (2)	1013
	Total	682	420 (1)	86 (2)	1188
1979/80	Male	102	51 (1)	-	153
	Female	436	392 (1)	119 (2)	947
	Total	538	443 (1)	119 (2)	1100
1980/81	Male	76	65 (1)	-	141
	Female	446	288 (1)	14 (3)	748
	Total	522	353 (1)	14 (3)	889
1981/82	Male	103	32 (2)	-	135
	Female	571	174 (2)	21 (4)	766
	Total	674	206 (2)	21 (4)	901
1982/83	Male	99	67 (2)	26 (4)	194
	Female	722	149 (2)	22 (4)	893
	Total	821	216 (2)	48 (4)	1085
1983/84	Male	181	160 (2)	117 (4)	458
	Female	738	720 (2)	203 (4)	1661
	Total	919	880 (2)	320 (4)	2119
1984/85	Male	247	180 (2)	211 (4)	638
	Female	1100	556 (2)	292 (4)	1948
	Total	1347	736 (2)	503 (4)	1596
Total	Male	1112	677	354	2143
	Female	5332	3006	757	9095
	Total	6444	3683	1111	11238

(1) Equals Fifth Primary Class                      (2) Equals Sixth Primary Class  
(3) Equals Second Intermediate Class            (4) Equals Third Intermediate Class

Source : Melika, Louise Kamel, Proposed Strategy for Follow-up Stage in Adult Education in Bahrain, UNESCO, 1986, p. 58, (in Arabic).

TABLE 7.7

Break-down of Classes and Learners in Adult Education Centres  
in January 1986 According to Sex

Class	Males		Females	
	Classrooms	No. of Learners	Classrooms	No. of Learners
First Anti-illiteracy	25	622	61	1227
Second Anti-illiteracy	18	339	72	1431
First Follow-up	14	294	54	961
Second Follow-up	12	226	39	666
First Remedial	12	269	27	503
Second Remedial	13	226	29	621
Total	94	2076	282	5409

Source : Melika Louise Kamel, Proposed Strategy for Follow-up Stage in Adult Education in Bahrain, UNESCO, 1986, p. 57, (in Arabic).

learners' residential areas. And finally, lack of interest or motivation caused by discouragement by members of the family, by inappropriate teaching, and by unsuitable textbooks, and harsh comments.<sup>20</sup>

One may conclude that literacy and adult education in Bahrain has been faced with many problems such as: the dropping out of students before completing the course; the lack of qualified teachers necessary for adult education. And thirdly there has been the urgent need to improve the qualitative levels of teachers who could build up the motivation and the interests of their students.

Whether the Ministry of Education will achieve the set goals of the five-year plan and eradicate illiteracy from the country by the year 1990 remains to be seen. However, in spite of the problems that have faced all the efforts in the implementation of the plan, it was reported in 1986 that the percentage of illiteracy in Bahrain, which was 31.3 in 1981, had declined to less than 25.<sup>21</sup>

## 7.2 Special Educational Needs

There are in the area today several separate special schools which cater for a wide variety of handicaps. For a number of years the general trend has been increasingly to provide special education in ordinary schools where this is in the educational interest of the child, and where the nature of his or her disability permits.

In recent years, however, co-operation among local educational authorities in the Gulf States has provided for a new system of special education based on (1) the categories of disability and (2) the special educational needs of the child. Thus for the last two decades, children with emotional or behavioural disorders and those with significant learning difficulties, as well as physical or mental handicaps were provided with special education appropriate to their needs.

Among the schools in the area that offer special education are (1) The Al-Noor Institute for the Blind, (2) The Hope Institute for the Physically and the Mentally Handicapped, and (3) The Al-Ahdath School for children with emotional or behavioural disorders. These three school were established in Bahrain; and for several years have offered special education for their variety of handicap.

#### 7.2.1 The Al-Noor Institute for the Blind

This Institute was established in Bahrain early in 1974 by the Regional Bureau of the Middle East Committee for the Blind. It is a regional institute serving both Bahrainis and non-Bahrainis, both day and boarding; and caters for nearly 200 male and female students whose ages are between 6 and 20.<sup>22</sup>

Since its establishment in 1974, its objectives have been to ensure all aspects of welfare, orientation, education and rehabilitation of blind persons, male and female, in the Gulf area.<sup>23</sup>

The Institute owes its existence to regional co-operation among the Gulf states. To make this clear some explanation is necessary. It was at the conference of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, held in New Delhi, India in 1969, that the resolution to establish the Middle East Committee for the Welfare of the Blind was passed.

At this conference the objectives of the Committee were established.

- To raise the social and cultural standard of the handicapped in general and the blind people in particular.
- To develop the services rendered to the handicapped and to foster co-operation among the institutions concerned, and to open institutes for the education and rehabilitation of the blind.
- To initiate scientific researches for the blind and blindness, and co-ordinate the work and hold conferences, meetings and seminars, and to award scholarships in the field of visual handicap.

After the work had been begun a conference was held in Riyadh,

Saudi Arabia, from 3 to 7 April, 1971. It was attended by eleven countries, namely: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (K.S.A.), Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Arab Republic of Yemen, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon and Iran. Later, other countries joined the conference, such as the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Afghanistan. As a result of this conference the Middle East Committee was established. This Committee and its Regional Bureau started its activities by the beginning of the year 1973. K.S.A. has provided all the financial requirements of the project. However, the budget of the Regional Bureau is financed annually by five member states, namely:

K.S.A.	45% of the total budget
U.A.E.	25% of the total budget
Qatar	11% of the total budget
Kuwait	10% of the total budget
Bahrain	5% of the total budget

Among the outstanding achievements of the Regional Bureau of the Middle East Committee for the Blind are the following.

1. Al-Noor Institute for the Blind in Bahrain.
2. The Regional Centre for the Rehabilitation and Training of the Blind (females) in Jordan.
3. Rendering financial and technical assistance to the Centre for the Blind in Yemen.
4. A Braille press, established in 1973, equipped with up-to-date machines to print Braille embossed publications and books for the blind.
5. A library, established in 1976, to provide blind people with recorded books.
6. A public library attached to the Research Centre, established in 1976, containing collections and selections of books, references and encyclopaedias.
7. Al-Fajr Magazine, which is issued monthly, in Braille, and air-mailed to hundreds of blind people throughout the Middle East.
8. A central computerised Braille production system in English and Arabic was installed in Riyadh.
9. Applied training courses conducted periodically for the instructors of the blind in Bahrain, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, with a view

to providing them with training in the most up-to-date techniques.

10. A special course for teachers and students in Bahrain on the use of the Optacon system. This course was established in 1979. 26

The Bureau also holds annual camps for the blind in Arab and African countries. The aim of such camps is to enable the students to develop their talents, to depend on themselves, and make "friends" with other delegations. The first camp was held in Bahrain in 1980 and was attended by 120 students and their teachers from 17 Arab and African countries. The second Arab African camp was held in Algeria in 1981 and was attended by 219 students and teachers. The third camp was held in Morocco in 1983.

The Al-Noor Institute for the Blind in Bahrain comprises the following departments.

- Boarding Department where the students are fully boarded, being provided with accommodation, catering and clothing, as well as medical treatment and social care. Each student is also given pocket money for personal use.
- The Academic Department looks after teaching and learning at the six-year preliminary stage, and the three-year preparatory stage.
- The Professional Department is responsible for the workshop activities, which include canework and wickerwork, cleaning tools, brushes and brooms.
- The Socio-Cultural programme includes trips and visits to scientific centres, museums of antiquities and ancient monuments, as well as tourist regions - also the organisation of cultural seminars, competitions, lectures and social events. 27

The Institute offers a variety of activities and programmes such as (1) classroom activities including education and training for the students in all related tools, advanced teaching aids and relevant set of books in Braille; (2) outdoor activities including social, cultural and recreational activities such as travel, seminars, cultural competitions and social events as well as musical parties; (3) further activities such as training courses on mobility, automatic telephone exchange and the Optacon system. Advanced training courses for the

teachers and the labourers are also conducted to develop and improve their efficiency and to acquaint them with the new inventions in the field of education for the blind, such as the modern mathematics course and the low vision course.<sup>28</sup>

For several years the Institute has conducted a pioneering experiment by which some graduates from the Institute at intermediate level have been integrated with their sighted colleagues at ordinary secondary schools, and the results have been satisfactory.<sup>29</sup>

The following tables are derived by summing up figures for enrolment at Al Noor Institute for the Blind in Bahrain.

1 - Table 7.8 (see p. 341) shows that over the past seven years there has been a gradual increase in the number of students both male and female. For instance, in 1978/79 the number of boys at the Institute was 83, and the number of girls was 19; it became 129 boys and 48 girls in 1985/86.

2 - Table 7.9 (see p. 341) gives information about the nationality of the students. In 1985, there were 48 boys and 18 girls from Bahrain, 46 boys and 2 girls from Oman, 4 boys and 2 girls from Qatar, 3 boys and 3 girls from U.A.E., and 43 boys from Saudia Arabia. There were in total 139 male students compared to only 39 female students. To put it in another way, these figures indicate that there are still children, and in particular blind girls, who are not benefitting from the special education that is currently available in the area. The result is that they risk staying illiterate all their lives. For this reason, together with others, it is recommended that local education authorities must ensure that parents of such children are required by law to see that their handicapped children receive efficient education by sending them to Al-Noor or similar schools elsewhere between the ages of 6 and 20.

TABLE 7.8

Enrolment at the Al-Noor Institute for the Blind  
1978/79 - 1985/86

Year	Male	Female	Total
1978/79	83	19	102
1980/81	104	17	121
1981/82	94	17	111
1982/83	69	17	86
1983/84	111	24	135
1984/85	139	39	178
1985/86	129	48	177

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain, 1978/79, 1980/81, 1981/82, 1982/83, 1983/84, 1984/85, 1985/86.

TABLE 7.9

Number of Students at the Al-Noor Institute for the Blind  
by Nationality and Sex 1984/85

Nationality	Male	Female	Total
Bahraini	48	18	66
Omani	46	2	48
Qatari	4	2	6
U.A.E.	3	3	6
Saudi	43	-	43
Others	6	14	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>178</b>

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics 1984/85, p. 289.

### 7.2.2 The Al-Amal (Hope) Institute

This Institute was established in Bahrain in 1977 and was then known as Hope House School, but in 1982 the name was changed to Hope Institute for Handicapped Children. It is one of the charitable projects sponsored by the Child and Mother Welfare Society with the aim of catering for handicapped children with mild deafness and mild mental retardation, between the ages of 3 and 12. It is a Bahraini Institute, run and administered by members of women's societies, but financed from gifts and donations from individuals and groups inside and outside Bahrain. The land where the school was built was donated by the Government of Bahrain; but the actual building was financed by the Government of Kuwait. However the training of the teachers, their salaries, and other educational equipment and aids are provided by the Ministry of Education.

The goals of the Institute as established by the Children and Mother's Welfare Society are:

1 - To develop the abilities of the handicapped child through an individual education programme in the following areas:

- (a) independent functioning
- (b) social skills
- (c) motor skills
- (d) language skills
- (e) recreation skills
- (f) arithmetical skills.

2 - To develop the skills and the patterns of behaviour needed by the handicapped in daily living.

3 - To develop skills and abilities that allow the handicapped to live and function (as normally as possible and to lead a normal life).

4 - To develop patterns of behaviour and response in the handicapped which correspond to the social environment of the normal population.

5 - To develop skills in the handicapped which are of assistance in

meeting the requirements for independent daily living and self-sufficiency.

7 - To engage in on-going studies and research in order to provide better educational services for the handicapped.<sup>30</sup>

The conditions of admission as set out by the same Society were as follows:

1 - The child should be mildly mentally retarded or should have hearing impairment with no other disabilities.

2 - The age range of the mentally handicapped should be from 6 to 12 years of age. For the hearing impaired the age range should be from 3 to 12 years of age.

3 - The child should be a citizen of an Arab country.

4 - The co-operation of the parents with the Institute staff is a prerequisite of admission.<sup>31</sup>

Services in the Hope Institute are offered on a day-school basis because there are no "boarding facilities". The services offered comprise the following.

1 - Instructional services : The Institute provides an individually designed instructional programme for each handicapped child; and this programme consists of (a) daily living skills, (b) arithmetic skills, (c) language skills, (d) social skills, (e) motor skills, (f) recreational skills.

2 - Counselling Services : As the family has the major effect on the development of the child, the Institute provides counselling services on child development to the family of each handicapped child.

3 - Health Services : In co-operation with the Ministry of Health and some private clinics, the Institute provides specialized medical care for each child. The physical development of each child at the Institute is observed and difficulties which interfere with the child's learning

progress are corrected.

4 - Recreation Services : The Institute provides recreation services for each child through programmes appropriate to their ability. Lessons in community awareness and daily living are included in weekly outings to the community. The children participate in formal and informal occasions such as the National Day, the Tree Day, and the Family Day.

5 - Financial Aid : The Institute provides financial aid in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs for children who come from families of limited income.

The Hope Institute building was provided by the Kuwaiti Government; and it can accommodate 150 children of whom 100 are mildly mentally retarded and 50 have hearing difficulties. The building comprises an auditorium, three wings consisting of classrooms for the mentally retarded children, offices, stores, workshops, a music room, a gymnasium, a well-equipped flat for training children in domestic duties, a dining room, a T.V. room, a medical clinic, and a visual aid department. The fourth wing has been specially designed for deaf children. The building also includes playgrounds, a swimming pool and a sand-pit used for teaching the children.<sup>32</sup>

Lessons at the Institute are free as are also the morning snacks, uniforms and transport. After the age of twelve, the children are transferred to the Government Rehabilitation Centre for handicapped children in Isa Town.

Regarding enrolment at the Institute, the Hope House School started in 1977 with 12 children. By 1986 the number of children enrolled at the Hope Institute had grown to 93. The following tables give information about the enrolment of children at the Hope Institute for the past five years, from 1981/82 to 1985/86.

1 - Table 7.10 (see p. 346) shows that the enrolment at the Institute

has, over the past five years, increased gradually. It was 43 children in 1981/82, was 47 in 1982/83, 77 in 1983/84, 93 in 1984/85, and 93 in 1985/86. Figures in this table also show that in the year 1981/82 there were 20 boys and 23 girls; in 1982/83 there were 23 boys and 24 girls; in 1983/84 there were 39 boys and 38 girls; in 1984/85 there were 48 boys and 45 girls; and in 1985/86 45 boys and 48 girls. This indicates that in this Institute, in contrast to the Noor Institute, the numbers of male and female pupils are almost the same.

2 - Table 7.11 (see p. 346) shows that in 1985 there were 91 Bahraini children and only 2 non-Bahraini enrolled at "The Hope Institute". This is mainly due to the fact that there are as yet no boarding facilities to accommodate non-Bahraini children living outside the city.

To conclude this section on special educational needs, one may say that special education is available, nowadays, in various forms in the region.<sup>33</sup> However, local education authorities should ensure that children with special needs be not only provided with adequate education compatible with meeting their needs with the best use of resources, but also after being trained, the students continue to be under observation, helped in the process of integration into their local communities in order to pursue their careers.

### 7.3 Conclusion

Several studies have dealt with literacy development in the Third World. However, in an attempt to build a theory, most of these studies have used the model approach.<sup>34</sup> These studies have largely ignored the fact that most of the developing countries view education as a functional rather than a sociological process.

Developing countries have always tried to use education as a means to economic growth. Thus a ten years old boy who never attended school,

TABLE 7.10

Number of Children at Hope Institute (Mentally and  
Hearing Handicapped) 1981/82 to 1985/86

Years	Male	Female	Total
1981/82	20	23	43
1982/83	23	24	47
1983/84	39	38	77
1984/85	48	45	93
1985/86	45	48	93

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Statistical Summaries on Education in Bahrain for the years 1981/82, 1982/83, 1983/84, 1984/85 and 1985/86.

TABLE 7.11

Number of Children at Hope Institute (Mentally and  
Hearing Handicapped) by Nationality and Sex 1984/85

Sex	Bahraini	Non-Bahraini	Total
Male	48	2	48
Female	45	-	45
TOTAL	91	2	93

Source : State of Bahrain, Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics 1984/85, p. 291.

yet has learned patiently and gradually the craft of carpet spinning from his highly skilled father in Iran, Iraq, Turkey etc., or the highly skilled traditional marquetry in Syria, might be considered illiterate by Western standards. But in their own homes what they have learned about such crafts is enough to guarantee them employment for the rest of their lives. These children are very much respected in that part of the world, not only because they contribute to the economic welfare for their countries, but also through them, traditional skills are passed from generation to generation. It is not surprising that among the illiterate people in Yemen, for example, are many learned and wise men.

Consequently, there were in Bahrain before the 1970s children from the villages whose knowledge was gained not by attending formal schools but by accompanying their fathers on business trips, or learning from their craft-relatives the skills of boat-building, weaving, mat-making, lime gypsum, pottery, gold engraving, and so on. However, children who are self employed, but are not listed among school enrolments, are statistically illiterates.

Probably in a majority of countries, the skills necessary to earn a living and the skills of reading and writing are quite different. If one defines literacy as "occupational competence" then one identifies very different groups from those currently regarded as "illiterate". The only merit of defining literacy as "the ability to read and write" is that it avoids these complications and is a yardstick that can be applied equally everywhere.

In the immediate post-independence years, the question asked by developing countries is how can education contribute to economic growth.<sup>35</sup>

This inclination to link education with economics is also clear in the present Bahraini policy of education - in the diversification

of the curriculum, especially at the secondary school level, and in the selected specializations in higher education. This has been done in order to create a system of vocational training, which would meet the country's manpower needs in the economic and social fields.

Male literacy in Bahrain was hardly 8.7 percent and female 1.8 percent in the early 1940s. This rose to 12.8 percent of the total population in the 1950s.<sup>36</sup> According to the 1971 census, the percentage of illiterates to the population was 52.9. But by 1981 this percentage had fallen to 31.3.

One may wonder why in spite of the efforts of the Bahraini Government in the field of education since 1919, Bahrain's educational system has failed to reach so large a number of people living on the Island.

Our study shows that many factors have interacted with each other to produce this situation. Most of these factors were mentioned earlier, such as (1) schools in the past existed mostly in towns and cities, (2) many of the immigrant workers were illiterates, (3) education was and still is free but not compulsory, (4) the prevailing cultural view against women's education has kept many school-age girls, especially in the villages, out of the school system. One may notice that most of these factors are similar to those which contributed to illiteracy in the region in general.

The census of 1981 has illuminated the distribution of illiteracy in Bahrain. It is most common among the elderly people, among the females, and among those who live in rural areas.

To combat illiteracy, the Ministry of Education has, in recent years, implemented a five-year comprehensive plan by which illiteracy should be eradicated from the Island by 1990. The course of study consists of three stages of learning - (1) the literacy stage, (2) the follow-up stage, and (3) the consolidation stage. However, in spite

of the efforts to make the plan succeed, a large number of the students, both male and female, have been consistently dropping out from the courses.

The drop-out problem is considered by the educational authorities as a major obstacle which could prevent the five-year plan from achieving its aim. Our study shows that there are different reasons for dropping out from courses. However, regardless of whether these reasons are personal, local or general, the students who drop out from the literacy programmes will continue through life to be illiterate if no other measures are introduced.

For this reason, together with others, it is recommended that co-operation among the Gulf States should be directed toward the implementation of a new kind of education to eradicate illiteracy among the people and in particular among those who live in remote places, or those who for one reason or another cannot attend the regular classes at the centres. This could be done by promoting literacy lessons through the use of broadcasting, television, and video tapes. Such a plan, in addition to improving the methods of teaching, text books and other facilities at the centres, could reduce the harmful effects arising from the drop-out problem. This is because the availability of the tape makes it possible for them to be used at any time and by anybody, in particular by shift workers, by housewives, and by others who, because of various obligations, are unable to attend the classes on a regular basis.

To conclude this topic on adult literacy and special education, one can say that in the developing countries many conditions have been considered as handicapping such as being a female. And illiteracy, in a narrow sense, is like blindness, deafness, or physical and mental handicap, it can limit a person's opportunities and cause frustration.

However, without the strong support of the Government to educate the illiterate parents, progress will be difficult to achieve.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, the aim has been to present a broad view of education and the problem of change. The study was concerned with the interaction of various forces and trends at different stages of development and at different levels of education.

The final chapter seeks to evaluate the Educational System in Bahrain and analyse the strengths and weaknesses in that system with regard to both policy and reality. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first examines innovative practices in Bahraini education which have been initiated, over the years, to make the system more functionally related to the needs of modern society. The reason why we have adopted this analysis is that such reforms have significantly influenced the current educational system in Bahrain; and have also made some penetration into the superstructure of education in the Gulf region.

It is the aim of the second part of this chapter to examine the problems that Bahraini education is currently facing and to present recommendations.

#### 8.1 Innovative Practices in Bahraini Education

Education in Bahrain has, over the years, passed through several phases of evolution, consolidation and reform. The result was that innovations were slow, gradual but well considered. This section attempts to review and analyse educational gains that may be characterized as innovative and have the potential for improving the condition of learning both within and beyond the school system. The Bahraini

educational system has, over the past seven decades, made impressive gains in the following areas.

First, of all the states of the Arabian peninsula and the southern Gulf, Bahrain, despite its small size and limited economic resources, was the first to establish a modern system of education nearly seventy years ago. As a result, the Bahraini system is the oldest system of education in that part of the world. Today almost every child in the age group 6-11 goes to primary school and almost 70 percent of the young people between the ages 12 and 17 attend an intermediate or secondary school (academic and vocational). These children, their parents, and grandparents, being themselves the product of this system, are more tolerant of social and educational changes than their counterparts in other countries of the Gulf region.

Secondly, the Bahraini educational system reflects the cultural values of a traditional yet modern society. There is a reaching out for new ideas, new life styles and innovations. This has been achieved as a result of socio-cultural change.

One of the striking features of Bahrain is its historic openness to the rest of the world, mainly through navigation. The Islands, being bounded by seas, have had contacts with the rest of the world since the earliest days. We have seen in Chapter One how socio-cultural change, at both cultural and institutional levels, was primarily the consequence of factors which were, to some extent, external to the society. After World War I, many Bahrainis went to the West and came to know and admire its outlook and values. In 1919, Shaikh Abdulla bin Isa returned from his first visit to England filled with enthusiasm for education. Much of Western culture was introduced to Bahrain, not least its educational institutions and a generation grew up exposed to Western ideas and values. This was true especially of some Bahraini

students who in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s and 1970s were seeking training in Western universities and who are today the leaders of education in the country.

Bahrain owes much to Western liberal influence and aspires to the development of a modern type of secular state. Counter to this, however, is a traditional Islamic school of thought which remains critical of innovation at both the cultural and institutional levels.

What is important is that the Bahraini system of education has, over the years, maintained a balance between these two forces: the "reality" and the "Islamic ideology". The introduction of girls' education in 1929, as we have seen in Chapter Two, was a daring innovation in a highly religious and conservative region such as the Gulf. Yet the Islanders accepted women's education as a natural process. Years later when schools for girls were opened in other parts of the Gulf, they were met with hostility and suspicion. As a result women, in today's Bahrain, have more freedom, more responsibility, and more roles to play than their sisters in other countries of the Gulf.

Such attitudes obtain, nowadays, towards co-education. To avoid duplication of time, effort, money and resources, both boys and girls sit side by side in all Bahraini institutes for higher and university education. Yet such a phenomenon has not been fully accepted in the area. Co-education was and still is a matter of lively debate among the more conservative of the people. Perhaps this explains why the new Arabian Gulf University, though located in Bahrain, is sex-segregated. This is because, as Chapter Five shows, the Arabian Gulf University is financed, as well as by Bahrain, by other Gulf states, who insist on sex-segregation as part of the University policy.

Thirdly, among other characteristics of Islamic education, the Bahraini system tries to implement two important qualities - integration

and continuity, which are both traditional and at the same time modern.

Integration, in Islamic education means approaching man as a whole person and a responsible being. Education is then centred not upon a given discipline or area of science but on the totality of the human being which has to be developed.

Continuity means that education takes the human being at the earliest age and involves him for the whole of his life. The principle of education "From the womb to the tomb" or "From the cradle to the grave" has, since 1982, become the main motto of the Bahraini system of education. This is illustrated in the Adult Literacy scheme and the Five-Year Plan to eradicate illiteracy from Bahrain by 1990, which have been discussed in Chapter Seven.

Fourthly, in recent years, the Bahraini system has made impressive gains in the in-service training of hundreds of national teachers to replace the primary subject teachers with primary class teachers. In addition, hundreds of secondary graduates were given 5 or 6 years of university education to enable them to specialize in the subject they wish to teach in the secondary school. This has been done in an attempt to move towards greater specialization. Consequently, since 1984 no-one has been allowed to enter the teaching profession unless he/she has a teacher-training qualification. It is worth mentioning that this vital move towards the qualification of teachers was taken in the United Kingdom only in 1962. And considering the limited resources in Bahrain, the adoption of such a move in 1984 is an indication of the priority which is given to education in the country.

Fifthly, another impressive gain was achieved in the diversification of the secondary school curricula. On the one hand it satisfies the need of the country for manpower; and on the other hand, it enables the students to choose subjects appropriate to their abilities. And

though the system of education has lagged behind the economy of the country, it is now admitted by decision-makers in Bahrain that development covers a much wider field than material growth; and without adequate manpower and human fulfilment, as a prime factor and as a goal, the best devised planning and programming is bound to fail. Tremendous development in the region has been promoted mainly by oil. However, there are also factors of development in depth, related to manpower, more lasting than oil, which are the attitudes, beliefs and ways of life of the people.

Today, secondary education in Bahrain is divided into different specializations: technical, commercial, scientific, humanities, nursing, agriculture and home economics. The rationale behind this early specialization was that a secondary school graduate should be both equipped to start work and qualified to enter college, in line with his/her early specialization, to receive a university degree.

Co-ordination between the programmes of secondary education and the programmes offered in the five institutes for higher education has also been achieved.

Sixthly, a still more important innovation was the establishment, in 1936, of two classes at secondary school level for technical education. By 1968 these two classes had grown to become the Gulf Technical College to provide opportunities for students to undertake further technical training. Currently this College is known as the Gulf Polytechnic and forms a major part of Bahrain University, offering the B.Sc. degree in Engineering and other technical studies. From its inception, technical education in Bahrain has aimed at creating an attitude of respect for manual work, at the discovery of vocational and technical talents at an early age with the purpose of providing educational and vocational guidance in the following stages of education,

otherwise providing an early opportunity to train for the world of business. Today nearly 37 percent of the Bahraini student population undertakes technical education; and though such a percentage is small, it is a highly unusual development by Gulf standards. The lack of interest by local Gulf population in developing technical skills has, over the years, acted as a serious constraint on indigenous economic change; and the lack of adequately trained technicians has been one of the main reasons for the importation of foreign labour in that part of the world.

Seventhly, another promising innovation has been the creation of the Arabian Gulf University by the seven Gulf states which has been discussed in Chapter Five. From its inception, students at the College of Medicine and Medical Sciences, located in the capital of Bahrain, have been involved in pilot medical field research. And because the projects of study are regional in nature, they involved regional need assessments and systematic reviews of other comparable projects, world wide.

In addition to the Arabian Gulf University, mention should also be made of the recent scheme to promote educational medical facilities in the country. This has been done because students from both the College of Health Sciences, established by the Bahraini Ministry of Health in 1976, and students from the College of Medicine of the Arabian Gulf University established in 1982, are trained at the Sulmania Medical Centre, the main and the largest hospital on the Island. There is now provision at the Centre for students to be trained as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, radiologists, and laboratory technicians.

Finally, our study shows that a new system of evaluation has been introduced - based on the daily achievement of the student as well as on the semester tests and end of term examinations. This is because

the old system which promoted students from one level to the next mainly on the results of the final examinations, created an atmosphere of anxiety and fear of failing in both the students and their parents - hence the drop-out problem. For this reason, the implementation of the new system of evaluating and promoting the students as well as resitting examinations is regarded as a positive step to overcome some educational problems such as students' repetition and drop-out.

In brief, the system of education in Bahrain has made impressive gains in the last seven decades. It was the first in the Gulf to initiate modern formal education, to introduce female education, to develop technical education, to practise co-education, and in recent years to implement some selected innovative education projects. Within Bahraini school education, there are today noteworthy examples of large scale response to the reforms in various areas which have accelerated throughout the 1970s, and developed further in scale and scope during the 1980s. It has never been possible to build highly expensive schools, or to employ large numbers of foreign teachers; but this has not been a serious disadvantage as the thesis shows.

To conclude this section on "Reforms", one may say that:

- (1) Bahrain has, over the years shown courage in introducing modern ideas into the system of education, and
- (2) innovative practices do and can contribute to a country's development if properly implemented.

However, in Bahrain, a serious disadvantage has been in the implementation system due to the lack of adequate administrators, teachers, and other related problems to which we now turn.

## 8.2 Problems and Recommendations

Before analyzing the weaknesses in Bahraini education, it is worth mentioning that since most of the educational projects are recent,

it has not been possible to determine to what extent the innovation has been implemented as intended, nor to ascertain whether or not the innovation in question will be adopted in other countries in the region. Several years will probably lapse before the full impact of innovations, requiring regional wide efforts, such as the Arabian Gulf University, and the Five-Year Plan to eradicate illiteracy from the country by 1990, will be fully realized.

However, judging from the present situation inside the school system, our study reveals the following.

#### 8.2.1 Administration

In Bahrain, as indeed in the whole of the Arab world, the administration of education is generally characterized by the centralization of all decision-making powers. In this pattern, key decisions concerning resource allocation, selection of text books, teacher-training, end of semester examinations, and student promotion standards are all made by the central authorities. To ensure that these decisions are enforced, there is a system of school inspectors and supervisors who report directly to the Ministry of Education.

Our study also reveals that a major problem of decentralization is the inadequate preparation of the personnel. This is because educational administrators in most schools receive no special preparation for their jobs; generally they are recruited from the ranks of the teachers. The staffing of both the Ministry and the school administrators came from the few qualified teachers that Bahrain has, over the last four decades, developed and trained. As a result, qualified teachers were turned into administrators, bureaucrats, headmasters and headmistresses, and inspectors, to man and supervise the system of centralization. Hence there has been a gradual dilution and diversion

of abilities enhanced by rapid expansion. In an interview in March 1986, the Principal of Khawla School, one of the largest secondary schools for girls in the capital of Bahrain, stated:

"I graduated nearly 20 years ago from Cairo University in Egypt in Arabic Studies. I have gained valuable experience through my work as a teacher; but as an administrator of such a big school, I wish that I had better preparation for my present job to enable me and my colleagues to meet the day-to-day demands and challenges."

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An interesting question is why there are so many inadequately trained administrators in the Bahraini educational system, particularly at school level, in spite of the training programmes. Many inter-related factors contributed to this situation. The most important is that the current organization of administration has reflected, by and large, the political aspiration of the country in each of the different stages of its organizational development. As a result it has inherited some of the weaknesses of each stage.

There is no suggestion that the educational administrative system in Bahrain should not be centralized in matters concerning educational policy, strategy, planning, curriculum, finance, supply and the like, because Bahrain has neither a large population nor problems of communication between different areas. Indeed, for these reasons a centralized educational administration is an advantage and could help to speed educational development. But providing schools with administrative autonomy will create an environment of competition among schools in developing their educational productivity, as well as in establishing a distinct status and character. Working out a balance between the centralized educational administrative system and school autonomy would enrich the Ministry of Education's own experience and enable education in Bahrain to develop in the right direction.

It is therefore recommended that administrators at all levels of

the hierarchy should be retrained at regular intervals to become familiar with the ideas and procedures in the science of educational management. Hence, specialists in the field of educational and school administration should be recruited for the University College of Bahrain, where the training takes place, in order to strengthen the existing expertise.

The present supervisory staff at the Ministry of Education should be retrained to play a more advisory and supportive role in the schools. Also training opportunities for the staff responsible for administration within the Ministry, especially those with inadequate qualifications, should be provided on a systematic and continuing basis. Provision also should be made for new administrators, including school principals, to have training at the higher degree level in school administration. Consequently regulations relating to school administration should be drafted to give greater authority and autonomy to the schools. The necessary training should be provided for directors and staff to equip them for their new roles.

Finally, regarding planning, a comprehensive long-term plan needs to be prepared dealing with the qualitative and quantitative aspects of both school and adult education with particular reference to the professional growth of all educational personnel. In the evolution of such a plan, and in order to guarantee its close relationship to manpower needs, consultation and co-operation with other Ministries, particularly with the Ministry of Labour, will be necessary.

As long as there are unqualified administrators and untrained teachers, innovative practices in any system will never be implemented as intended. In this respect the system of implementation, that supposedly links policy and reality, is a major problem in Bahraini education.

### 8.2.2 The Implementation System and Change

Another major problem facing Bahraini education is the inadequacy of the techniques and methodologies of teaching. And though the programme of "Teacher Training" itself has been subjected to a number of reforms, the instructional methods and school activities still leave much to be desired.

The argument which has been presented in Chapter Four has brought us to the conclusion that the reforms of the 1980s, such as the class teacher movement at the primary level, the curriculum reform movement at the secondary level, and the updating of the examination system at all levels, have not, as yet, created significant changes in attitudes towards those who teach and towards those who learn. In practice, the changes intended for the children, for the subject, for the teacher and for the classroom have not been fully achieved. Teachers are still using the traditional paradigm rather than the humanistic or the eclectic-situational paradigms. Thus memory work is, for the most part, the accepted and most widely used pattern of learning in school. This is not to say that the classroom life has not, over the years, changed in Bahrain. Indeed it has made considerable progress. But the point is that although there have always been various mixtures of influences and trends in different educational eras, the most persistent influence in Bahraini education is the traditional paradigm. To make this clear a brief explanation is necessary.

What has come to be termed a "traditional" position with respect to the education of young children involves the view that children are inherently 'uncivilized' and that they must, through hard work, obedience to adults and strong discipline, learn good social and literacy skills through diligent practice. Knowledge is regarded as that defined by the academic disciplines which can be acquired

through the teacher, texts, memorization, and drill. Examples over the years of this approach to education include the early religious schools, and the Kuttab schools - which are basically teacher and subject oriented. It could be argued that modern behaviouristic approaches such as those of Skinner, work book approach and the minimum competencies of basic skills movements are current manifestations of this traditional paradigm. This paradigm is also characterized by a highly centralized and prescriptive approach to the curriculum.

In a sense this paradigm appeals to discipline to provide for educational achievement. The humanistic paradigm, on the other hand, represents an appeal to love and respect for the child's natural way of learning for educational and personal achievement. And the eclectic-situational paradigm represents the conventional classroom and an appeal to the practical situation as a means to educational achievement. The traditional paradigm is teacher and subject centred, the humanistic position is child centred, and the curriculum of conventional classrooms is a judicious mix of central suggestion and local adaptation.

These three basic positions, the traditional, humanistic, and the practical paradigms, have at various times during the last sixty or more years emerged as the dominant rhetoric of education. This has occurred more as a result of historical, social economic contexts than through the ~~in~~intrinsic merit of particular paradigms. These positions have always been present, have constantly been evolving, and they have all been manifest to some degree in the practice of each educational era. Which position, however, and which manifestation of that position was dominant in each era or each situation depended very much on the historical, religious, political, social and economic context.

In Bahraini education, the traditional paradigm finds its roots in the traditional Islamic Kuttab schools. During the pioneering

times in the 1920s and 1930s, education was initiated and controlled by lay people. When this was combined with the fact that most teachers were untrained, that more sophisticated pedagogical strategies have not yet evolved, that each teacher taught many different subjects and grade levels, that educational resources consisted of the wit of the teacher and perhaps one text, that the local economy could only support the barest of physical resources - it is possible to understand the prominence of the traditional paradigm in those days.

It is surprising, therefore, to find that in spite of the reformed "teacher-training programme", school curricula, and the examination system, the traditional paradigm still prevails in Bahraini education. In this context, teachers present themselves as the authorities on each subject. Based on this conception, everything that teachers do and say in the classroom is acceptable; their behaviour is to be emulated by the young. The common practice is for teachers to lecture on a daily topic or demonstrate, themselves, a problem on the blackboard, an activity that normally consumes most of the classroom time. Whatever little time is left is devoted to student recitation of the material in the study assignment. It is rare to find a classroom in which dialectical or inquiry teaching is taking place; teaching that affords students the opportunity to express their own positions on issues and search for evidence to back their opinions. The Bahraini classroom, as it still the case in many Arab classrooms, is not conducive to problem solving. The student, in general, is treated as a passive recipient; and teaching is predominantly informational with memorization playing a large role.

It would be unfair, however, to attribute this state of affairs in the classroom only to teachers. The work of the teachers is, in most ways, very satisfactory and the keenness of the students is largely

due to their influence. It is their teaching methods that still leave much to be desired.

One might ask why, in spite of the "teacher-training" programme, the instructional methods and classroom environment are still unsatisfactory. Many factors have interacted with each other to produce this situation. Our study reveals that the system itself and society are responsible for both the weakness and the problem. This is because the educational system largely interacts with and is influenced by the general attitudes, political, social, cultural and administrative. As we have seen, the political system in the country is influenced by the past tribal image; and this greatly weakens efficiency and the thrust towards modernization of the state's administrative system. Schools cannot be better, or worse than societies in which they operate. If the societies are authoritarian, the schools are bound to exhibit similar traits. On the other hand, if societies have a tradition of democratic values, fair play, compassion, equal treatment for all or no sex-segregation, their schools will inescapably reflect these traditions and beliefs. Of course a society cannot be classified as essentially authoritarian or essentially democratic - there are usually elements of each that can be observed. However, there are certain dominant social tendencies, and as a rule the schools reflect them.

Our second observation is that, operating with a set of inherited cultural traditions and beliefs, teachers in the Arab world are basically expected to be strict, disciplinarians, individuals whose authority and knowledge are beyond question. The fact that the student/teacher ratio is uncomfortably high usually provides an additional justification for continuing to see the teacher as a strict taskmaster who discourages classroom discussion based on the initiative of the student. The

system is reinforced by the fact that teachers have a set of prescribed material to cover and must prepare the students to pass the exams. Further, the lack of well-equipped libraries resulted in one characteristic of Bahraini students, which is relying on the teacher all the time. So the teacher is considered as the sole source of knowledge even at university level. This has a deleterious effect on the students because it kills their sense of research and the inclination for further studies. Such factors are, at present, another set of obstacles in the path of achieving the best results from the educational reforms.

As a remedy for this situation, more funds should be allocated for the equipment of libraries and laboratories in all subjects taught in Bahrain. Modernization of the curriculum assumes the availability of a cadre of teachers trained in the new methods of classroom instruction as well as the existence of adequate instructional materials including course syllabi, text books, supplementary materials and audio visual aids. Functioning in a school environment that stresses strict discipline, memorization and drill, the teacher has little chance to apply methods that deviate from the traditional lecture approach. The available text books, the school curricula, classroom facilities, and the examination system, no matter how much they are updated, do not necessarily bring about change in the traditional type of education.

To conclude this section one may deduce that the modernization of Bahraini education has been faced with many problems. In this thesis most of them have been discussed. The inadequate traditional teaching methods, such as learning by rote, and memorization was and still is the biggest problem. In this respect the reforms of the 1980s have been successful as far as policy is concerned. Ultimately the policy has been successful in relating the curricula to the economy of the country. However, inappropriate choices of approaches to

pedagogical changes have slowed down the full achievement of the reforms.

### 8.2.3 Towards a Functional Model of Educational Reforms

This case study of education in Bahrain has, through the analysis of the various environmental forces - social, political, religious and economic, through the analysis of the changes and reforms resulting from limited oil, and through the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the education of today's Bahrain, suggested a model for educational reform that can be applied in Bahrain, in the Gulf and in the Arab world.

The model is designed to reflect a new reality and to anticipate future changes in this reality. It is also designed as a functional tool which will make it possible to test various propositions in educational theory (policy) against educational reality (practice). In this context it will be possible for such a model to create, to respond, to survive and to adapt to future changes. The model's capacity to suggest choices among different alternatives, will enable it to initiate new changes as the need arises.

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the case study is that the educational systems of the region will be facing, shortly, new problems and difficulties arising from the "deplete" or "without oil" era. Therefore old problems should be dealt with immediately. These include the following.

First, to eliminate illiteracy, particularly among females; and to end discrimination against women - because this reduces the potential labour force in the area by one-half.

Second, to change the prevailing attitudes toward manual labour; those close to the tribal way of life look down on all physical work. This will necessitate a change in curriculum toward an emphasis on

values and towards more balance between theory and application, academic and vocational.

Third, to develop a 'teamwork' spirit; and to co-ordinate creative effort to build high quality research institutions capable of dealing with any set of social, political, economic, or technological problems. Such research institutions should be able to anticipate the trends of the world and of the region; and to prepare appropriate manpower for that future. Unlike developed countries, where futuristic studies are already established and widely accepted, the Gulf region is still wrestling with the problems, conflicts and ideologies of the past.

To come to terms with the future, education will need to confront two tasks: to dislodge some of the suffocating aspects of the past and to assist in solving the hundreds of problems of cultural underdevelopment that plague the present.

Fourth, to shift the emphasis from Islamic religion to Islamic culture. Cultures, being living organisms, must change and develop in order to preserve their basic values and characteristics. Change of this nature will enable the culture to contribute positively to the development of the societies, while unchangeable religious standards tend to impede such a development.

Fifth, to create a public awareness of the population explosion. The high rate of population growth in the Arab world has significantly contributed to the high rate of illiteracy, to the primitive state of technology, and to the present status of women in Arab society. Therefore shifting the emphasis in education from quantitative expansion to qualitative innovation is necessary.

Sixth, to democratize the learning process. Individual as well as academic freedom should be respected and preserved. Students should be encouraged to have faith in democracy and practice it inside and

outside the classroom. This requires an understanding of the global information revolution. The traditional passing of knowledge from teacher to student will have to be replaced by "learning how to learn". This will entail a basic retraining of all teachers, an in-depth change of all curricula, and the implementation of an appropriate system of evaluation and examinations. It will also entail dealing with the computer as both a scientific and a learning tool.

To summarize, the concept of excellence in education should be probed and defined. The challenge of developing the necessary indigenous technology needs to be met. Bridges to the world of work must be constructed. Informal education, continuing education and retraining will have to be integrated into formal education.

Before leaving the topic, it is worth mentioning that the problems discussed are not the only ones that the education systems of the region are facing. There are others; but these six issues are the most fundamental. One can also add that a favourable political system and social climate are essential for the introduction and implementation of educational reform. Success will depend on the Government's attitudes toward its human resources, and its willingness to make them healthier, more secure, and creative, capable of meeting the needs of the future. For without oil, it is education that will determine the future of the Gulf peoples.

To conclude, one may claim that Bahrain has gone through difficult periods in its history. However, without the strong support of the Government to diversify the economy of the country and to reform education to relate it to that economy, Bahrain would have never been able to overcome the problems resulting from limited and steadily declining oil reserves.

Such a case study illustrates, that irrespective of differences in the cultural environment and economic needs, educators, striving to achieve broad aims, entertain everywhere similar purposes and objectives for their children.

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