

**Struggling for a Right:**  
**Islam and the Participation in Sports and Physical  
Recreation of Girls and Women in Kuwait**

**A thesis submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**By**

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**April 2004**

## DECLARATION

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## DEDICATION

*This work is dedicated to my parent's souls. Even though they were illiterate, they encouraged me throughout my life to learn and help others through my knowledge. To Latefa Abdulah Al-bedawy and Mohamad Othman Alhaidar and to the future vision that I see in my nephew Marzoqe's children Mussad, Ltefah and Deema.*

## SPECIAL DEDICATION

*To a friend and a sister who I knew since my childhood. We grew up and our loyalty, friendship and love grew up with us. We shared common feelings and attitudes which gave us great strength and inner happiness which we conveyed to all around us – who in turn were strengthened and shielded from pain.*

*Whenever we met over the years, we recalled many pleasant moments that we had shared, each moment having been ordained by God.*

*The pain was enormous, and the grief was great; when the destiny decided to take her and my mother away to another world at the same period of time during my scholarship, however, my determination to meet the challenge of seeing this thesis fulfilled overcame all obstacles before me- and now, it has been accomplished.*

*And so, I dedicate this work to my friend (Salwa Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah) in thanks for her life, her love, and her devotion to me; I thank her for her emotional support, even during times of great illness.*

*Special dedication to her pure soul, wonderful humanity and great personality, which will never be forgotten. May God bless her, and may she rest peacefully in heaven.*

**Thanks be to GOD**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study has been accomplished during a period of three years. My research would not have reached this point without the support, advice and patience of many people who have encouraged, helped, sacrificed and guided me to its completion. It would be impossible to mention by name all those involved in this work, but I would say thank you very much, the encouragement was indeed invaluable.

However, at the forefront of this help was Professor Jennifer Hargreaves. She is a person endowed with very high and most noble qualities. Her students know her more for her humanitarian values than for the official position she holds. She is always smiling – she puts everyone at ease with friendliness. She is humble and mild mannered, and possesses an endearing disposition. I would like to thank her for her guidance, support and tireless editing that has been essential for the completion of this thesis. She has helped me when I felt it had all got too much for me, she always pointed me in the right direction. She was a true source of knowledge, motivation, strength and guidance.

Gratitude is extended to the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait, for awarding the scholarship, which enabled me to follow through this study.

Finally, to those who encouraged, helped and made sacrifices on my behalf: my family and friends, this includes my brothers Musaad and Ali, my sister Shaikha. A special greeting to my nephew Marzuoq and his wife Sohelah Al Fahad and his children, Musaad, Latefa, and Demah who live with me in my home and always asked me when I was going to finish my studies because they missed me so much and have suffered during my absence from home. To all my relatives – family and friends – whom I have not forgotten, they have encouraged me to confront the loneliness and difficulties of living in London.

Special thanks also go to my friends Dr. Hana Al-Majed, Dr. Basma Al-Haj, and Eman Al-Nasser from Kuwait. I would like to express particular gratitude to Asmah Saud M. Al-Saud from Saudi Arabia for her continuous support and emotional dedication which helped me so much throughout the long period of study. Finally, grateful, thanks go to all my friends, too many to mention by name, but they are always in my mind and always I pray for them.

## ABSTRACT

The present study is the first of its kind. It is a study about the involvement of Kuwaiti females in sports and physical recreation. The study investigates both the structures and resources that make female participation in sports and physical recreation possible, and the ideological and physical barriers that prevent girls and young women from taking part.

The development of female sports and physical recreation in Kuwait is investigated in relation to relevant historical and political developments, taking particular account of the influence of Islamic ideologies about the role of women in society, women's enfranchisement, and women's bodies. It provides evidence from the Holy Qur'an in support of the need for girls and women to exercise their bodies. The research highlights the contradictory position that Kuwaiti women find themselves in living in a relatively liberal Islamic state with an official discourse of gender equality, but facing traditional and unequal gender divisions in daily life and throughout culture, specifically in sports and physical recreation. Opportunities for females in sports and recreation are tied to the political administration system of the state and the study looks at the present day situation of public provision and resourcing, following the liberation of the country from Iraq, as well as private resources that have developed as a result of westernized, global influences.. The study presents recommendations for Kuwaiti sports policy-makers, planners, and providers - that may be useful, too, for those in other societies in the Arabian Peninsula – concerning sports and physical recreation for Muslim girls and women in the future.

The project traces the development of organised sport and physical recreation for females from 1950 until the present day. It includes details of physical education in schools, and the establishment and expansion of sport clubs and other facilities that are now in the country. Reference is made to the role of government agencies and departments – in particular the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS) that has special responsibility to establish stronger and more specialized opportunities.

Since there is virtually no previous research or literature about the topic of girls and young women's involvement in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait, the main method of data collection was through questionnaires and interviews, supported by documentary evidence, including official statements.

## BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Ghaneemah Mohammed Al-Othman Al-Haidar is a graduate with scientific qualifications. She obtained a Teacher's Institute Diploma in Kuwait; and she holds a Bachelor degree in Physical Education and Curriculum Studies (1982) and a Masters degree in Sport Psychology (1985), both from the USA.

Ms Al-Haidar's work experience commenced in 1982 when she was a teacher at the College of Basic Education (Physical Education), during the period from 1983 until 1985. Between 1985 and 1986, she was a teacher at the College of Basic Education (Sport Psychology) and from 1986 to 1994 was Head of Student and Trainee Affairs at the College of Business Studies. Finally she became Assistant Dean for Student Guidance at the Deanery of Student Welfare and Activities, and Lecturer at the College of Basic Education (Sport Psychology) in the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

Throughout her professional career, Ms Al-Haidar has attended numerous courses and conferences in Kuwait and in other countries across the world many of which have been connected to her special concern for the development of sport and physical recreation for girls and women in Kuwait, which is the focus of this PhD thesis. For example, among others, she was a delegate at the following conferences: World Youths Unity Conference in Taiwan, China (1989); *Women and Sport: The Challenge of Change* in Brighton, UK (1994); *International Conference for Sports and Women* in Alexandria, Egypt (1995). Ms Al-Haidar received an invitation from UNESCO to attend *Images of Education for Building Peace* in Washington, USA (1995), and she attended the first *Arabic International Conference on Women and Sport* in Alexandria, Egypt (1995). In 1999 she attended the conference entitled, *Developing Strategies of International Cooperation in Promotion of HPERSD* for the New Millennium, organized by the International Council for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Sport and Dance (ICHPER.SD) in Cairo, Egypt; and then in 2000, she attended the *Life Long Learning: Towards Active Girls and Women* conference in Alexandria, Egypt, also organized by ICHPER.SD. In 2003, Ms Al-Haidar represented the Al-Fatat Club with a presentation entitled, '*Sport and Religion*' at a special *ICHPER-SD Middle East Congress* in Alexandria, Egypt, concerning Sport: Development and Peace.

At present Ms Al-Haidar is on a number of college and international committees and is a member of numerous associations, including being a founder-member of the Faculty Members Unity (since 1985); a member of ICHPER.SD; IAPESGW; and the Kuwaiti Journalists Society. She has been a writer for the Al-Watan Newspaper since 1985; an Honorary Member of Environment Safety (Egypt), and she produces seminars for TV and broadcasting programmes concerning the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities. Ms Al-Haidar is a founder-member of *The Gulf Women's League in London* and has been the Chairperson of this league from January 2004.



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## GLOSSARY

<b>ABBAYA</b>	Women's long black cloak, worn over the dress and covering the entire body.
<b>AHL AL DIMMAH</b>	Unbelievers and non-Muslim
<b>AHL AL KITAB</b>	Christian and Jewish
<b>BURGA</b>	A black veil for the face with openings for eyes only
<b>DEAN</b>	Religion
<b>DIWANIYA</b>	Men's reception room;(by extension) social gathering
<b>FATWA</b>	Legal ruling.
<b>HIJAB</b>	Women's veil consisting of a head cover
<b>MAHRAM</b>	Male relative (e.g. Father, Brother and Husband)
<b>NAKSAH</b>	Setback
<b>SAHABA</b>	Companions of the Prophet (PBUH)
<b>SHARIA</b>	Islamic Law
<b>SHELA</b>	A long black scarf wrapped tightly around the head
<b>WASTAH</b>	Connection
<b>ULAMA</b>	Religious Scholars or Islamic Directives
<b>ZIKR</b>	Praise of God
<b>SATR</b>	Curtain

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**INTRODUCTION**



## **1.0 Introduction: Rationale - a personal quest**

*Struggling for a Right: Islam and the Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation of Girls and Women in Kuwait* is about involvement, barriers and opportunities. It sets the account of female sport and physical recreation against a brief account of the background of the country and its specifically Islamic character. The particular position of women in Kuwaiti society, Islam and attitudes to women's bodies, and issues of gender inequalities in sport and physical education are important features of the discussion. The thesis also provides recommendations for the Kuwaiti authorities to increase women's participation.

The topic was chosen because of my love of all types of physical activities since I was a child, and in response to my experiences of, and observations about, being a Muslim woman in sport and physical recreation. My special interest in physical activities became the driving force for my career. I qualified first as a teacher of Physical Education in Kuwait, and then was one of the very first Kuwaiti women to go to the USA to study for a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education and Curriculum Studies and then a Masters degree in Sport Psychology (See Chapter 4). I returned to Kuwait and have had a number of positions in the Physical Education Department at the Basic College of Education, and presently hold the position of Lecturer in Sport Sciences and Deputy Dean of Student Welfare and Activities. During my childhood years and my years as a college student in Kuwait I was always aware of different attitudes to female participation in sport and recreation in relation to male participation, and during my years as an academic I became increasingly conscious and critical of the inequalities between the sexes in terms of opportunities for participation, the number and standard of facilities, the funding available, and provision for competitive sport.

Over the years, I also became more interested in, and knowledgeable about, the question of gender differences and inequalities in sport and physical recreation. I attended many conferences and seminars specifically about the subject of women in sport, including one entitled, *Women and Sport: the Challenge of Change*, held in Brighton in 1994, which was the first international conference on the subject, attracting women from over 80 different countries in the world (Hargreaves 2000, pp215-233. See also Chapter 5). The Brighton conference set out to bring women

together from different backgrounds and cultures all of whom were struggling to create better opportunities for female sport. Being able to talk to women from other countries about similar *and* different experiences, about opportunities *and* problems, about new ideas *and* reactionary attitudes was very insightful and rewarding. Including myself, there were five Muslim women from Kuwait at the conference and also Muslim women from other Islamic countries. Focus group meetings were held specifically so that we could all share ideas about the particular issues we were facing *as Muslim women in sport* in our different countries, and we always talked about our hopes for more equality with men in the future. This experience provided an inspiration for the organization of a number of conferences specifically for Muslim women held in Alexandria, in Egypt, and in Tehran, in Iran. All-Muslim female sports competitions were also arranged (Hargreaves 2000, pp215-233). Muslim women in sport were becoming much more active and more organized in their own countries and internationally. For example, in 1996, the Sport Association for Arab Women was founded with the intention of supporting a women's sports association in every Arab nation (Christensen, Guttman and Pfister 2001, p.1106). I attended more meetings and conferences about physical education and sport for girls and women in general (for example, organized by the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women IAPESGW), and for Muslim women, specifically. I kept in contact with Muslim colleagues in the field from Kuwait and other Islamic states – especially those in the Arabian Peninsula, and I also communicated with non-Islamic women from countries in the West who are associated with the wider women's international sport movement (Hargreaves 2000, pp215-233). In the following quotation, Margaret Talbot (1999, pp113-14), President of IAPESGW, argues that building bridges between women from the West and those from Islamic countries is an important challenge for the future:

*Colleagues in Islamic countries...wish to break down Western misperceptions of their religion. They are constantly frustrated that people in the West see Islam as homogeneous, and...fail to recognize the enormous range of interpretations and presentations of their religion, which are mediated by culture, particular forms of patriarchy, politics and economics. For Islamic women and girls, just like females of other religions, sport and physical education are seen as important ways of expressing their bodily independence, self-esteem, and personal growth. Some conditions of modesty and privacy about the context in which activities take place would be welcomed also by many non-Islamic women. People in the West need to learn to listen to what*

*Islamic women are saying about their needs and interests in physical education and sport, and to help break down the myths, which have been created about the relationships between Islamic beliefs and women's participation in sport and physical activity.*

It is also recognised by Muslim women that they can learn from women in the West who have been tackling the problem of gender inequity in sport in their countries since the 1970s (Edwards and Hargreaves, 2001). Although there are huge cultural differences between the West and Islam, in particular concerning the role and position of women in society and in sport, and the patterns of patriarchy are different, there are also similarities to do with gender and power in both cultures. Also knowledge about sport development for girls and women in the West can benefit the development of female sport in Islamic countries.

Over a period of about five years following the Brighton conference, I was exchanging ideas with women in sport in other countries, focusing my attention on the particular situation in Kuwait – in particular, there are clear inequities between males and females in sport and physical recreation, including the fact that there is a lack of women's participation in policy and decision-making so that women cannot share in the decisions about their own futures in sport and physical recreation (linked to a lack of access to political processes). But there is so little knowledge and understanding about these problems, and nothing has ever been published specifically about Kuwaiti female sport and physical recreation. It has therefore only been possible to observe and hypothesize about all the issues and influences affecting Kuwaiti girls and women's participation. Furthermore, I realised that if Kuwaiti women want to influence change in the future, they need information about the present situation on which to base their arguments.

My concern about girls and women in sport and physical recreation and the need for information was the starting point for this PhD research project. I was most fortunate to receive funding from the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) in Kuwait, and the recommendations at the end of the thesis for an increase in the numbers of female participants in sport and physical recreation are intended for the attention of PAAET and other significant organizations and individuals who can

influence change. The research is 'action-oriented' because it has been funded by a government organization to whom I am accountable (Altorki and El-Solh 1988: p.20).

### **1.1 A unique project: the orientation and logistics**

Most of the literature about women and sport has been published in the west (Examples of key texts: Birrell and Cole, 1994; Cohen, 1993; Hall, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994; 2000; Scraton, 1992, and there are a huge number of journal articles), but very few authors have written about Muslim women in sport (Benn 2000a, 2000b, 2002 and others; Hargreaves, 2000; Layden, 1997; Morgan, 1998; Sfeir, 1985, 1989). In Islamic countries the situation is even worse – there have been only a tiny number of women who have authored publications about Muslim women in sport and there are no comprehensive texts whatsoever (Abdelrahman, 1992; Daiman 1994, 1995). In Kuwait, specifically, there is one documentary book about Kuwaiti sport during the years from 1970-76 which includes some information about women (Al-Sabah, 1976. See Chapter 4 for more details of this period), and there are two studies that have included some references to social aspects of women's sport – one provides information about administration, provision and participation in sport and recreation (Behbehani, 1992); the other is a field study about Sport for All in Kuwait (Hashem, 1997). Nothing has ever been published specifically about Kuwaiti women's sport and physical recreation. This research project is therefore highly original.

It was decided from the start of the planning stage that the investigation would focus on sport *and* physical recreation. If the project was only about sport, which usually occurs in institutional settings, such as schools, colleges, and clubs, many Kuwaiti females who prefer to exercise in different locations as part of their leisure would have been left out of the analysis. It is acknowledged that some writers accept that the broadness of the term 'sport' may also embrace physical recreation and exercise (Bouchard and Shephard, 1994 p79; Hargreaves 1994), but I wanted to ensure that it was understood that the research would make reference to the wide range of physical activities that Kuwaiti women participate in. In this study sports are understood to be 'institutionalized competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by personal

enjoyment and external rewards' (Coakley, 2001 p.20), and physical recreation is understood to be an activity 'which is performed for its own sake during free time, which offers...joy and satisfaction and an outlet for...physical, mental and creative powers' (Al-Owdah, 1993 p24). It is also recognised that physical recreation 'may involve a degree of compulsion, extrinsic purpose, and discomfort, or even pain or danger' (Kraus, 1997 p53).

Because there are no previous publications on the actual topic of girls and women in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait, big questions arose about the orientation of the research: What type of project should it be? What should be included? What should be left out? How would I get the information? How would I carry out research about my own country if I was located in a completely different part of the world?

In trying to answer these questions, the following decisions were made:

1. To provide background information about Kuwait and its people, traditions and religious affiliations etc.
2. To set the scene historically - specifically in relation to Islam, the role of women, and attitudes to women's bodies.
3. To investigate the particular development of physical education, sport and physical recreation for females.
4. To construct an account of the contemporary situation concerning female sport and physical recreation in Kuwait.
5. To take account throughout of relevant social, cultural, political, religious, and global factors.
6. To provide recommendations for the future of girls' and women's sport and physical recreation.

This was the starting point for three years of research about Islam and the participation in sports and physical recreation of girls and women in Kuwait.

Taking into account my position as a Muslim woman doing research about Muslim women, this introductory chapter includes a discussion about methodological issues; and taking account of the originality of the project and the difficulty of collecting data, it provides information about the methods used. There is a detailed account of the field study collection of data using a questionnaire and interviews in Chapter 6. No particular theoretical position has been taken – this is an empirically-based study providing as much information as possible upon which further analysis can be carried out later on. Because of the lack of specifically Kuwaiti studies, texts from the West have been used, and a considerable amount of information has been gathered from the internet as well. The focus is on Kuwaiti citizens only, all of whom are Muslims because, although foreigners comprise the largest percentage of the population (see Chapter 2), they are not all Muslims and they are not all permanent residents.

## 1.2 Methodological questions

In the Introduction to their edited text entitled, *Arab Women in the Field*, Altorki and El-Solh (1988, p.1), point out that:

*The involvement of Arab women in the study of other women in their own societies parallels the period of cultural and political awakening that occurred throughout that region following World War II....This was a period of national struggle for independence, of mounting demands for decolonization, and of calls for serious attempts at development. This period is also characterized by an upsurge of feminism in the West and the attendant interest in the condition of women in Arab societies.*

However, Altorki and El-Solh (1988, p.2.) go on to say that it was after the defeat of Arab countries by Israel in 1967 (the *naksah* – setback) that male and female intellectuals ‘initiated a long and painful process of examining their own societies, their values and institutions.’ Part of this process was to question the relationship with the West, its cultures and the social theories developed in the West. Since that time, Altorki and El-Solh (Ibid) argue that ‘Arab women have become more involved in the production of knowledge about their own societies and about women in those societies’ and in their book they are interested in the role that gender and indigenous status play in the research process and the ways in which the personal experiences of Arab female researchers may influence ‘the range of variables that may interact with gender and indigenous status to affect their access to and construction of knowledge’.

This project is part of the continuing trend of indigenous Arab women doing research about women in their own countries. However, as we have seen, only a tiny number of Arab women have shown a particular interest in the subject of female sport and physical activity during the period of forty years since the mid-nineteen sixties, and virtually no sustained research of any kind has ever been done.

The project is also feminist in orientation because its intention is 'to create change and improvement in women's lives' (Scraton and Flintoff 1992: p, 168) through the creation of knowledge about Kuwaiti girls and women in sport and physical recreation which can be used to argue for improved opportunities. Scraton and Flintoff (Ibid) argue further that 'Feminist research... is research *for* women, rather than simply research *on* women'. This position is taken also because Kuwaiti sport is thoroughly male-dominated, and because at present there are no women in the National Assembly (parliament), and no women in decision-making positions in sport, women have no power to make changes to improve opportunities for themselves. However, this project is not based on a fully worked out feminist standpoint (Stanley and Wise 1990; Reinharz 1992). Unlike in the West, in Kuwait there is no organized feminist sports movement and the mainstream Kuwaiti feminist movement does not concern itself with female sport and physical recreation – it is, however, committed to fighting for female suffrage (See Chapter 3). At the centre of this research are girls and women whose experiences in sport and physical recreation have been recorded on semi-structured questionnaires. The participants who are the focus of this study have had the chance to write about the barriers and problems they experience and what they wish for in the future and I have adopted a feminist stance through speaking out for them through the recommendations in the last chapter.

However, throughout this research I have been deeply reflexive (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995) about my role as a feminist *and* a devout Muslim. Stanley and Wise (1990, pp.29-34) discuss 'silenced feminist standpoints' – specifically, black feminist and lesbian feminist epistemologies. But I would describe myself as a Muslim feminist and there is no discussion by Stanley and Wise of Muslim feminist

epistemology. It is argued by them that feminist differences should be recognised and valued, but Western feminists do not take account of feminists from other parts of the world – notably from Islamic countries. My position of reflexivity (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995) includes awareness about the complexities and sensitivities of doing research in an Islamic country, about my specific position in the research process, and about the respect that is needed for Islamic traditions (see Observations below). There are a ‘distinct set of experiences’, ‘contextually specific’ (Stanley and Wise 1990, p.30,31) of being a Kuwaiti female, central to which is being a Muslim which means that centring Islam in the analysis is essential. Such a position fits with Stanley and Wise’s support of ‘academic feminist pluralism’ (1990, p.47).

Making sense of the data – the analysis - has been my responsibility as researcher. Aspects of the analysis have already been mentioned, and the section below describing the contents of the thesis provides more details, but it is useful to summarize here the general approach that I have taken. The experiences of Muslim girls and women in sport and physical recreation have been positioned in relation to Kuwaiti society as a whole – historically and contemporaneously. Significant political, economic, cultural, social, and religious features of Kuwaiti culture provide the basis of analysis. A major focus is the position of women in society and attitudes to female exercise throughout history and in relation to Islamic ideas and culture. Concepts such as gender and patriarchy have therefore been incorporated into the analysis, but there is no preferred overriding theory. Importantly, the account in this thesis is providing a basic social history of girls’ and women’s sport and physical recreation linked to women’s social status. Kelly-Gadol (1987, p.15) suggests that, ‘Women’s history has a dual role: to restore women to history and to restore our history to women’. The brief historical overview in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis is a first step in restoring women to the story of Kuwaiti sport and physical recreation.

### **1.3 Methods of investigation**

It has taken me three years of concentrated work to complete this study since registering at Brunel University, during which I have shared my time between England and Kuwait. While in London I have spent hours and hours in the British Library and in Brunel University library; on the internet; exchanging e-mails, writing



letters; and talking on the telephone to get information. I spent my time in Kuwait carrying out the major field-work study which is the basis for Chapters 6 and 7, and collecting documentary evidence and verbal evidence in person-to-person contacts or on the telephone.

It was generally very difficult to get data because of the lack of knowledge about the field and the absence of previous research publications. It was often a problem knowing where to go and to whom to go for information, sometimes involving numerous telephone calls to find who could answer a question, who would know about unpublished events, who were the decision-makers etc etc. The absence of references in some parts of the thesis is because the information was gathered from personal experience during a long career in sport and physical education and from numerous discussions with other Muslim women, friends and colleagues etc. In other words, we were part of the history that I am writing about.

The methods of investigation, or actual research practices, were varied. They included documentary research; observations; and gathering evidence from participants by means of a questionnaire and interviews:

#### **1.4 Documentary research**

The importance of the relationship of knowledge (data) to its historical, social, and cultural contexts was very apparent through the collection of data from documentary evidence. I used the Library of Kuwait Embassy, the Library of the University of Kuwait, the library of PAEET<sup>1</sup>, the Library of SOAS, London University, the British Library, and Brunel University Library and collected material from original books and references, including newspapers, and letters, as well as secondary source materials, such as periodicals, PhD theses, and brochures. I also used electronic material and television programmes. These sources provided information about the present day and about past history.

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<sup>1</sup> Public Authority for Applied Education and Training

However, many reports were destroyed during the Iraqi invasion of 1990-1991, some archives were mislaid, in some organizations the amount of evidence was immense and took hours of searching through it, and so on. In so many situations, it was extremely difficult to get proper evidence. For example, the only public all-female club where most of the competitive teams sports are played, – the Al-Fatat Club – did not make its records available, and so I had to go to newspaper archives. However, the newspapers did not report all women’s sports events, and so the evidence is only sketchy. Another example was when I visited the Department of Commerce Registration at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in 2002 in order to find out how many private sports clubs for women there are in Kuwait. There was a huge amount of material (300 pages) listed under ‘clubs’ – male and female - that took days to search through in order identify the number of relevant ones. It was also discovered that most of the Kuwait University Annual Reports were missing. Because of the difficulties of securing documentary evidence, in particular, the details of the development of girls’ and women’s sports outlined in Chapter 4 and 5 are incomplete.

### **1.5 Participant observations**

The observations that I made prior to starting the official period of research, and those I made during my visits to Kuwait were an intrinsic feature of the research. They were linked to my professional role as a lecturer at the College of Basic Education (Physical Education) (see Chapter 4), and to my social position in other professional roles and as a Kuwaiti woman. I have taught female students at the College of Basic Education for many years and I have seen how they respond to the physical activities that are part of their teacher-training programme, I know whether or not they take part in extra-curricular recreational activities, over the years I have talked to them about their chosen profession to be PE teachers, and I have listened to them talking amongst themselves about being a female in sport (amongst other topics). I have also been to many other venues in Kuwait and watched girls and women play sport and take part in physical recreation. Subjectivity has therefore played an important part in this research in relation to the understanding that I have specifically about female participation in sport and physical recreation.

My contention is that the observational techniques complemented the interviews and because they occurred in everyday situations, enabled me to gain greater insight into the sporting and recreational lifestyles of the participants.

### **1.6 The researcher's role**

Because Kuwait is a sex-segregated society (Altorki and El-Solh 1988: p.1, 4), my gender has always been significant during the research process. It was easy to set the girls and women at ease who answered the questionnaire (See Chapter 6), to answer any queries they had while completing the questionnaire, and to encourage them to elaborate as much as they could in relation to the open questions. It was also easy to interview all the female participants, including the five female 'experts' (See below, and Chapter 6). I was more formal with the 24 male experts and had fewer common understandings with them about the particular problems facing girls and women. In general, however, I felt that it was an advantage being indigenous – an 'insider' – because of the common language, the shared belief in Islam, and the understanding of cultural norms, beliefs and customs. Furthermore, because of my professional position, and because Kuwait is relatively small and I have numerous connections, I gained easy access and full co-operation from the participants in the schools, the college, and the clubs where I went to supervise the questionnaires. I was personally known either to the participants or to the gatekeepers. I also knew most of the group of expert participants personally and was able to interview them at their places of work.

I have worked reflexively throughout the period of research, aware of my personal biography, my relationships with the participants (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995), and the difficulty of remaining detached (Altorki and El-Solh 1988: p.8). The question of detachment has not been a problem, however. I believe that my serious involvement with the project and my enthusiasm regarding female sport and physical recreation for Kuwaiti females has benefited the research process. However, I am also aware of some of the limitations of this project and the need for more research. The next stage would be to carry out a more personally-based in-depth ethnographic project investigating the detailed opinions of female participants from a much wider

range of social backgrounds in open-ended interviews. It would be essential to look at those women who disengage themselves from sport and physical recreation after their school and college playing days are over.

### **1.7 Questionnaire and interviews**

Details of the questionnaire and of the interviews that were carried out with 30 'experts' in the field of sport and physical recreation are in Chapters 6 and 7 and constitute the Field Study (See Appendix 2A for list of experts). I also interviewed – in person, or on the telephone, or via e-mail exchanges – other persons with expertise in different areas, such as Islamic Sharia Rules, who could provide important information that was relevant to the study (See Appendix 2B). Some of these people are Kuwaiti; others come from other Arab countries, such as Qatar and Bahrain. The purpose of these communications was to gather as many opinions as possible about a range of factors that are relevant to female sport and physical recreation, to the role of women, to the significance of Islam to physical exercise for females and so on. Sometimes I needed factual information, but I also wanted comments on the nature of the research. The topic is a very sensitive one - to do with women's bodies; to do with culture and tradition; to do with family relations; to do with religious influences and beliefs – and it was not easy to get people to talk freely about these issues. I adopted a conversational approach to the interviews to set people at their ease and to avoid making them feel as if they were being cross-examined. With the women that I spoke to the talks were friendly and just like an exchange of ideas without a distinction between interviewer and interviewee (Scruton and Flintoff 1992: 179-182).

### **1.8 The content: introducing the chapters**

The present study is the first of its kind. It investigates both the structures and resources that make female participation in sports and physical recreation possible, and the ideological and physical barriers that prevent girls and young women from taking part. The first five chapters of the thesis set the scene for Chapters 6 and 7 which investigate the present-day situation in Kuwait regarding girls' and women's participation in sport and physical recreation. The aim was to get as much information as possible concerning an aspect of Kuwaiti life and culture about which so little is

known. The decision was therefore taken to carry out as comprehensive a piece of research as was feasible in the time and in relation to the resources at my disposal

The development of female sports and physical recreation in Kuwait is investigated in relation to relevant historical and political developments, taking particular account of the influence of Islamic ideologies about the role of women in society, women's enfranchisement, and women's bodies. It provides evidence from the Holy Qur'an in support of the need for girls and women to exercise their bodies. The research highlights the contradictory position that Kuwaiti women find themselves in living in a relatively liberal Islamic state with an official discourse of gender equality, but facing traditional and unequal gender divisions in daily life and throughout culture, specifically in sports and physical recreation. Opportunities for females in sports and recreation are tied to the political administration system of the state and the study looks at the present day situation of public provision and resourcing, following the liberation of the country from Iraq in 1991, as well as private resources that have developed as a result of westernized, global influences. The project traces the development of organised sport and physical recreation for females from 1950 until the present day. It includes details of physical education in schools, and the establishment and expansion of sport clubs and other facilities that are now in the country. Reference is made to the role of government agencies and departments – in particular the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS) that has special responsibility to establish stronger and more specialized opportunities. Finally, the study presents recommendations for Kuwaiti sports policy-makers, planners, and providers concerning sports and physical recreation for Muslim girls and women in the future. These recommendations may also be useful for those in other societies in the Arabian Peninsula.

## **Chapter Two**

'The Political and Administrative System of Kuwait and its Significance for Women in Society and Culture' examines the nature of the state of Kuwait, its historical, political, and economic development and the particular position of Kuwaiti women in society. The chapter includes discussion about the role of Islam and religious

influences on women's lives and activities, including differences between liberal and Islamist groups. The significance of patriarchal relations is discussed and the chapter points to the importance of women's agency and their struggle for suffrage and the desire to play a full role in politics, work and culture. The way in which women find themselves caught between liberal and traditional views is part of the analysis. The importance of sport and physical recreation and its provision concludes the chapter.

### **Chapter Three**

'Islamic Views of Sport and Physical Recreation and their Relevance to Female Participation' sets out the different views regarding the relationship between Islam and physical exercise and the consequences that different interpretations of Islam have for women's involvement in sport and physical recreation. The important point is made that Islam does not neglect the importance of physical exercise and recreation for women – as for men. The chapter includes views about women in society, and specifically about women's bodies, including arguments for and against different forms of exercise for women, linked to different interpretations of the Holy Qur'an. Islamic views in support of sport and physical recreation are discussed and guidelines of the Ulama (religious scholars) in support of the actual practice of sport and physical recreation for Muslim girls and women are outlined. The chapter also points to discrepancies between arguments for equal gender relations in sport and physical recreation and what actually happens, and provides a resume of the position in different countries in the Arabian Peninsula. It also includes details about the foundation and development of Muslim-specific sport organizations and competitions and the particular difficulties facing Muslim women in relation to the Olympic games.

### **Chapter Four**

'Physical Education, Sport and Physical Recreation from 1950 to 1990' explores the development of physical education, sport and physical recreation for females in Kuwait during a formative forty-year period. The chapter starts in 1950, at which time all Kuwaiti females had regular experience of physical education, which was a compulsory subject in the curriculum. It was also a period of quite rapid development of activities for girls and women outside the school curriculum, in particular during

the mid-1970s when previously all-male sports clubs set up women's sections. The chapter provides some details of the opportunities available for girls and young women in sports clubs and of the sporadic competitions that took place in these early years. It also refers to Kuwait University, established in 1966, which played a further role in the expansion of sport and physical recreation for females, and the importance of the Kuwaiti pioneer women who studied abroad to get higher qualifications in sport and physical education. Central to the account is the role-played by government ministries and private companies responsible for resourcing education and out-of-school facilities, and the opportunities available for females to take part in recreative activities. The point is made that throughout this period, male sport was always very much better resourced than female sport and that men always had the power to make decisions about what women could do. The chapter ends in August 1990 when Kuwait was invaded by Iraqi forces.

## **Chapter Five**

'Physical Education, Sport and Physical Recreation from 1991 to the Present Day' details the different government ministries and departments/organizations involved in the development of sport and physical recreation for females and the responsibilities that each has. Attention is paid to the role of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour which supports and regulates most of the organized social and leisure activities, including sport, and the role of the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS) which specialises in the welfare of youth and sports in the nation. The importance to the development of female sport of the Sport for All Department and the centres and clubs under the control of PAYS are also included. In addition, reference is made to other government organizations, for example, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Oil and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry that make provision for female participation in sport and physical education. More details of the role of sport in the education sector, including schools, colleges and Kuwait University is also included. In summary, this chapter outlines the workings of the present-day infrastructure for sport and physical recreation throughout the country.

## **Chapter Six**

'Investigating Girls and Women in Sport and Physical Recreation in Contemporary Kuwait' describes the field study conducted in Kuwait. It was designed to examine the present situation regarding the involvement of Kuwaiti females in sport and physical recreation activities, to identify the barriers that prevent Kuwaiti females from participating in sport and physical recreation activities, and to investigate the opportunities given to females by the government and public organizations. It also investigated opinions about the likely future of female sport and physical recreation in Kuwait. The methods as well as the statistical results obtained from the data are included in this chapter. The methods included a questionnaire completed by a sample of girls and young women (443) involved in sport and physical recreation, and interviews carried out with 30 'experts' in prestigious positions in government or in sport and physical recreation. The questionnaire concentrates on the opinions of a representative sample of Kuwaiti pupils at high schools, students in the Department of Physical Education at the Basic Education College, and girls and women who are members of the government (Al Fatat Club) or members of private clubs.

## **Chapter Seven**

'Outcomes and Comments on the Field Study' outlines the findings from the questionnaires and the interviews, and assesses them in relation to issues discussed in previous chapters. The answers were assessed in relation to the district that the participant lives in, the place in which she practices sport and/or physical recreation (high school, college, Al Fatat Club, private club), her age, marital status, level of education, and occupation. The first group of answers were about the opportunities available to girls and women and the most notable results related to the use of the home as the most popular place for participation, and walking, swimming and aerobics as the most popular activities. The results also indicate the use of private clubs to be increasing, but that competitive sport is not generally popular. Answers to the group of questions about barriers to participation show clearly that the weather is considered to be the greatest deterrent of all, and that Islamic ideas are not believed to be important. However, the comments of the 'experts' are more comprehensive – they cite customs and traditions, family crises, lack of facilities, financial reasons and marriage, as well as weather conditions, as barriers that prevent females from practising sport and physical recreation activities. The questionnaire and interview



participants are in general agreement that there is a shortage of resourcing; including an insufficient number of modern sport and recreation centres that care for girls and women in Kuwait and an insufficient number of female trainers and coaches. The experts in particular stress the need for firm plans for the development of women's sport and physical recreation for the future and they focus on government intervention arguing that the budget for girls and women should be increased. Importantly, they also stress the need for co-operation between all the different public and private organizations with an interest in or responsibility for female sport and physical recreation.

## **Chapter Eight**

'Looking to the Future: Conclusions and Recommendations' seeks to make comments on the thesis as a whole and sets out a series of recommendations about sport and physical recreation for Kuwaiti girls and women intended for sport organizations, officials, and policy- and decision- makers in the field. It points in particular to the issue of inequalities in Kuwaiti sport and physical recreation between males and females. In the summary, it is also clear that girls and young women often find themselves in a contradictory position. They are encouraged to take part in sport and physical recreation in official statements and by some individuals, but in practice, they are very aware that males have far better opportunities than females. The contradictory message relates to traditional ideas about Islam and, specifically, to ideas about female exercise, and the way in which Islam's positive message about the benefits of exercise to girls and women has been misrepresented. A most important observation is that women are absent from the decision-making positions regarding sport and physical recreation for females and lack the power to influence change. Finally, this chapter concludes by providing practical recommendations for the future.

In summary, this thesis is the first-ever comprehensive research into girls' and women's participation in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait, and I believe that it is the first comprehensive study about the subject based in any Arab country. It is hoped that it will be used in the planning and decision-making about the future

development of Kuwaiti female sport and physical recreation and that it might also be of benefit to those societies close to Kuwaiti culture, in the Arabian Peninsula in particular and in other Arabic countries and Muslim societies. It is certainly timely because it is an area of female life and culture that is being debated in Kuwaiti society at the present time and it represents an important intervention at a time when other Kuwaiti feminists are struggling for representation in the National Assembly (See Chapter 2). But at the present time only men can make decisions about the future of female sport and physical activities. During the three years that I have spent immersed with this project I have become increasingly aware that the powerful link between Islam and patriarchy is probably the greatest barrier preventing positive change. In her book entitled 'Women and Islam', Mernissi (1993, p.23) has argued that, 'The access of women as citizens to education and paid work can be regarded as one of the most fundamental upheavals experienced by our societies in the twentieth century and she goes on to say that 'the quest for dignity, democracy, and human rights, for full participation in the political and social affairs of our country....is a true part of the Muslim tradition' (p.viii). In common with proponents of sport and physical recreation (See Chapter 3), Mernissi she goes on to say that, 'Islam promised equality and dignity for all ' (p.viii), and 'if women's rights are a problem for some modern Muslim men, it is neither because of the Koran nor the Prophet, nor the Islamic tradition, but simply because those rights conflict with the interests of the male elite' (p.ix).

There are a growing number of Muslim women from different countries who are challenging the power that men wield in their societies, the most notable of whom is the Iranian lawyer Shirin Ebadi, the first-ever Muslim woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy of human rights and women's rights. In 2003, the first Arab Human Development Report of the United Nation Development Program (UNDP) identified freedom, empowerment and knowledge as the three deficits that should be addressed at the Summit Meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) – the core members of which are from the 22 countries in the Arab region. A report was drawn up by Arab politicians and highly-reputed scholars and academics, stating that 'despite considerable progress in education and public health care, the group of 22 Arab states ranks near the very bottom in the world (in some

instances even behind sub-Saharan Africa) when it comes to civil and economic freedoms, women's participation in public life and production, and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills'. The report also says that, in the rebuilding of their societies, the Arab countries should give priority to a 'full respect for human rights and freedoms and the complete empowerment of Arab women by taking advantage of all opportunities to build their capabilities and to enable them to exercise these capabilities to the full extent'. Shirin Ebadi believes that there is no contradiction between Islam and human rights and that all she had tried to do in the last 20 years has been to prove that with another interpretation of Islam, it would be possible to introduce democracy to Muslim countries. When she was awarded her prize, she said, 'We need an interpretation of Islam that leaves much more space for women to take action. We need an Islam that is compatible with democracy and one that's respectful of individual rights' (Siang 20/02/04).

My position in respect of girls' and women's participation in physical activities is that those who oppose them, or those that deny women's rights to make decisions about them, do so because they misrepresent Islamic ideas and or because they use Islam as a reason to excuse male power. The evidence included in this thesis shows that the time has come to allow Kuwaiti women the freedom to participate in all forms of social life and culture, including sport and physical recreation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The Political and Administrative System of Kuwait and its Significance for Women in Society and Culture**

## **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter is about the nature of Kuwaiti society and some of the ways in which past history and more recent events have influenced women's lives and their potential for taking part in sport and physical recreation. It provides an outline of the development of a modern political and administrative system in Kuwait. The specifically Arabic and Gulf character of the state of Kuwait, and its essentially Islamic traditions, have crucially affected the position of women. But for many years outside (Western) influences have also affected women's lives and outlooks. The scene is set here for understanding the ways in which women have been caught up in the particular tensions in Kuwaiti society between conservative religious opinions and more secular, liberal views. It provides a basic background for the much more detailed account in Chapter Three of how Islamic attitudes to women's bodies have fundamentally affected the potential for female participation in sport and physical recreation and for the later chapters which investigate the lived realities of female involvement in these areas of life and culture.

### **2.1 The State of Kuwait: Place, Population, Religion, and Politics**

The state of Kuwait lies at the northeast corner of the Gulf States with the Arabian Gulf on its eastern border. To the south and southwest, it shares a border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while the Republic of Iraq shares its northern and western borders (See Fig. 1). Due to its geographical location, Kuwait is considered to be an outlet to the north of the 'Arab Island', making Kuwait a genuine gateway to the Arabian Peninsula (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 1996 pp12-13). Kuwait covers a total area of 17,188 square kilometres. It is mostly flat sandy desert, which gradually slopes down from the extreme west of the deserts of Shigaya and Salmi towards sea level in the east (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 1996 p30). Owing to the location of Kuwait in the Sahara (desert) geographical region, the weather is dominated by long hot and dry summers; dust storms almost always occur with a rise in humidity during the summer, and the winters are often short, warm and sometimes rainy (Hashem, 1997 p127). Water is a scarce commodity in Kuwait, there are no running rivers, and the wells that do exist are mainly brackish (salty) water.

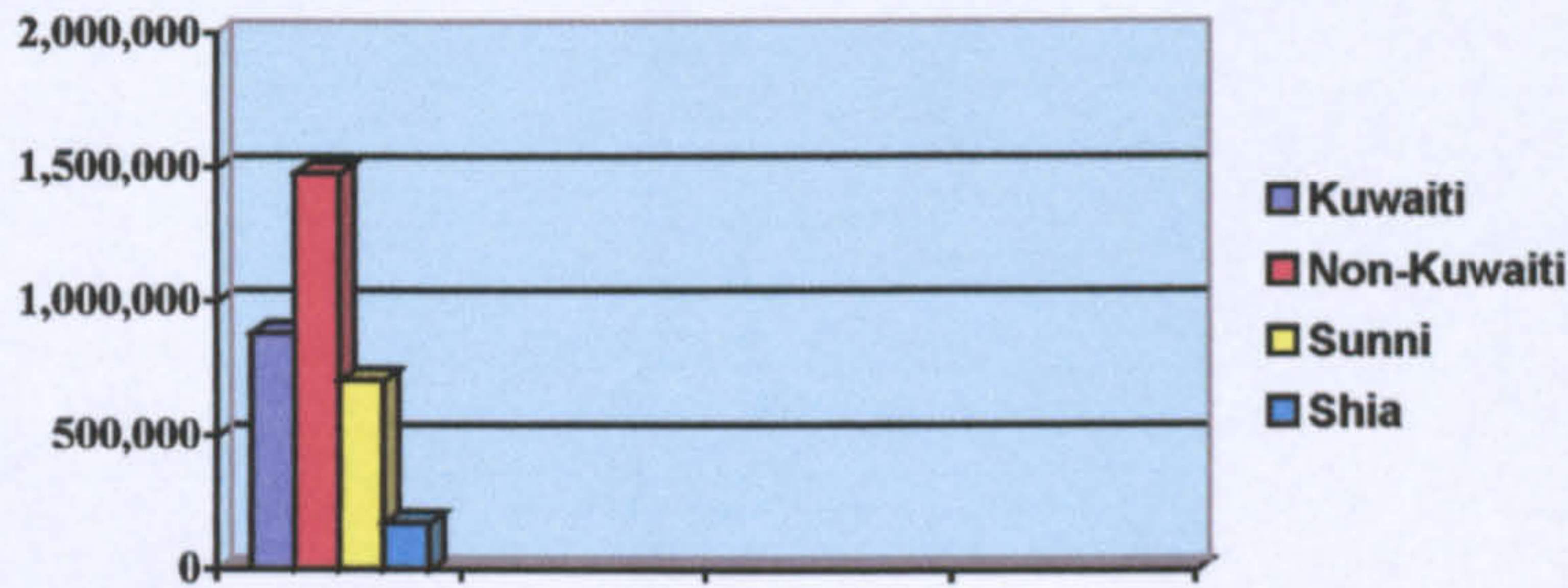
Figure 2.1: Map of Kuwait



The population of Kuwait, including non-Kuwaiti citizens, was estimated at the end of 2002 to be about 884,550 of Kuwaitis only and 1,478,775 million people are non-Kuwaitis. (Statistical Review 26<sup>th</sup> edition 2003 p5). Approximately 69.9% are Sunni Muslims, 20% Shia Muslims, while Christians make up 5.3% of the population with most of these individuals being expatriates. There are also small populations of Hindus (2%), non-religious people (1.5%), and Buddhists (1%) ([http://www.kuwait-info.org/country\\_profile.html](http://www.kuwait-info.org/country_profile.html) 26-11-2003). Freedom of religion is guaranteed by law and foreigners practice Islam and Christianity as well as other religions. Kuwait is

one of the most tolerant of Arab countries in the area in relation to religious freedom, allowing regular worship for the country's non-Muslim contingents (Lambert, 1992 p22).

**Figure 2.2**  
**The Population and Religion**



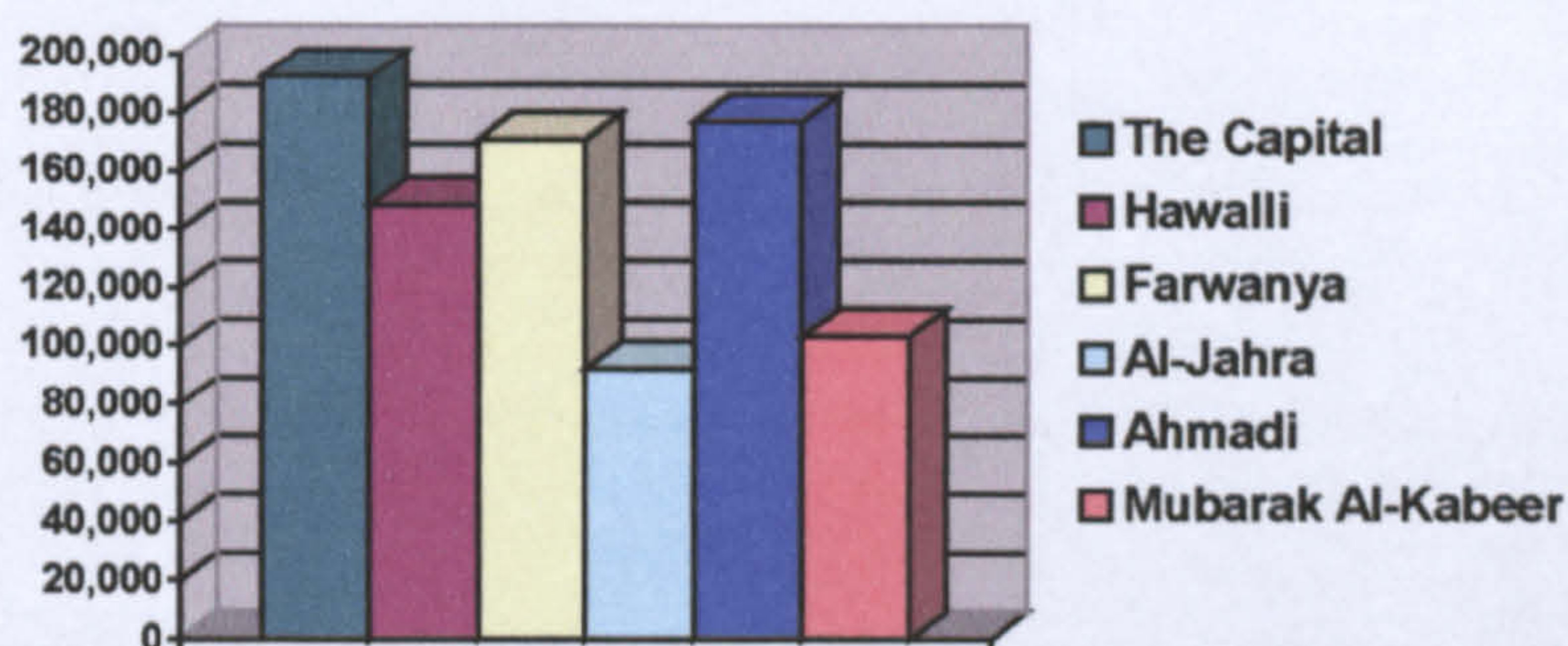
Kuwait also has a specifically Gulfian identity, a common cultural identity it shares with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq (Al-Dekhayel, 2000 p66). This identity is a unique local mix of Islamic and Arab influences with a liberal borrowing from African, Indian, and Persian cultures (Rumaihi, 1986 p97). There are an increasing number of immigrants in Kuwait filling the shifting labour requirements of the country. It is estimated that there is an annual growth rate of 3.38%, divided mostly between those from South Asia, Iran, and Southeast Asia. However, Kuwait is an Islamic state and only Muslims are given official citizenship – although non-Kuwaitis have equal rights to free education and healthcare and other state benefits (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Dec 2001). The percentage of females in the population has increased sharply during the last forty years, numbering 17.7% in 1965; 42% in 1995; and approximately half the population (51%) in today's society. Women compose an estimated 33.8% of the total labour force (estimated at 1.214 million in 2001) – the highest in the Gulf region. Of the women in the work force, 31% hold university degrees compared to only 12.6% of working men (National Bank of Kuwait Quarterly I/1999); and women enjoy a slightly higher life expectancy of 77 years in comparison to men who have a life expectancy of 75 years (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5409.htm> 10-7-03, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs December 2001). However, in spite of increased opportunities for women in many areas of life and work, there are also many traditionally based and very unequal gender divisions, including no rights for women

to vote or be elected into the National Assembly (the main political decision-making state apparatus).

The country is divided into six areas known as governorates (local governments) for the implementation and organisation of state legislation and benefits. The population of the governorates (of Kuwaitis only) is as follows: The largest by far is Kuwait city the Capital, which in 2002 had a population of 192,338. The other governorates are Hawalli (148,412); Farwanya (170,743); Al-Jahra (92,203); Ahmadi (176,983); and Mubarak Al-Kabeer (a relatively new area – 103,566 and Non-States are 305. There are other small communities in desert areas, some of which are nomadic. (Statistical Review, 2003 p 5).

**Figure 2.3**

**Kuwaiti Population of the Governorates**



The most powerful individual in Kuwait is the Amir. The present Amir, Jabir El-Ahmed Al-Sabah, has been in power since 1977. According to the Constitution of 1962, the executive power is embodied in the Amir who exercises his authority through the Council of Ministers. However, although the Amir is the Head of the National Assembly, it is possible for his opinion to be overruled by a majority decision of all members of the National Assembly. This is a rare occurrence, but has happened in relation to decisions about the role of women. Government legislation is important in determining the position of women throughout Kuwaiti society, but so too are a range of interlinked factors including history, religion and culture, and external pressures and influences – in particular western, global developments.



## **2.2 Brief Historical Background**

According to Abu-Hakima (1983), Kuwait's modern history began in the 18th century with the founding of the City of Kuwait by the Utub section of the Anaiza tribe who wandered north from Qatar. Since then many other Arabs have also settled in Kuwait, but in general it is fair to say that the ancestors of most Kuwaitis are of desert stock. At different points in the 18th and 19th centuries, these traditional sons and daughters of the desert adapted themselves to a life revolving around the sea (Abu-Hakima, 1983 p56).

Political sovereignty over Kuwait was claimed by the Ottoman governorate of Basra in Iraq, but the local ruler enjoyed considerable autonomy. In 1899, following the settlement of British people in the country, Kuwait entered into a treaty of protection with Britain (Allen, 2000 p 4). Kuwait occupied a small, quite vulnerable area of land and was troubled by disputes with Ibn-Saud, the ruler of Saudi Arabia. Since that time, the Al-Sabah family has ruled Kuwait. The head of the family – the Amir – was the sole ruler until 1961.

The strategic place of Kuwait had brought British, Iraqi and Saudi Arabian political interests into the country. But also in the picture was the influence of the merchant classes. Before the discovery of oil in the 1930s Kuwait used to be a trade centre for fishing, pearls and other products (Crystal, 1990 p31). This created a strong political group of merchants who transported goods and traded between ports in the Gulf, Africa and the Indian Coast (Kuwait and Social Development, 1995). From the 1930s onwards, the merchants were in general a liberalising and modernising influence on the development of Kuwait. In 1930, Ahmed Bin Jabir Al-Sabah (Amir from 1921-1950) opened up municipal controls after a suggestion from a leading merchant, Yusif al-Qinani. A basic law of 1932 included a broad mandate for health and social affairs. Two attributes distinguished later municipal arrangements from previous ones: first, they were financially independent of the ruler, and second, they were elective, created by merchants and more or less operated by them. Although the chairman of the decision-making authority was from the ruling family, all the other members were merchants. In 1936 the merchants developed the Education Council

through which the organisation and hiring of expatriate teachers, the opening of new schools, and the systematisation of the curriculum occurred (Al Shihib, 1980 p72). At that time, however, the schools were only for boys. Exclusively male public education reflected the very strong patriarchal systems of culture and control that systematically infiltrated family, religious and political arrangements throughout Kuwaiti society.

The discovery of oil in the 1930s and its export from the 1940s generated unexpected wealth and provided the potential for fully modernised national education and health infrastructures. During the 1950s and 1960s income from oil was on the increase and numerous schools were built to meet the demands of the increasing numbers of students. Liberalising tendencies provided some Elementary schooling for girls many of whom wanted to continue their education at high school schools and in higher education because they believed that with knowledge came happiness and with it the key to liberation (Al-Ba'tha, 1954).

1961 marked another watershed in Kuwait's history when Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah became Amir and Kuwaiti independence was declared. Abdullah Al-Salem has been characterized as 'The Father of Freedom', in part because it was during his rule that the National Assembly was set up. In July 1961 Kuwait joined the Arab League and in 1963 became a member of the United Nations. Also in 1963 the first legislative elections were held and Sheikh Abdullah, the Emir of Kuwait, inaugurated the first National Assembly on 29 February 1963.

([www.mideasttravelling .net/kuwait/kuwait%20city/kuwait\\_history.htm](http://www.mideasttravelling.net/kuwait/kuwait%20city/kuwait_history.htm) 30-1-2004)

The founding of the National Assembly was a symbolic and practical shift towards democracy. Although the Amir remains head of the Assembly, members of the Assembly have the final majority casting vote. In spite of opposition to Abdullah Al-Salam's government from leading merchants backed by dissenting members of the ruling family, highly-qualified teachers from many Arab countries were recruited, health services became free for all residents of Kuwait, and Sheikh Abdullah pursued the establishment of an effective administration and instituted a sound foreign policy.

He worked to establish cordial relations with his Gulf neighbours and his alliance with the British continued to be strong even after Kuwaiti independence (Crystal, 1990 p58). Kuwait played a major role in establishing the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consisting of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman in 1981.

([www.mideasttravelling.net/kuwait/kuwait%20city/kuwait\\_history.htm](http://www.mideasttravelling.net/kuwait/kuwait%20city/kuwait_history.htm) 30-1-2004)

Kuwait's democratic experience has matured since the National Assembly was established in 1963. Today it is composed of 50 members elected every four years. For political representation, the country is divided into 25 regions and each region has two representatives in the Assembly. Representation in the Kuwaiti National Assembly is broad, drawn from secular and religious groups. It is claimed to be an active legislature with relative freedom creating a healthy atmosphere for national dialogue (Al-Boom, July 1999). However, in terms of gender relations of power, the concept of democracy is very limited since all representatives of the National Assembly are men and they have collectively prevented women's suffrage. Furthermore, the very strong patriarchal structures that have historically underpinned decision-making procedures and been intrinsic to family life and to the world of work have also disallowed women from benefiting equally with men from modernising developments. The family forms the basis of society in Kuwait. Its importance is enhanced by the country's small size, which allows leaders accessibility to power through family networks. One family network – the Diwaniya – is a weekly social gathering adapted from the pre-oil era (Al-Mughni, 2001 p15) at which men who are relatives and/or friends discuss business and politics over coffee, arrange introductions, and obtain grants through the development and maintenance of wastah (connection). The Diwaniya is confined to male heads of families and other men from similar social backgrounds; they form a society that operates for its own collective benefit (Farrah, 1979 p61). The Diwaniya is one of the most important social institutions linking the individual and the family to the state. It is the place not only for articulating grievances, but it is also where political decisions are still taken (Al Dekhayel, 2000 p68).

Women have always had a low level of participation in public affairs. A form of strategic, institutional control has been to exclude women from political participation, from joining voluntary organisations, from taking part in democratically-run associations, and from having organisations under their own control (Al- Mughni, 2001 p39). Male control has also occurred at the level of ideology based on male-defined beliefs that women are unable to handle political and/or administrative responsibilities and are more suited and better qualified for child-care, social welfare activities, fund-raising, and pursuits where they work in a female-only environment.

However, Kuwaiti men vary in their attitudes about women's abilities and suitability for participation in the whole range of cultural and work activities available to men. Experiences of everyday life and the influence of patriarchal traditions also affect the attitudes of women in different ways, some of whom have little interest in change.

The outcome is that there are some men and some women who are negotiating for radical changes in women's lives, whereas other men and women continue to argue for the status quo and for traditional and very unequal gender relations of power to be maintained. Women who seek change are, of course, dependent on those liberal minded men who are in power decision-making positions to argue for change on their behalf. However, the greatest barrier to change is because gender relations of power throughout Kuwaiti society have been historically linked not only to the role of government and officialdom and public life, but to the 'Islamic way of life'-the religious influences incorporating attitudes to women's natures, to their bodies, and to their roles within the family and in the community.

### **2.3 Religious Influences on Women's Lives and Activities**

Every aspect of Kuwaiti life has a Muslim cultural heritage and religious affiliation. Article 2 of Kuwait's Constitution states that, "The religion of the state of Kuwait is Islam, and the Islamic Sharia shall be a main source of legislation" (Constitution of the State of Kuwait, 1982 p2). "Deen" is usually regarded as equivalent to the English term religion. It embraces a wide spectrum of practices and ideas which affect the entire daily life of the Muslim individual (Hashem, 1997 p144-145) based on the

Holy Qur'an (revelations from God to the Prophet Mohammed) and the Hadith (the sayings and practices of the Prophet Mohammed). Surveys in the late 1970s indicate that Kuwaiti university students, when asked to choose abstractly, consistently chose Islam as their most important group affiliation, outranking citizenship (Farah, 1983 p29). Because Islamic identity is so important, the government has consciously encouraged displays of public piety, through state funding of mosques and Islamic institutes, through state support of religion in the school curriculum and through playing a prominent role in Islamic conferences (Al-Dekhayel, 2000 p65-66). Currently, Kuwaiti society has become deeply concerned about the strict application of these principles and seeks to encourage Islamic societies, mosques, and religious media. The strong influence of Islam extends to all parts of life and affects the domains of sport and physical recreation. It carries with it some tight restrictions, for the most part concerning women rather than men (Behbehani, 1992 p72-73).

One of the characteristics of religion in Kuwait is the sectarian division between the Sunni and Shia Muslims. Each sect has its own vision of the "ideal" woman. For Sunnis, Aisha, the Prophet Mohamed's wife and the daughter of Khalifa Abu Baker, is the ideal woman, while for the Shia, Zeinab, the granddaughter of the Prophet Mohamed and the daughter of Khalifa Ali, the cousin of the Prophet Mohamed, is the ideal woman. These two women became active and visible in public life in the early period of Islam (Walter, 1993) and stories of their lives illustrate their active roles in shaping the history of early Islam. Aisha's participation on the battleground and Zeinab's recounting of the Shia struggles are symbols of the militant character of women in the early period of Islam, shattering myths about the passive roles of Muslim women throughout time (Stromquist, 1998). However, in spite of the celebrations of Aisha and Zeinab, the roles of women in modern Islam have been powerfully influenced by very traditional conceptions of womanhood linked to the position of women in the family, as wives and mothers. In general, the majority of Kuwaiti Shias are more conservative in their attitudes to women than Sunnis (Al-Dekhayel, 2000, p77).

Muslim women have a long history of limited participation in relation to men – in law, in politics, in culture – and have experienced problems and setbacks in their quest for greater opportunities (Ahmed, 1992). The aims of various feminist organisations that exist in the Muslim world are to safeguard the interests of women against unjust practices. However, little attention has been paid to sport and physical recreation until recently. Female participation in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait has been tied to the country's particular form of Islamic culture, although the way in which Islamic ideology is put into practice varies between groups, historical periods, and different interpretations of the Holy Qur'an. Proponents of sport and physical recreation for females argue that the Qur'an is not opposed in principle to women's participation in physical activities; but that, on the contrary, it provides a supportive framework for the development of radical opportunities for girls and women (Anhar, 1992 p32-36; Daiman, 1995 p18). Many Islamic nations, including Kuwait, now recognise that sport and exercise are beneficial to health and that both men and women should be encouraged to take part. Official support for such a position makes it easier for women to argue and struggle for better resources (see Chapter 3). In very recent times, women in Kuwait have become part of a wider Islamic women's movement for creating opportunities and a more public voice for the development of sport and physical recreation for Muslim women (see Chapter 3). The radical activities of Kuwaiti women in other fields should also strengthen the potential for including women's sport and recreation on the mainstream feminist and political agenda.

#### **2.4 Kuwaiti Women, Agency and Struggle**

Kuwaiti women as a whole are far from being passive recipients of legislation or of tradition or of culture. For example, during the 1950s a rebellious group of merchant-class women were encouraged by forward-thinking young males to raise their veils and to call for emancipation. A special newspaper was reserved for them to air their views and comments, and in the decade between 1950 and 1960, merchant-class teenagers wrote articles about issues that mattered to them. During the 1950s the topics were 'education' and 'the veil', and in the early 1960s the topic was 'the employment of women' (Al-Mughni, 2001 p58). Since that time Kuwaiti newspapers have reserved columns dedicated especially for women. Also during the 1960s, in

part as a result of the influx of foreigners, women of the merchant-classes began to travel and study abroad, and they also began to work alongside men.

The potential for Kuwaiti women to play a full role in the country's affairs and in all types of cultural activities was signalled symbolically and practically during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, starting on 2 August 1990 and lasting for seven months. Many Kuwaiti nationals were forced into exile and Kuwait was claimed to be Iraq's 19th province. Although the occupation was short lived, it was brutal, and resistance of any form was swiftly suppressed. Schools and sports clubs became detention and torture centres. However, Kuwaiti women were defiant; they were active in ways that contradicted the widespread belief about 'women's passive nature'. They printed and distributed newsletters telling those who stayed in Kuwait to 'remain steadfast in the face of aggression'. Women also provided help with food rationing and first aid and gave advice about chemical weapons (Esposito, 1998 p196). They wore the black *abbaya* (women's long black cloak, worn over the dress and covering the entire body) as a symbol of defiance. Shortly after the invasion, hundreds of women marched, carrying national flags and pictures of the Amir and Crown Prince and chanting, 'Death to Saddam' and 'Long Live the Amir' (Rajab, 1993 p15). Iraqi soldiers opened fire on these women and a university law student was killed and many were injured. However, this did not deter Kuwaiti women. Because of the shortage of staff in hospitals, they cleaned wounds, brought food to patients and staff, took care of orphans and the disabled, organised regular visits to Kuwaiti prisoners detained in Iraq and Kuwait, and volunteered to do manual "man's" work (Al-Hammadi, 1994).

Women also became active in the resistance. They carried weapons and ammunition under their *abbayas* and under car seats. They trained to fight hand-to-hand and to use explosives (Badrnan, 1998 p198). Kuwaiti women thereby showed Iraqis that they were a real threat. Those women that were caught were beaten, raped and subjected to executions. Many women are still unaccounted for.

After the invasion, the new regime openly declared its commitment to democracy (Al-Najjar, 2000) and women were acknowledged for their patriotism and promised that

they would be enabled to play a greater role in the newly-liberated Kuwait (Crystal, 1992 p169). However, influenced by religious leaders, the government was reluctant to upset the patriarchal order of the country and so women were re-established as second-class citizens whose rights and obligations continued to be defined as those of wives, mothers and daughters.

Since the Iraqi invasion there has been a greater concern to apply Islamic beliefs and practices to female roles. In the Kuwaiti Parliament, the liberals and Islamist groups express 'fundamental ideological differences, especially around the issue of women's enfranchisement' (Al-Mughni 2001 p173), and while liberals have been fragmented and disorganised, Islamists have been better organised and united, as well as being numerically dominant in the Parliament. Furthermore, a Muslim cleric has acknowledged the fact that even the early women's movement in Kuwait both angered and frightened men, and that it was for this reason that men welcomed and even encouraged the revival of Islamic beliefs (Al-Hassawi, 1985 p17).

In spite of Kuwaiti women's continued struggles in particular to be part of a democratic system and to secure voting rights, in 1999 Parliament voted twice to reject their enfranchisement. First an Amiri decree promising women the vote in the 2003 election was rejected by 41 votes to 22, and then a second bill was defeated by only two votes – 32 for women's enfranchisement and 30 against. These defeats were followed in 2000 by women campaigners for female suffrage winning a landmark administrative court ruling, allowing one of their number to take her case to the constitutional court (Allen, 2000 p6). However, Islamists won the day and the court case made no difference to the status quo disallowing women the vote.

Nevertheless, women in Kuwait are less restricted than women from many of the other countries in the Arab peninsula. They are free to drive and travel on their own, as they please. They can also dress as they wish and it is common to see women in western attire alongside women wearing traditional Islamic dress. In the area of work, Kuwaiti women are guaranteed equal pay and are not confined to those jobs traditionally reserved for females, such as teaching and nursing. But although women



hold all types of positions from those in the government sector, to professional positions in the oil industry, to running independent businesses and holding prominent positions such as ambassador, President of Kuwait University, and Under-Secretary of Higher Education, they do so in very small numbers in comparison with men. In spite of their greater numbers in higher education, Kuwaiti women overall are not given equal access to employment and are not being allowed equal chances of promotion; nor do they have equal opportunities in sport and physical recreation. For example, among the 15 sporting clubs in Kuwait, there is only one club for women; the Al-Fatat club (see Chapter 5). In addition, despite the great budget and grants, either governmental or non-governmental, given to the male sporting clubs (Hashem, 1997 p180), the Al-Fatat club is dependent on an annually-fixed grant. Finally, all members of the board of directors of the particular institution specialising in the welfare of youth and sports in Kuwait, The Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS) are males.

In order to be able to argue and struggle for equal rights in all areas of life and work and culture, women's suffrage remains one of the most pressing issues in Kuwait today. Women's rights groups have started a publicity campaign, which they say will continue until all women's political rights are approved by parliament (Al-Najjar, 2000 p248). They work through various social and cultural organisations such as the Women Affairs Committee, Kuwait's Union of Women's Societies and other predominantly female organisations. Kuwaiti women have on several occasions protested against their political ban; they have routinely marched on the National Assembly holding signs and banners demanding political rights; on other occasions they have marched into voter registration centres in police stations claiming the vote. Kuwaiti feminists argue that under Islamic Law all human beings are equal and that Islam is not against women's political rights. More specifically, they point out that there is nothing in the Constitution of Kuwait that limits women's right to vote and run for office and that an electoral law passed by the 1963 Assembly that prohibited female participation in politics violates the Constitution (Al-Mughni, 2001 p63).

Over the years, women's lives in Kuwait have been influenced in quite contradictory ways. Patriarchal arrangements and traditions have been counterbalanced by the increasingly multicultural character of Kuwaiti society and by global influences. After the discovery of oil, the need for labour power led to the country's largest influx of foreigners in 1936 from which time Kuwait became a strongly mixed-race nation (Al-Mutawa, 1985). As well as supporting the economy, 'outsiders' have stimulated the diversification of Kuwaiti culture and living styles. For example, prior to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the vast majority of non-nationals in Kuwait were of Palestinian, Egyptian and Lebanese origins, in general more liberal in terms of attitudes to women than Kuwaiti nationals. Their presence in Kuwait helped to create a more liberal society, especially in respect of attitudes towards women. Also during the 1960s the feminist movement in the west was gaining impetus and middle-class Kuwaiti women were more aware of the benefits of education and work. It was not accidental that at this time the first group of Kuwaiti women was sent to Cairo University on state scholarships (Al-Dekhayel, 2000 p60). They were the first generation of Kuwaiti women who went to university (Al-Mughni, 2001 p59).

But in more recent times there has been another change in the social structure of Kuwait, and a further shift in attitudes to women. The majority of Palestinians sided with Iraq during the invasion, which, in turn, has resulted in their expulsion from Kuwait. Also following the end of the invasion, a number of Kuwaiti exiles returned to their own country from more religious and conservative locations, such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman. These migrations, and the general catastrophe of the invasion, have led Kuwaitis to create a society more conservative and religious than before the invasion - for example, as we have seen, Islamists have become increasingly influential in government and have resisted liberal attitudes to women and women's quest for equality with men. It is too early to hypothesize about, or predict upon, the effects on attitudes to women in Kuwait following the capture of Saddam Hussain and the liberation of Iraq from his regime in 2003 by predominantly American forces, but in spite of the general relief that Saddam Hussain has been deposed, it is likely that Islamists in Kuwait will strengthen their opposition to any growth of American influence over culture, which will inevitably conflict with liberalising tendencies towards women.

However, advances in travel and communications and the influence of global culture and a world-wide women's movement have, at the same time, had a radical and secular influence on the lives of Kuwaiti women. The development of sport and recreational opportunities in recent years - for example, the opening of private fitness gymnasias, and the influx of fitness classes illustrates the influence of global flows (Robertson, 1992) on the Kuwaiti economy and culture. However, to date, most feminist activities have been linked to the areas of education, health, politics, and work, and there have been few initiatives about access to, and opportunities specifically for sport and physical recreation for females. Female suffrage would be an important step in changing this situation by providing women with a legitimate public voice and the potential for successfully negotiating changes in all areas of life and culture.

## **2.5 Sports, Physical Recreation and Human Development**

The benefits of sport have been acknowledged since Kuwait was founded. In the early years, the citizens of Kuwait participated in swimming, diving, rowing and navigation, hunting, shooting, horseback riding, and tracking so that they could adapt to both the sea and land. Although life for Kuwaitis has changed historically, the people continue to pursue sporting activities. However, these activities are now seen as hobbies rather than as a means of survival. (Hashem 1997 p152) The most notable period of development of all aspects of culture, including education and sport, occurred following the discovery of oil. In 1936, modern education included sport in its school programmes, albeit only for boys in the first place, which then led to the setting up of curricular, teaching, and organization principles influencing participation and competitions. Teams and clubs were formed under the supervision of the Council of Education. The Council was needed to develop sports throughout the country and it could be argued that with these developments a new phase in the history of the Kuwaiti sports movement was underway. A sport infrastructure was established which, although distinctly male-oriented and controlled, provided a basis for expansion and, specifically, for the provision of more opportunities for girl's and women's participation.

Following the patterns of development in western countries, there has been a growth of awareness that sport and physical recreation – linked to health and education services – can provide benefits that directly affect women's lives. The provision of health and education systems has been regulated by laws and policies under the control of the state, which, Moore (1988, p.129) declares, 'has a role not just in regulating people's lives but in defining gender ideologies, the conceptions of "femininity" and "masculinity", and determining ideas about what sorts of persons women and men should be'.

In the 1950s Kuwait became the first Gulf State to introduce a comprehensive health system for the entire population. Since then, it has continued to provide free healthcare to all nationals and most expatriates (Al-Dekhayel, 2000 p59). Physical recreation programmes are provided for by Kuwait's health budget based on the benefits to health of exercise. Provision is made for people with low incomes to use the recreational facilities and there has been pressure on management agencies to provide better recreation programmes (Kuwait and Social Development, 1995 p101). Improving health services to women is expected to increase the number of women demanding sport and recreation participation.

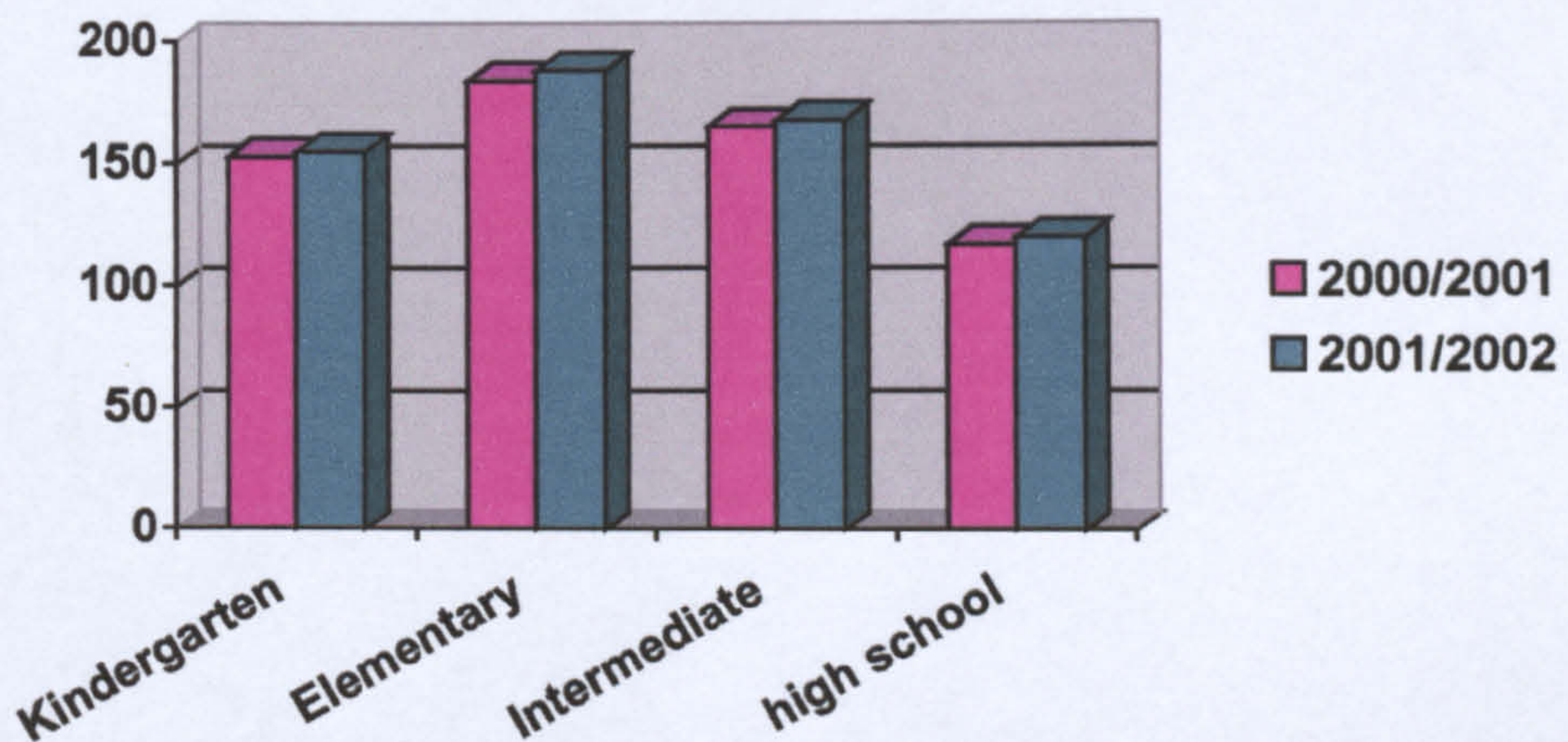
The government has also shown a keen interest in education, and expenditure has increased since the first oil exports from Kuwait in 1946. A 20% increase in the number of teachers between 1957 and 1977 led to a marked rise in the number of students attending school in Kuwait; in 1946 there were 3,962 students going to school, including females; in 1967 the number increased to 101,728, and the government spent about \$560 per student (including non-Kuwaiti students). The trend of increased numbers has continued in pace with the expanding population. The Kuwait Constitution states that, 'Education is a fundamental requisite for the progress of Society... assured and promoted by the State' (Constitution of the State of Kuwait, Article 13, Kuwait 1962 p7).

Kuwait's education system is one of the best in the Arabian Peninsula; it is well funded, modern, comprehensive, and free to all schoolchildren and university and

college students. In 2000/2001 a total of 314,073 pupils attended the 619 government schools (153 kindergarten, 184 Elementary, 165 intermediate and 117 high school). The growth in provision at all levels is reflected in the 2001/2002 figures when a total of 318,992 pupils attended 631 schools (155 kindergarten, 188 Elementary, 168 intermediate and 120 high school).

**Figure 2.4**

Number of Schools in Kuwait from 2000 to 2002



Women have benefited greatly from free access to state education and the philosophy of equal educational opportunities for students of both sexes has been an important factor in liberalising women's traditional roles. By the early 1980s, for example, over 4,000 Kuwaiti women held university degrees, compared to only 38 in 1965; the number of students admitted to Kuwait University for the academic year 1997/1998 totalled 4,229, including 2,723 females and 1,506 males (KUNA Reports 281555, February 1999); over 72% of Kuwait University graduates were women in 1998/1999 and in 2001/2002 the total numbers of students who graduated from the university were 1,028 male students 253 and 775 female students (Statistics and Information Sector 26<sup>th</sup> Edition 2003 p11, State of Kuwait Ministry of Planning). According to the 2003 Ministry of Planning Statistics, there has been a steady growth of female graduates who outnumber males at all educational levels. For example, In Kuwait's university in 2000/2001 there were 16,107 Kuwaiti students; 4,907 male students and 11,200 females students (Statistics and Information Sector 26<sup>th</sup> Edition 2003 p10, State of Kuwait Ministry of Planning). Interestingly, in the university sector there are

incentives such as free sportswear, transport, and field trips; and students are also sent overseas on State Fellowships (Al-Dekhayel, 2000).

However, despite the growth in the number of teachers, students and scholarships abroad, the education system is unable to meet the local demands of every sector and the lack of comprehensive educational planning has resulted in a great financial loss to the Kuwaiti economy. It is also the case that the curriculum for male and female students has not been the same in all subjects, and although physical education is compulsory for both sexes, male and female students have had different and unequal resourcing and opportunities. The policy in countries with well-established health and educational infrastructures, such as Kuwait, is to create a comprehensive physical education and sport curriculum, which, in turn, links to the provision of sport and recreation in the community. But in practice girls and young women in Kuwait have limited opportunities and experiences while in the education sector, and it is, therefore, less likely that they will participate in physical activities when they leave school and university (see Chapters 4 and 5).

There is a general problem also concerning the public resourcing of sport and physical recreation facilities. During the 1990s, because of oil revenues, Kuwaitis enjoyed the second highest per capita income in the world – KD 5,419 (KD=£2) (Annual Statistical, Abstract, 1996) but the economy of Kuwait faced new challenges after its liberation in 1991 from the aggressive Iraqi invasion. After more than twenty-five years of having a surplus, the budget has had a real deficit due to many factors including the heavy expenses of the Liberation War, the reconstruction of the armed forces and civil infrastructure, the decline in world oil prices, and sizeable reductions in foreign investments. Kuwait's first human development report, in 1997, raised awareness of the country's struggle to shift from dependence on oil towards a knowledge-based economy. Policy-makers in the new millennium emphasise the role of education in providing human resources by building up technical skills and scientific knowledge, by the spread of education, by developing the potential abilities of the population and raising their productive efficacy through planned education and training, and by raising the standards of health and culture of all (Ministry of

Planning, Kuwait, December, 1998 p63). It is argued that the current economic status is unsustainable because public expense continues to grow while revenues remain limited and subject to external market forces. Therefore, the economy needs a major restructuring process to create more stable and diversified revenue streams to reduce, or at least control, the growth of public spending (Al-Sane, 1997). It is likely; therefore, that development of facilities for sport and physical recreation will become increasingly linked to the private sector and that public provision may be reduced. In fact, sport and physical recreation have already become an important focus of business investment and an essential element in the total national economy.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Kuwait is a partially democratic state, and it is fairly modern in its form of democracy when compared with most other Arabic countries. However, the exclusively male National Assembly has the power and freedom to discuss and express opinions that intimately affect the lives of women, and yet prevent women themselves from playing a role in decisions enforced upon them. However, Kuwaiti women have shown themselves to be active agents in a number of different contexts and they are showing a growing interest in the importance to women of sport and physical recreation for health and well-being. They are, however, in a complex position, influenced both by traditional and patriarchal attitudes about their roles – in particular Islamic views about the usage of the female body, discussed in Chapter 3 – and also by more liberal and Westernised perspectives and the perceived need for greater modernisation. The provision of opportunities is also tied to the present economic climate in Kuwait and changing policies regarding public spending.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Islamic Views of Sports and Physical Recreation And their Relevance To Female Participation**



### **3.0 Introduction**

There are two key questions that serve to initiate this chapter. Firstly, 'What views are held about the relationship between Islam and physical exercise (i.e. sport and physical recreation)?' and, secondly, 'What consequences do different interpretations of Islam have for women's involvement in sport and physical recreation?' The discussion that follows sets out to answer these questions by looking at official, cultural and religious views about women and exercise in Kuwait (including some general discussion about countries in the Arabian Peninsula). Sport and physical recreation in Kuwait have not developed in a vacuum, but are influenced by a general movement throughout the region of the Arabian Peninsula, including government interventions and encouragement and leadership from women's sport and physical education professionals and organisations.

The greatest influence on the everyday lives of Muslim people, including their attitudes to their bodies and to sport and exercise, is Islamic tradition and culture; the sense in which being a Muslim is a lived identity. Islam is an ideology based on the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. The Qur'an – which includes rules, legislation, practical examples, advice, and history – is considered to be the basis of Islamic culture. It provides for Muslims answers to the spiritual and material needs of Islamic society, as well as being an exposition and explanation of all aspects of life. Views about women in society, and specifically about women's bodies, including arguments for and against different forms of exercise for women, are linked to different interpretations of the Qur'an (Hargreaves, 2000).

A number of Islamic scholars (Siddiqui, 1991; Nazlee, 1996; Hatimy, 1979; Patel, 1997) claim that prior to Islam men were dominant and women fell victim to much tyranny and maltreatment from them. As Siddiqui (1991 p2) points out, 'Before the advent of Islam, the status of women throughout much of the world was appalling'. According to Nazlee (1996 p9), in many regions of the world women had few or no rights, and Siddiqui (1991 p2) elaborates when he claims that, 'In every part of the world woman was subjected to unbearable tortures by man, who treated this weak and delicate creature like a beast of the jungle'. Hatimy (1979 p19) generalizes about

women's role before Islam by saying that her proper place was considered to be in the home, or working in the field or at other menial duties, disregarding her feelings or her identity. It is further argued that, in contrast, with the advent of Islam, and following the dictates of the Qur'an, it was intended that women should be given equal status with men and that, indeed, this right was provided to women without any struggle (Patel, 1997 p32).

In such constructions, Islam is portrayed as an essentially liberating religion that 1400 years ago uplifted the status of women, and gave them revolutionary rights for that time. Consequently, modern notions of gender equality, human rights, co-distribution of responsibilities, and the potential of both sexes, can be seen to be inherent in Islam (Daiman, 1994 p14; Al- Farruqi, 1994 p36). But the reality for women in Islamic societies is very different from such claims. Historically, there have been very uneven gender relations of power between the sexes, and in recent times the issue of gender equity has not been straightforward but has varied between societies according to the role of government and the relation between state and religion (Hargreaves, 2000). Activities that focus on the female body – specifically different forms of physical exercise – have in particular been fraught with restrictions. Throughout the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, including Kuwait with its relatively liberal and modernising ruling ideology, commonplace attitudes believed to be based on religious dictates have precluded women from taking part in sport and physical recreation – most particularly in public places. There is, therefore, a gap between official statements about the desirability of females taking exercise and the everyday life experiences of non-participation. Because there has been no previous culture of female sport, it is especially hard to change practices and ways of behaving that are built into people's psyches and ways of living.

Proponents of sport and physical recreation for women turn to the Qur'an and the Hadiths for guidance. It is noted that the Prophet (pbuh) himself was active throughout his life – for example he was more than fifty years of age when he raced with his wife Aishah – and he continually recommended his companions to take part in many forms of sport, which still today are considered to be beneficial forms of

exercise. He himself took part in wrestling, running, archery, horse racing, shooting and swimming, and it is reported that he stood out amongst his entourage, not only for his wisdom and uprightness, but also for his physical qualities, his feats, and the results he obtained at sporting competitions. There are many kinds of games and sports that the Prophet recommended to Muslims as a source of enjoyment and recreation that, at the same time, prepared them for worship and other obligations. Sports, which require skill and determination, and which also involve physical exercise and bodybuilding activity were viewed positively as were those that are related to the martial arts, including training Muslims for the battlefields of jihad (holy war) in the cause of Allah. Specific sports such as racing, swimming, marksmanship and horse riding for both males and females were also mentioned (Bemat, 1989 p26). Following the Prophet's guidance, religious scholars were aware of the benefits of exercise and would exhort others to take part. The Companions of the Prophet used to race on foot, and the Prophet encouraged them in this (Al-Owdah, 1993 p99). It is reported that Ali, the Prophet's cousin, was a fast runner and enjoyed racing tremendously. Referring to exercise, Ali bin Abi Talib the fourth of the caliphs or successors of Muhammad, was born at Makkah. His father, Abu Talib, was an uncle of the Prophet, and Ali himself was adopted by Muhammad and educated under his care. As a mere boy he distinguished himself by being one of the first to declare his adhesion to the cause of Muhammad, who some years afterwards gave him his daughter said, "Refresh your minds from time to time, for a tired mind becomes blind". The Prophet Mohammed also established children's rights to practise sport. He liked to say, 'Children have a right to demand that their parents teach them to read and write, to swim and shoot with a bow and arrow, and leave them a good inheritance' (Al-Asbahani, 1987 p31/ and <http://en2.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali> 16-1-04).

In the advice about the benefits of exercise found in the Qur'an and the Hadiths, there is no obvious differentiation between the sexes, although most of the examples of sport and exercise lead one to assume that the activities were male activities. However, as we have seen in Chapter 2, one particular story is evoked specifically to provide an example of women's physical health in earlier times and to support the idea of women's participation in exercise today. The story concerns Ashia bint Abu Bakr, one of the Prophet Mohammed's wives, known for her spirit and good memory,

who became a teacher to other Muslims and a narrator of the Hadith. Ashia bint Abu Bakr was on a journey with the Prophet with whom she had a race and she outpaced him. As time passed the Prophet wished to avenge his loss, so he raced her again, and this time he won, saying, 'This is for the previous outpacing' (Al-Hammami and Darwesh, 1997 p298).

Such examples from the Prophet's own life are used by today's advocates of sport and physical recreation for girls and women to argue for greater equality between the sexes. It is claimed that Islamic ideology is not opposed in principle to female participation in sport and physical recreation, but, rather, that it is in favour of such activities (Anahr, 1992, pp32-36) and that the Qur'an provides a supportive framework for the development of opportunities for girls and women (Daiman, 1995 p18). In summary, Abdelrahman (1992) points out that from the very beginning of Islam, for both men and women, emphasis was placed on self-rectifying and mind purifying, body strengthening and encouragement of the physical. It follows that all good practising Muslims in modern-day Islamic societies should carefully maintain their bodies and use them to the maximum – to exercise them, train them, master them, make them supple, strong and beautiful. It is further argued by advocates of sport and physical recreation for Muslim girls and women that a true believer will strive for the ideals of physical strength, mental and physical harmony, beauty, and virtue.

However, although in recent years there has been greater recognition in official discourse of the physiological, psychological and social benefits of physical exercise to both men and women (Al-kholy, 1996 p7), and physical education has become a compulsory part of the curriculum for boys and girls in all schools in Kuwait, in all countries throughout the Arabian Peninsula, and in Kuwait, specifically, Muslim women have had a long history of limited participation compared to men (many women have never participated), and, unfortunately, there have been problems and setbacks in the quest for greater opportunities (Ahmed, 1992; Hargreaves, 2000). There is clearly still a need to increase awareness and understanding about issues and problems in sport and physical recreation for women under Islamic rule. This chapter,

therefore, aims to examine the impact of Islam on women's sport and physical recreation in Kuwait (and other Islamic societies) and to look at some recent developments that have taken place.

### **3.1 Women's Sport, the Qur'an, and Attitudes of Religious Scholars**

It is the interpretations of the Prophet's words that dictate the practical applications of Islam relative to women. But there are different interpretations resulting in different everyday customs and rules of behaviour. What is common in all Islamic societies is that Islamic observances and beliefs affect social and cultural behaviour and school and university policies, and impose greater restrictions on women's participation in sport and physical recreation than on men's participation. For example, De Knop (1996 p150) suggests that 'this is due to the fact that women are considered more vulnerable [than men] (as a result of biological differences between the sexes) and therefore need to be protected and supported'. Another most significant reading of the Qu'ran has to do with attitudes to a woman's body, and to modesty. Under strict Islamic rules, every Muslim woman is asked to cover her whole body – excluding her face and hands – from all men except her husband or relatives (and old or infirm men, servants, and infants or small children who have not yet obtained a sense of sex) living in the same house with whom a certain amount of informality is permissible (Dio, 1996 p14). Some interpretations of Islam are strict to the extent that a woman's face cannot be revealed in public. However, others have few or no clothing restrictions. The traditional legitimate dresses for Muslim women are long uniforms covering the whole body, and the hijab that derives from the Arabic word meaning 'curtain' or 'veil'. The hijab is usually taken to mean a scarf worn over the head. The foremost reason why women wear the hijab is because they are God-fearing people, and because God tells Muslim women to do so in the Qur'an: 'O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw in their outer garments around them (when they go out among men). That is better in order that they may be known (to be Muslims)' so as not to be annoyed. (Qur'an Al-Ahzab 33.59).

Bearing in mind the importance of female modesty in Islamic thinking, proponents of women's sport and physical recreation for Muslim women also refer to religious

documents and to the sayings of Islamic scholars to support their views. The leaders of the Muslim women's sport movement and those who promote physical education for girls in schools have adopted a straightforward Islamic position – they could be characterized as Islamic or Muslim feminists (Karam1998, p9-12) Doing so provides them with a very strong justification in support of the development of sport and physical recreation for Muslim females. The following key points have been drawn up from the publications of Abdelrahman (1992), AlFaroqi (1988) and Turabi (1991), and from meetings with Dr. Khaled Al Mathkor, Head of the Supreme Consultative for Completion of the Implementation of the Islamic Sharia Rules in January 2004 and Dr.Mohammed Altabtabai, Dean of the Faculty of Sharia at Kuwait University in December 2002. Their opinions have, in turn, been extracted from the studies of the Ulama (religious scholars). The points below provide guidelines for the actual practice of sport and physical recreation for Muslim girls and women:

1. The Ulama agree that there should be no prohibition for women practising sport because of the positive effect it has on the soul, body and mind. They argue that women should take part in sport and exercise because they are vital to maintaining health and reducing risks of degenerative diseases. Moreover, Ulama point out that God created us with joints, bones, muscles and different biological systems, which, if not worked, will deteriorate and weaken.
2. The Ulama also mention that performing ablutions and praying are merely some sporting activities carried out by the body: “The obligatory prayers consist of 17 cycles of body activities. During prayers Muslims have to stand still, bow, kneel and prostrate. These activities are proven to control and synchronise body muscles, release pressure and facilitate relaxation, helping to release pressure on the brain, stimulate all the joints including the spine, and activate heart and blood circulation” (Khan, 1997 p15).
3. It is argued that practising sports does not stand in the way of women leading normal lives as wives and/or mothers. The Ulama agree that, on the contrary, sport helps them to carry out their responsibilities in these two roles more efficiently.

4. The Ulama also state that women can practise sports but within the values of Islam, for example, with regard to attire, this should be discrete and cover the entire body.
5. The Ulama agree that women may participate in competitive sport but must follow the previously mentioned restrictions. In case the practice necessitates some body parts to be bare, the audience should be confined to women, even with regard to referees and officials.
6. All Islamic countries should:
  - a. Provide separate facilities (or separate times or schedules) for women to train and practice sports.
  - b. Encourage women to practice sports as a positive mental and physical benefit.
  - c. Teach Islamic jurisprudence in sport institutes, likewise physical culture should be taught in Islamic faculties.
  - d. Spread the right concept of sport amongst all classes of society and sport consciousness amongst Muslim women should be heightened.
  - e. Launch informative campaigns on a global scale to clarify the Islamic concepts of women practising sport.

All efforts to develop female sport and physical recreation in Kuwait and the other Arab states have been underpinned by the Ulamas' Islamic directives. There have been very practical implications – the most significant of which is about the issue of separatism. Throughout the Islamic world care is taken to ensure that the modesty of girls and women is not put at risk which means that in most contexts they can only take part in single-sex activities and it is important to ensure that no males are watching. Under Islam, the mixing of the sexes in sport is forbidden in public unless women's clothing is Islamic. Participation in public and mixed-sex situations, therefore, disallows shorts, T-shirts, leotards, and swimming costumes etc.

But Muslim women's participation in sport and physical recreation is linked not only to the idea of female bodily modesty in relation to men, but also to the issue of personal contact with other women who are disbelievers – an important issue which

most Muslim women are ignorant about. Strict adherents to Qu'ranic readings point out that, according to Ibn Abbas, "A Muslim woman is not allowed to display herself before the women of the unbelievers and non-Muslim poll-tax payers" (Ahl al-Dhimmah) any more than she can display herself before other men (At-Tabari). That is why, in early Islam, the Khalif Umar wrote to Abu Ubaidah Ibn al-Jarrah, the Governor of Syria, to prohibit Muslim women from going to the baths with the women of the Ahl al-Kitab, the People of the Book (At-Tabari and Ibn Jazir-<http://www.worldofislam.netfirms.com/hijab.html>, 9/9/03). The idea that a Muslim woman should not use public baths or swimming pools because these places are likely to expose her to evil influences, is based on a traditional story that some women from Sham (now the area of Damascus) came to Aisha and she asked them if they had entered the public baths. Then she commented, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (GOD) saying that a woman who undresses anywhere else other than in her own house tears off *satr* (curtain) which lies between her and her Lord" (Doi 1996 p27).

This distinction between women on grounds of character and religion is intended to safeguard Muslim women against the influence of 'outsiders' whose moral and cultural background is either not known, or is objectionable from a conservative Islamic point of view. The problem of mixing with non-Muslim women presents challenges for many believers in sports such as swimming. Since wearing a whole body suit or joining a female-only swimming club does not necessarily provide a solution, some women choose to remove themselves from this activity. There are some female-only swimming complexes that have been established by the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (see Chapter 5), yet these are not suitable for the purposes of strict Muslim women. As with swimming, there is a similar problem with fitness gymnasiums. Although many women-only gymnasiums have become popular, strictly interpreted Islamic tradition dictates that loose clothing and proper headwear be worn in the presence of non-Muslim women and strict Islamic Kuwaiti women cannot become members of those clubs if non-Muslims are present. However, in Kuwait, it is possible for 'liberal' Muslim women to share the same gym with non-Muslims without having to cover their heads. In self-defence classes, Muslim women can only train with other women, and must wear loose clothing and a head covering,



and must not attack the head, as the Prophet has forbidden Muslims to hit on the face while training (Beiruty, 2002 p2).

In Islam the conciliation of body and mind is a major factor. The body is considered only to be an instrument generously put at the disposal of a person by the Creator (Allah), and it is believed that everything to do with the body has an ethical dimension. In particular, it is the global character of women's sport in contemporary societies, bringing images of the female body and female sport into everyday life via satellite television and other forms of communication (Whannel 2000) that poses additional problems for Muslim women. To keep in line with today's excessive demands for women to have 'supermodel' physiques, many Muslim women are being drawn to exercise for this sole purpose (Hargreaves 1993). The arguably unnatural and unnecessary stress and anguish that women impose upon themselves is not conducive to Islamic ideas about sport as a fun activity as opposed to a chore. Bodily exhaustion is not suited to an Islamic way of life, explained by Allah when he says, 'Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope' (Qur'an 3, verse 286).

In addition to the limitations placed on women's participation in sport and physical recreation stemming in particular from Islamic attitudes about women's bodies, there are other restraining factors. Women's sport in Kuwait has never been an organic aspect of Muslim women's lives and everyday Islamic culture. Husbands and fathers still retain very traditional attitudes about the roles of girls and women that do not include support for exercise. A married woman must have the permission of her husband before participating in sport outside the home, and she must ensure that none of her wifely duties are sacrificed as a result of her taking part. A traditional culture and way of life is very hard to shift and men as well as women need to be educated about the health and other benefits of exercise. But there are material barriers to participation as well. There is a serious lack of facilities, especially indoor facilities, equipment and other resources for girls' and women's sport and physical recreation. Furthermore, there are many Kuwaiti women who have excellent qualifications and a great deal of experience in the field of sport and physical recreation, including academic degrees, often from foreign universities, but because of male dominance,

there is a regrettable dearth of women in powerful administrative, leadership and decision-making positions. This topic is discussed in Chapter 5.

In Kuwait, there clearly exists a discrepancy between arguments for equal gender relations in sport and physical recreation and what actually happens in practice. Far fewer women than men take part in sport at all levels – for fun and in elite competition - and far fewer women than men take part in physical recreation in all its contexts - in indoor and outdoor locations, and in public and private venues. However, in spite of the drawbacks, there has been some growth in recent years, although a huge shift in thinking and a radical investment in material resourcing are still needed. In Kuwait there is official acknowledgement that the Muslim religion encourages sport and recreation for both sexes and that more opportunities for girls and women should be made available in order to reduce the inequalities in provision existing at present. The following section outlines some specific guidelines for the development of women's recreational activities in Islam.

### **3.2 Islam and Recreation**

For most women in Kuwait, opportunities for participation in some form of exercise come in the form of physical recreation, and recommendations for recreation are based on the belief that Islam is a practical religion; that it does not float in the stratosphere of imaginary ideals, but remains with the human being on the ground of realities and day-to-day concerns. A very 'down-to-earth' view of Islam is that it does not regard people as angels, but accepts them as mortals who eat food and walk in the marketplace; that it does not require of Muslims that their speech should consist entirely of pious utterances, that their silence should be a meditation, that they should listen to nothing except the recitation of the Qur'an, nor that they should spend all their leisure time in the mosque. Rather, it recognises that Allah has created human beings with needs and desires, so that, as they need to eat and drink and work, so they also need to relax and to unwind by taking part in activities like sport and physical recreation.

In a number of Islamic states, including Kuwait, recreation is viewed as an important aspect of personal experience in modern life in regard to the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual benefits it provides. It is argued that recreational experiences enhance the quality of a person's life, and in order to make this possible, governments and other responsible social agencies should provide recreation resources, programmes, and, where appropriate, recreational education to help people understand the value of free time, when constructively and creatively used (Al Hamami and Mustafa, 1998 pp233-235).

In support of the official resourcing of facilities and opportunities for physical recreation, the words and actions of the Prophet are invoked. Scholars recognize that, following the Prophet's example, his companions enjoyed humour and laughter, as well as play and sport, thus relaxing their bodies and minds and preparing them to travel on the long, arduous path of striving in the cause of truth and justice. Abu Al-Darda, one of the Prophet's companions said, "I entertain my heart with something trivial in order to make it stronger in the service of the truth". Accordingly, it is argued that there is no harm in Muslims entertaining themselves in order to relax their minds or refresh themselves with some permissible sport or play with their friends.

However, using another example of the participation of the Sahaba (Companions of the Prophet), Islamic scientists have instructed that anything done simply for futile pleasures or merely 'for fun' has no basis in Shariah as every action of a believer is orchestrated by the supreme command of Allah and orientated towards attaining His pleasure only. Resisting further pleasure is believed to be the culmination and perfection of faith wherein the servant attains pleasure only in fulfilling the command of His Master so that his heart ingests and aspires at all times to ascertain the command of Allah (Darwesh and Al-hamami, 1997 p303).

The apparent confusion between the encouragement of, and opposition to, recreation is resolved by the argument that recreation in moderation only is beneficial and need not clash with the values and principles of Islam. In support of this position, recreation only in people's spare time is permissible under Islam – any activity that

pulls them away from their daily duties and religious observances is unacceptable. It follows that Islam prohibits devoting all time to fun and play, and of damaging life with superficial events. It is those 'ultra-playful' people to whom the Holy Qur'an refers in the following quotation: "Leave alone those who take their religion to be men, play and amusement, and are deceived by the life of this world" (Sura Al-Anaam, verse 70).

In summary, it is argued that Islam allows - indeed encourages - participation in recreational activities, including sport and physical recreation but that participation should not be obsessive and should not result in the neglect of other important activities.

The belief that all sports and an increasing range of recreational activities are acceptable is progressing rapidly in Islam. With global influences, there is a tendency for Muslims to place greater emphasis on this world, and less on the hereafter. But, as we have seen, Islam offers certain directives for maintaining a balance between faith and sports and recreation. These directives are aimed to prevent Muslims from neglecting essential religious and worldly responsibilities, as well as other praiseworthy contributions they could be making to society (Al-Owdah, 1993 p108). Firstly, if sport and recreation prevents or diverts Muslims (males and females) from performing daily prayer, they are expected to prioritise prayer. Secondly, if sport interferes with the worldly and social responsibilities of Muslims, they are expected to reverse this state of affairs. Thirdly, Muslims are always encouraged to increase their involvement in activities such as Zikr (praise of God) and recitation of the Qur'an and fourthly, to read and learn more about Islam and the Islamic world. Fifthly, Muslims are expected to involve themselves in community activities like Islamic lectures and programmes and lastly, to fulfil the rights of those closest to them, such as parents, friends, children, neighbours, etc. (Al-Owdah, 1993 pp47-48 and p155).

There is an obvious tension for Muslims resulting from the very different messages that come from religious teachings and from the variable interpretations of the Qu'ran. Kuwaiti women in particular, in common with women from other countries across the

world, including those in the Arabic Peninsula, are pulled between their responsibilities to their homes and their families and their desires and needs for recreation. However, the official government and educational discourses about the importance of exercise for health balances the more negative and traditional attitudes to recreation and, especially, to sport and other physical activities.

### **3.3 Recreation, Physical, Mental, Social and Moral Growth**

It is particularly important for women that there is general acceptance that Islam does not neglect the physical aspect of recreation. In Islamic thinking the body is the means through which women can remain healthy and so carry out their religious and temporal duties. Most significantly, an authentic Hadith goes: “You have a duty to your body”.

The more specific values of physical recreational activities to everybody are authored in other Hadiths as follows:

1. A healthy body is free from illness or disease. This health then has its impact on the soul and mind.
2. Freedom from illness is not enough; the body should be strong and able to move quickly and easily, as well as being able to face difficulties and endure hardships under difficult circumstances.
3. In summary, “A strong believer is better and closer to God than a weak one”.

These hadiths provide a clear message that attention should be paid to the development of a strong and healthy body which, in turn, provides a rationale in support of sport and physical recreation. There is also general agreement that in order to increase energy to their bodies; women as well as men should do regular physical exercise (Al-Owdah, 1993 p107).

But Islam regards the mind as man’s most important faculty, and therefore the link between body and mind in physical recreation is significant in Islamic thought as

well. Most sports and forms of physical recreation in one way or another enhance intellectual, mental, or logical thinking. The main objectives of physical recreation for Muslims associated with mental development have, therefore, been outlined as follows:

To develop an individual's mental ability and logical thinking, as well as enhancing their insight, perception, and imagination for their own benefit and for the benefit of society (Al-Owdah, 1993 p47-48; Darwesh and Al-Hamami, 1997 p56-57)

But body and mind are also linked in Islamic thinking to the third dimension of human beings – the soul (incorporating the social and moral aspects of a person's development). For example, it is argued that a wide range of recreational activities can contribute positively to women's Islamic personalities by fostering good relationships. Likewise, the moral aspect is considered to be another important feature of recreation. Muslims place considerable importance on the moral aspect, and consider it to be the first theme of social change (Al-Qaradawi, 1979 p38). Organized recreation is also encouraged for artistic and cultural creativity and the discovery of potential talent.

In summary, the justification for and encouragement of Muslims to take part in recreational activities are linked to the concept of 'all-round' development – physical, mental (psychological), and spiritual. It is argued that a combination of all these qualities can be found in the physical activities described in the Qur'anic stories of prophets and messengers (Qotb, 1972 p44-45; Al-hamahmi and Darwesh, 1997 p294).

### **3.4 Participation of Muslim Women in Sport**

Although readings of the Qur'an and official (government and educational) discourse provide encouragement for women as well as men to take part in various recreational activities, including sport, Muslim women have a long history of very limited participation in comparison to men, in large the result of patriarchal relations inherent in the family, state, and religious institutions. As De Knop et al. mention, referring to

Muslim women in Western Europe, “Constraints such as the segregation of sexes, traditional attitudes of parents, and the lack of sport facilities and equipment, especially indoor facilities, still account for the absence of physical education classes for many girls” (Badr, 1981; De Knop, 1996 p153). However, over the past decades there has been a significant increase of female participation in the Islamic world as a whole, and in Kuwait specifically. In 1996, it was claimed that the most popular sports among Islamic women in the Middle East were volleyball, basketball, track and field athletics, gymnastics, and handball (De Knop et al., 1996 p154). Since that time there has been a steady increase in the types of sports and physical recreation activities that girls and women take part in – including, for example, aerobics and cycling. As long as they have taken place according to Islamic rules, they have in general been accepted without opposition.

However, the relatively recent and rapidly increasing popularity of female soccer has attracted negative responses. For example, (Hargreaves, 2000, pp76-77) recounts the problems encountered in Egypt in 1995 by Sahar El-Hawary when she formed and funded an Egyptian women’s national indoor soccer team and struggled to develop a club infrastructure so that she could go on to form a full 11-a-side team that qualified for the African Nations Cup in Nigeria in 1998. In spite of the care that El-Hawary took to avoid criticism from Islamists by kitting the players out in cycling shorts under their football strip, and even although she received from the Egyptian Football Federation, there was a particularly punitive reaction from religious leaders who declared a ‘fatwa’ (religious decree) against football for women because it was perceived to be unfeminine and un-Islamic in character (‘Une fatwa’, 1995).

A more recent and less aggressive example of opposition to female soccer took place in Kuwait in 2001 when an Islamic associate member of the Kuwaiti Parliament directed a complaint to the Ministry of Higher Education and to the University of Kuwait. The purpose of this complaint was to prevent the opening of a female soccer tournament due to be held between the students of the university, colleges, state and private schools unless it was going to be held within the values of Islam. As a result, and to satisfy the demands for Islamic standards, the tournament was held in special

private halls with female-only participation and in the presence of females only (*Al-Watan Newspaper* 21 September 2001).

The increasing popularity of soccer among girls and young women runs in parallel with the increasing popularity of indoor activities, such as aerobics and gymnastic work-outs, during which women can move freely in Western-style leisure-wear, away from the eyes of the opposite sex. But such activities attract fear of secularisation and Westernisation, and opposition to them comes from both clerics and politicians. The link between state and religion was again demonstrated when another Kuwaiti politician demanded that some Olympic television coverage be taken off the air because he argued that it contained more sex than sport. In his opinion, some of the clothes worn by female participants are not appropriate for sport due to their physically constrictive design – he was referring to the body-hugging materials and styles that accentuate female sexuality. Other Islamists who oppose Olympic television coverage claim that viewers are constantly bombarded with images of semi-naked women. They also object vehemently to television coverage of alcohol consumption in victory celebrations, of violence and aggression, as well as other activities that are completely prohibited by Islam (13/04/2003-  
"http://www.jamiat.co.za/library/books/Islam"www.jamiat.co. za/librar/ books/Islam).

### **3.5 A Brief Resume of Sport and Physical Education in the Countries of the Arabian Peninsula**

Although all the countries of the Arabian Peninsula are Muslim countries where Islam is the source of legislation, there are nevertheless differences in attitudes to women and in the opportunities for women to work and to play a full role in culture and politics. Specifically, there are notable differences between the different Arabian Peninsula countries in relation to female participation in Physical Education (PE), sport and physical recreation activities. For example, Saudi Arabia has been one of the strictest Islamist states and up until the present day schoolgirls have had no PE lessons and there have been no opportunities at all for women to take part in sport and physical recreation (Interview with Dr Sanaa al-Mandel, November 2003). However, in response to pressure from individual Saudi men and women and school pupils, and



resulting from a general change of public consciousness about the values of physical exercise for health, at the end of 2003 the Shoura Council (Saudi government) voted by 75-29 in favour of introducing physical education into girls' schools for the first time in Saudi history. The recommendation was subsequently approved by King Fahd and as a result PE will be introduced into girls' schools in 2005, putting an end to a ban which has prevented girls from participating in any form of sports in public schools for more than 40 years (Raid Qusti & Maha Akeel *Arab News* January 1, 2004)

In common with Saudi Arabia, Qatar also applied strict rules preventing female participation in sport and physical recreation for many years. In 1998, Qatar was described by Mackay (*Guardian* 8/5/98) as having 'a strict allegiance to the fundamentalist Wahabi Muslim faith and to local custom (which) has for more than 15 centuries required that women be largely invisible outside the home' (cited in Hargreaves, 2000 p69). But Qatar has experienced some shifts in recent years allowing girls and young women limited opportunities for sport and physical recreation. Although the Ministry of Education in Qatar supports the principle of physical education in schools it is not considered to be an important subject. As far as women are concerned, many activities are available to them but not all families encourage them to participate. The University of Qatar has a Department of Physical Education that has the responsibility of training females as teachers in the field of PE and sports (from interview with Al-Noami, September 2003). In May of 1998, the Qatari royal family allowed the Athletics Grand Prix to be staged at an indoor stadium allowing women to participate in the competition. The only condition was that all female athletes were dressed 'respectably' in consideration of the Muslim tradition. Although the Grand Prix did not include any Muslim female competitors, it marked the first time that elite female athletes competed in public in a Grand Prix in a Gulf state. The event was preceded by an International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) seminar marking the launch of, "The Year of the Woman Athlete". One hundred Qatari female physical education teachers attended the seminar and references were made to "tearing down the walls and taking the first steps on the road to change" (Hargreaves, 2000 p70). Since that time the State of Qatar has increased its sporting activities for females. Moreover, Sheikha Moza Al-Misnad, the wife of the

Amir in power, has taken on the responsibility to ensure that Qatari women have the chance to participate. In November 2000, she founded the Qatari Women's Sports Committee (QWSC), supported by Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, President of The Qatar Olympic Committee (*Qatar Women's Sports Committee*, 2002, P14). The QWSC works to promote the participation of women in sport throughout the country. Women are encouraged to participate in seminars, study programmes and sport congresses in order to create a sports consciousness and to develop knowledge about sports practice and administration in line with the plan of the Qatar National Olympic Committee. Through the work of the QWSC, women are encouraged to help sport organizations which are concerned with women's sport affairs in Qatar and to exchange information and experiences with national and international sport organizations in order to develop sports activities for women at all levels (*Solidarity Cup Championship for Women 2003* p20). The Qatari Women's Sport Committee provides a number of activities, including gymnastics, shooting, track and field athletics, volleyball, basketball and handball. In 2003, Qatari women participated in volleyball and handball tournaments in Iran, and also in 2003 for the first time Qatar hosted The Women's Solidarity Cup International for volleyball and handball in its capital city, Doha – symbolizing the first steps in encouraging more Qatari women to participate in sport. The volleyball competition had six participating teams including Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria, the UAE and its host Qatar. However, the handball competition had only three participating teams including Iran, Sudan and Qatar. Kuwait did not send teams to either of these events.

Referring to the Women's Solidarity Cup International, Dr Anisa al-Hitmi, chairman of the Qatari Women's Sports Committee said that during the tournament there would be privacy for women according Islamic values and traditions. Men and photographers were banned from observing the tournaments, but women spectators were encouraged to attend in order to provide encouragement for the women players. Not only is Dr. Anisa al-Hitmi the chairman of the Women's Sports Committee, but also the first Qatari woman to gain a PhD in sport and to receive support from the wife of the Emir of Qatar to be a decision-making member of The Qatari National Olympic Committee. The National Olympic Committee is endeavouring to send Qatari females to represent their country in the Asian Games of 2006, which will also

be held in Qatar. (Al-Noami interview 29-9-03; <http://www.gulf-times.com/2003/09/17/sports.htm>).

Bahrain is probably the most 'modernised' Islamic state in the Arabian Peninsula. It has a population of only half a million people and in common with Kuwait; it has a comprehensive education system and free healthcare for its citizens. Women in Bahrain can vote and stand for election to parliament (as can women in Qatar and Oman), and it is fast becoming a leader of women's sport in the Arabian Peninsula. Higris (1993) states that in just over one year (1992-3), the number of sports centres in Bahrain for the exclusive use of women rose from five to nineteen. Bahraini women's consciousness and belief in the role of sports for women in modern societies is embodied in the role women play in sports. Women's sports at the University of Bahrain are a prominent feature and individual and group practices are available in football, volleyball, tennis, gymnastics, and other sports. The university supports and reinforces these activities by providing all the necessary equipment and staff. At the University of Bahrain, the College of Education established an academic department for Physical Education in 1982. Currently, there are 100 female students (Bulletin of IAPESGW, 2002 p9).

Kuwait is not as advanced as Bahrain in its development of sport and physical recreation for women, but there is awareness and general acceptance of the need for greater opportunities. Although Kuwaiti women do not have the vote and cannot stand for election to parliament, as we have seen, they comprise an active female population in a relatively liberal Islamic society. PE is part of the curriculum at all education levels for girls and sport has become a social activity for Kuwaitis, as well as playing a role in improving health and providing opportunities for leisure. However, in interviews with physical education teachers, carried out as part of this research, it became clear that highschool pupils especially do not attach great importance to physical education and seldom attend PE lessons unless the grade adds to their final mark. It appears that not only do pupils show a negative attitude towards physical education; there are even female teachers who do not want to teach the subject because they are obliged to wear sport clothes during classes. Also there are

several headmasters who refuse to give the same attention to physical education as to other subjects. However, at the time of writing in 2004, public sport has become a large and competitive industry in many governates in Kuwait and is now a significant service often provided directly by the government, through a network of clubs and associations. Ironically, however, in spite of the relatively better infrastructure for girls' and women's physical education, sports and physical recreation in Kuwait in comparison with neighbouring Islamic countries, the involvement of Kuwaiti women in international events is minimal. For example, there were no Kuwaiti women taking part in the women-only volleyball and handball competitions referred to above that were hosted by Qatar.

None of the six states of the Arabic Peninsula are insular from one another in their development of sport and physical recreation for girls and women, but are influenced by what is going on in the other Arabian countries. Bahrain is probably the most advanced and secularised in its policies for, and provision of, sport and physical recreation for females and plays a leading role; at the other end of the scale is Saudi Arabia where very strict Islamic codes have been legalised through the state for years and put into practice as barriers to women's participation in physical exercise of any sort. The decision by the Saudi Shoura Council to make some changes in 2005 follow those, and have been influenced by those, that have taken place previously in other Arabian Peninsular countries. Throughout the Arab states, including the United Arab Emirates and Oman, which have not been included in the above resumes, women and girls are being educated in greater numbers than ever before which probably more than any other factor has led to the greater expectations that many of them have about taking part in sport and physical recreation. However, it is clear that in Kuwait there is a particularly large discrepancy between the official support and rhetoric about female inclusion and the actual practice. Religious and traditional ideas, supported by patriarchal relations in the home, remain particularly powerful, but it also appears that Kuwait does not give support to the development of competitive sport for females to any great extent, even when it takes place in insular, female-only contexts, organized by Muslims specifically for Muslims. But women throughout the Arabian Peninsula are increasingly becoming a driving force in the development of opportunities for female sport and physical recreation in their own countries liaising not only with

women in the Arabian Peninsula but also with Muslim women from Islamic states that are further afield. The foundation of a number of international organisations for women in sport, some of which are Muslim-specific, has helped to advance the position of sport and physical recreation for Muslim women in general. The most significant organization for the women of the Arabian Peninsula is the Sport Association for Arab Women, founded in Cairo, Egypt, in 1996. The organization was set up in order 'to support the development of sports for Arab women by helping to establish a women's sports association in every Arab nation' (Christensen, K., Guttman, and G. Pfister 2001). To date there is no Kuwaiti women's sports organization (See Chapter 8).

### **3.6 Muslim Women, and Sport Organizations and Competitions**

It is impossible for any women's organizations in Islamic countries to work outside the Islamic framework. In recent years, Muslim women from different Islamic countries have been struggling for better opportunities in sports in their respective countries and, most significantly, have liaised together in organisations and at seminars and have organised competitions specifically for Muslim women. They have worked carefully according to quite strict interpretations of Islam in order to advance their cause and have demonstrated how working within organizations can create a bond between female members and give them the strength that cannot be achieved as individuals. As one of the leaders of the Muslim women's sports movement said: 'Organisations give us some autonomy. On the one hand we may appear to be subservient, but within our own spaces, we are in control and can make some impact' (Hargreaves, 2000 p67).

In 1991, the First Islamic Countries' Sports Solidarity Congress (ICSSC) was held in Tehran in parallel with the First Islamic Solidarity Games. Efforts were made at that congress to encourage Muslim women to take part in international competitions. Kuwait did not participate in the first (1991) or the second Congress (1993), because of the effect of Iraq invasion. (The Embassy of The Islamic Republic of Iran in Ottawa, <http://www.salamiran.org/Women/Olympic/history.html> 5-4-04)

The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, gave a speech at the opening ceremony of the 1991 Congress. He stated that the congress aimed to build a framework of sporting competitions that women from Islamic countries could participate in. It was agreed that these sporting events had to be in accordance with the religious beliefs of Islam (Hargreaves, 2000 p64-65). At the Third Congress held in Tehran in 1993, the Islamic Countries Women's Sport Solidarity Council (ICWSSC) declared that Muslim women could, and should, participate in sporting events. The congress confirmed that women should not take part in activities in public view (Hargreaves, 2000 p65). The Second Islamic Solidarity Games were held in 1997 in Tehran. Although the opening and closing ceremonies were televised, cameras were not allowed to film competitive events due to the strict Islamic code of dress (Hargreaves, 2000 p66). On the occasion of the First West Asian Games, also held in 1997 in Tehran, Kuwait was one of the ten Islamic countries that took part – the others were Iran, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Chad, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Yemen (Hargreaves, 2000 p66-67).

Thousands of women gathered in Tehran, for the Third Muslim Women's Games (originally the Islamic Solidarity Games) in October of 2001. The goals of the Third Muslim Women's Games were threefold: First, to establish and strengthen solidarity among women of Islamic countries. Second, to develop and expand competitive sport within the framework of Islamic life. Third, to spread sports culture among the youth (Bell and Friedman, 2001 p591). Men and the media were only allowed at the opening ceremony, where women still wore the hijab, and once the games began all males were prohibited while women were competing. They competed in a variety of sports including volleyball, handball, basketball, and swimming. Seven hundred and fifty-three competitors took part with an all-female support staff – from coaches to trainers, referees, and even journalists. But in contrast to the popularity of the opening ceremony, the stadium with a seating capacity of 15,000 was practically empty. There was a clear discrepancy between the apparent public support of the Games, and the lack of interest among women themselves (or permission given to them) in watching the actual sports. Nevertheless, there was a sense of huge achievement among the participants who were creating a sporting venue which they could truly call their own. Although competitive Muslim sportswomen are still unusual and not in any way truly

representative of women throughout their societies, they do act as role models for the next generations of Muslim women. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah from Kuwait, President of the Olympic Council of Asia, who 'advocates fair play in sport and strongly believes that sport carries messages of global peace and is a means of co-existence, harmony and prosperity.' (<http://www.afsm.org.hk/newsletter/news-2000.htm#OCA5-2-04>) gave unequivocal support to the development of competitive sport for Muslim women when he praised the organizing Committee of the Third Muslim Women's Games by saying, "The Islamic Countries Women's Sport Federation has provided a new and suitable pattern for activating Muslim women in sport while observing the Islamic codes"

(6/4/03<http://www.icwsf.org/English/Messages.html>[www.icwsf.org/English/Messages.html](http://www.icwsf.org/English/Messages.html)).

Islamic countries, including Kuwait, also encourage women's attendance at various sports conferences that seek to expand knowledge about sport and physical recreation so that women can apply all that they have learned at these conferences to their own societies. One such conference was the 14th Conference of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW) in Egypt. Over 100 women and men from 30 different countries gathered for the conference in Alexandria, Egypt, in October 2001. The theme was, "Life Long Learning: Towards Active Girls and Women". Representatives from the IOC, WHO (World Health Organisation), ICSSPE (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education) and various National Olympic Committees joined the many sport scientists and physical education teachers who were committed to the advancement of sport and physical recreation for Muslim females. The emphasis of the conference was on the importance of physical activity for women and girls throughout their lives. A wide variety of papers were presented focusing on pedagogy and curriculum development; science and research; sports and dance in the community; health promotion and equity and social justice. Each presentation stimulated lively discussion and debate. The Faculty of Physical Education for Girls at Alexandria University was the conference organizer, continuing a tradition of successful women and sport conferences in Alexandria. Altogether, there were eight Kuwaiti delegates – five women and three men. All the Kuwaiti delegates were staff from the Basic

Education College in PAAET, reflecting the strong association between the education sector and the female sport and physical recreation movement.

There have been several other important conferences regarding sport and physical recreation all of which included in their programmes special sections, lectures, and meetings specifically to do with the interests, needs, possibilities and problems of sport and physical recreation in Islamic states and for Muslim women in the diaspora. For example, the International Council for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Sport and Dance held a conference on the topic in July 1999, at Minia University in Cairo. Probably the most significant conference of all was held in Brighton, England, in 1994, entitled, “Women and Sport: the Challenge of Change”. It was the first-ever international conference about women in sport. Known as the Brighton conference, it aimed to address and work to change the discrimination that women face in sport and physical recreation across the world. There were five Kuwaiti delegates – all women - three of whom were from the Basic Education College and two from the Al Fatat Club. They were all funded by the government to attend the conference. The only other delegates from the countries of the Arabian Peninsula were two women from Bahrain – one from the University of Bahrain, the other from the Ministry of Social Affairs. Towards the end of the conference, the “Brighton Declaration” was drawn up by a representative group of delegates, addressed to “all those governments, public authorities, organisations, businesses, educational and research establishments, women's organisations and individuals who are responsible for, or who directly or indirectly influence, the conduct, development or promotion of sport or who are in any way involved in the employment, education, management, training, development or care of women in sport”.

The Declaration includes the following objectives:

- To ensure that all women and girls have the opportunity to participate in sport in a safe and supportive environment which preserves the rights, dignity and respect of the individual;
- To increase the involvement of women in sport at all levels and in all functions and roles;



- To ensure that the knowledge, experiences and values of women contribute to the development of sport;
- To promote the recognition by women of the intrinsic value of sport and its contribution to personal development and healthy lifestyle. (cited by Hargreaves, 2000 p222)

Following the return of the Kuwaiti delegates to their country, the government signed the Brighton Declaration, thus demonstrating open support for the advancement of females in sport in Kuwait. Egypt was another signatory of the Brighton Declaration reflecting the energy and activities of Egyptian women in working to create better opportunities for females in sport and physical recreation in their own country and in other Islamic states. For example, Egyptian Women set up the Sport Society of Egyptian Women (SSEW) which organized the conference in October 1995, which was the first specifically Arabic International Conference on Women and Sport. The conference attracted 280 delegates from eight tow countries, 70% of whom were female. This eventually led to a National Sports Association for Women being established in twelve different Arab countries. In Kuwait, there is no ‘overall’ national association for women in sport, but one representative from the higher education sector, one from the Al Fatat Club, and one from the Kuwaiti Women’s Sports Committee (a committee of the Kuwaiti National Olympic Committee – have been elected to represent the country at conferences and other events which aim to promote women in sport. Such conferences as those described above have been instrumental in lobbying for greater opportunities specifically for Muslim women, through their vision of a sporting culture that “will enable and value the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport” (Hargreaves, 2000 p222).

### **3.7 Muslim Women and the Olympics**

As can be seen, Islam does not discourage women from participating in the Olympics; it merely establishes certain guidelines or rules on participation. Because the mainstream Olympic Games is a secular event, conserved within a Western context, with a long history of Western thought and majority-Western control, there has been no provision for female-only events that would allow Muslim women from countries that demand a strict reading of the Qur’an to take part. There is, therefore, a notable lack of women from the countries of the Arabian Peninsula that have taken part in

Olympic competition. Even in sports such as archery and equestrian events, in which Muslim women can take part without contravening Islamic dress modes, no Kuwaiti females have ever participated in Olympic competition – either for religious reasons or because they have not reached the qualifying standards.

A number of Muslim women's organizations have been brought into negotiations surrounding women's participation in the Olympic games. In her capacity as the President of the Islamic Countries Women's Sport Solidarity Council (ICWSSC) (Akhbar Morning, June 8, 1997 p7), Iranian Faezeh Hashemi has urged the IOC to promote more sports for Muslim women, and to be receptive to their specific needs. She points out that Muslim women make up one quarter of the female population in the world, and yet they are unable to participate in Olympic competitions as they exist at present. It was at the IOC International Conference on Women and Sports in 1996 that Hashemi petitioned the IOC to commission single-sex events so that Muslim women could take part in Olympic competition. She also negotiated with the President of the IOC at the time (Juan Antonio Samaranch) to allow Muslim women to take part in 'Islamic dress'. All her arguments were based on the close readings of the Qur'an and its satellite texts (Hargreaves, 2000 p71 and interview with researcher December 2003). Mr. Samaranch showed his commitment to women in the Olympics by saying, "I encourage you to continue in this important endeavour which will benefit the women and the population at large", but he made no commitment to the specific needs of Muslim women when he pointed out in his address to the World Conference on Sport, that "Sport, whether for competition or simply for enjoyment, has become a powerful social force with major effects on the structure of our society. But the problems of low participation by women in sport is fundamentally linked to the social challenges which they face, and therefore cannot be solved by the Olympic movement alone" ([www.cwsf.org/English/Messages.html](http://www.cwsf.org/English/Messages.html)).

There are approximately 30 countries which are members of the Olympic Movement but which prohibit women from participating in mixed sport at all levels in the Olympic Games and in other international competitions. Iranian Mandana Rassouli spoke out about women and sport in Islamic countries when she said, "Approaching

the third millennium, the issue of women and sport in society is a particular topic of debate in every country in the world. Therefore, the role of physical activity should be highlighted for women specifically, and it should be noted that it is not a mere priority among many issues of women's concern, but it is a vital one". Rassouli said that, "750 million Muslim women have been hindered from active participation in international competitions. The best evidence of this claim was the absence of nearly 30 Muslim countries in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta" (Al-Ahram Weekly, Dec. 16-22 1999, Issue no.460).

Even though the participation of Muslim women in organized sport seems to have increased they only take part in highly competitive events to a very limited extent. For example, in the 1984 Olympic games, fewer than 4% of Muslim athletes were women, which represented only 0.3% of the total number of participants (Sfeir, 1985). In 1988, twenty-one countries sent only male competitors (Hargreaves, 1994 p231). However, according to unpublished International Olympic Committee (IOC) figures, during the 1992 Barcelona Games, almost 8.5% of Muslim athletes were female, representing fewer than 0.5% of the total number of athletes (DeKnop et. al., 1996 p154). Furthermore, several of the nations that sent all-male teams to Barcelona – including Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia - all from the Arabian Peninsula - did not lack the fiscal resources to train women athletes, or to finance their participation, which it raises the question about whether it is acceptable for those countries to train men while neglecting women.

Nevertheless, Muslim women in some Arab countries have achieved more significant sporting success in certain areas than males. The first appearance of Muslim women was at the 1936 Berlin Games when two Turkish women athletes were among 115 Muslims taking part in competition. But it was the 1980 Moscow Games that proved significant specifically for Arabian Muslim women for the first time when competitors from Algeria, Libya, and Syria were represented (Elnashar, 1996 p18). The Los Angeles Games in 1984 provided an even more significant breakthrough when Nawal Elmoutawakel (Morocco) became the first Muslim female to win a gold medal in the 400 metre hurdles. In 1992 Hassiba Boulmerka (Algeria), another

Islamic woman, won the gold medal for the 1500 metres in the Barcelona Games. However, on her return home “she was booed and jeered by a section of the population commonly referred to as Islamic fundamentalists” because she had worn a vest and shorts (Hargreaves, 2000 p46).

In 2000, the Bahrain Olympic Committee stated that for the first time females from the Arabian Peninsula would attend the Sydney Olympics. Two Bahraini women were chosen to compete at the Games. A statement was issued stating that one runner, Mariam Hadi Al-Hilli (16 years), would compete in the 100 metres while Fatema Hameed Karashi would take part in the 50 metre freestyle swimming event. Fatema Hameed Karashi was the youngest competitor at the Games (12 years). Although they both had two false-starts, their participation was still a triumph. “My race felt so good, it was like a dream,” declared Miriam, while Fatema said, “It is a great honour to represent my country. It is the first time for women to show their potential in sports. It’s an encouragement to others. It’s a first step and we will lead the way” ([www.Sportsillustrated.cnn.com/olympics/news/2000/09/23/anderson\\_arab\\_women](http://www.Sportsillustrated.cnn.com/olympics/news/2000/09/23/anderson_arab_women), 2-1-04).

However, the evidence shows that only a tiny number of Muslim women have broken into the Olympic Games, and it is for this reason that activists have opposed the roles of governments in preventing their female athletes taking part. Human rights lawyer, Linda Weil-Curiel (French), Anne Marie Lizim (Belgium), past Secretary of State for European Affairs, and Annie Sugier (French), a nuclear scientist and feminist (Hargreaves, 2000 p238), set up a women’s rights activist body, Atlanta Plus, in order to protest about the discrimination against women in the Olympics. The idea for Atlanta Plus began as a response to observations that 35 delegations at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics had no female competitors, due to various reasons, such as the misuse of religion in serving political means, or the lack of talented female athletes in some countries, or because poorer countries spent their limited athletics budgets mostly on male athletes (Hargreaves, 2000 p72). Atlanta Plus, therefore, demanded an Olympic ban on those countries. It was argued that by allowing countries that prevent

women from participating in the Games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was contradicting its own Olympic Charter.

Hargreaves (2000 p73) points out that 'Atlanta 'exposed' and 'politicised' religious beliefs and cultural practices that had previously been isolated, private affairs'. But Islamic sporting feminists thought Atlanta Plus was politically inspired and portrayed Muslim countries as being backward and non-democratic. Furthermore, Muslim women want the Olympic movement to be sensitive to their cultural and religious traditions conditions and believe that 'predominantly White, Western, non-Muslim women should not interfere in the traditions and cultures of others' (Hargreaves, 2000 p73). The members of Atlanta, however, did not claim to speak for all Muslim women and believed that they were forcing the IOC look at the question of women's participation in the Olympics more seriously. They also argued that there are women in Islamic countries who want change, but lack the power, and that they need the support of 'outsiders'.

Atlanta next targeted Sydney 2000, which was renamed 'Atlanta-Sydney Plus'. It kept up the pressure to attain equal access for women in relation to men in respect of the Olympic ideal, disregarding religious or traditional differences. Atlanta-Sydney wanted the IOC to ban a number of countries from the Sydney Olympics. Kuwait, together with Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia – all from the Arabian Peninsula – were listed. Action was focused on two levels economic and political, and the arguments were as follows:

- "Economic: the IOC should state that a specific share of the Olympic Solidarity fund is contributed to the economically needy National Olympic Committees specifically for the development of women athletes. It will then be possible to identify countries that refuse women's participation from the games for ideological, and not for economic reasons.
- Political: the IOC should condemn and sanction all national sport politics founded on segregation of women (separate games, banning women from certain disciplines, prohibiting women and men from practising sports together). This is the sense of the UN Human Rights Commission, of the

Council of Europe, and the European Parliament” (Cited in Hargreaves, 2000 p74).

But the IOC ignored the Atlanta-Plus demands and refused to change its policy for the Sydney Olympics. It also refused to respond to requests by Islamic countries for competition arrangements that are sensitive to the cultures of Muslim women.

### **3.8 Women’s Sports Committee in Kuwait**

Due to the significance of women’s sports on the international level, and as a result of determined efforts by Kuwaiti females to take part in the Kuwait National Olympic Committee, a Kuwaiti Women’s Sports Committee was set up in 1997. This is a mixed committee with twenty males, but only five women. The board of the Olympic Committee consists of thirteen members voted in by election, seven by specification from the government and one woman recommended by the committee (Interview with Dr. Jawad Kalaf 1-1-04).

Its main objectives are as follows:

- 1- To support women’s sport in Kuwait, and reinforce their participation in all sport activities.
- 2- To spread sporting awareness in general with regard to the importance of women’s sports and the extent of sport participation in developing and improving women’s productivity.
- 3- To enhance Kuwaiti women’s participation in sporting seminars, studies, and conferences on both local and international levels.
- 4- To elevate the technical and administrative level of women’s sport in Kuwait within the general plan laid by the Olympic committee.
- 5- To document women’s sporting activities both on the local and international levels.
- 6- To exchange experiences, information and cooperation with all authorities interested in the development of women’s sports in Kuwait.
- 7- To provide proper communication channels with internal and external sporting corporations and authorities to develop women’s sports locally.
- 8- To support and strengthen relations with other women’s sports organisations on various Gulf, Arab and Asian levels.

As a result of the work of the Kuwait National Olympic Committee there have been a number of sporting events taking place and they include:

- October 1997: A recreational sports day in celebration of the Kuwaiti female teacher. The activities included volleyball, table tennis, walking and other recreational games. March 1998 saw the first liberation basketball championship.
- May 1998: Dalal Al-Ghanem Fencing Tournament.
- February 1999: Solidarity Day (commemoration and inauguration of women's sports in Islamic countries) including basketball, volleyball, Thai Kuan do and table tennis.
- December 1999: Open Table Tennis Championship.
- March 2000: Second Liberation Basketball Championship.
- In July 2001: A temporary women's sport committee was formed to participate in the 3rd women sports tournament in Tehran. The committee comprised of 6 female members headed by a male president. Kuwait participated in the championship with its girl's kickboxing and fencing teams and won medals in both sports.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined and attempted to answer the two questions that were asked at the beginning - 'What views are held about the relationship between Islam and sport and physical recreation?' and 'What consequences do different interpretations of Islam have for women's involvement in sport and physical recreation?'

It would seem that the relationship between Islam and physical activity for females is potentially positive. According to the readings of the Qu'ran, both males and females should partake in exercise to help maintain a healthy mind and body. However, particularly important for females is that exercise must be undertaken within the guidelines of Islam and must not come before a woman's duties to her husband and family. Prayers must also come before physical activities for all Muslims.

When it comes to the Olympic Games, only a very small percentage of Muslim women are able to compete in very few sporting arenas, and there has not been open support from Muslim women themselves for the woman's rights activists who are arguing for a ban on all those countries failing to allow the participation of female athletics. Nor is there any likelihood that the IOC will change its secular policy to

include female-only contexts for women's events. However, Muslim women are organizing their own competitions to improve their opportunities in sports and physical recreation. Because of the efforts of Kuwaiti females to take part in the Kuwait Olympic Committee, the Women's Sports Committee was formed in 1997. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, President of the Olympic Council of Asia, serves as chairman of many Women's Sports Committee meetings, and has played a vital role in encouraging women's sports in Kuwait. This proves promising for Kuwaiti women who wish to expand their role in their own country, in the Middle East, and internationally.



# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **Physical Education, Sport and Physical Recreation from 1950 to 1990**

## **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the development of physical education, sport and physical recreation for females in Kuwait from 1950 until the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. During this period schooling was compulsory and once physical education became a subject on the curriculum for girls, it provided the first opportunity for them to take part in organized physical activity. It was a period of quite rapid development of activities for girls and young women outside the school curriculum, too, and so this chapter also provides information about the opportunities available for girls and young women in sports clubs and about the sporadic competitions that took place in these early years. Central to the account is the role played by government ministries and private companies responsible for resourcing education and out-of school facilities, and the opportunities available for females to take part in recreative activities. It is a very brief overview of developments, providing a basis for the account which follows in Chapter 5 of the situation from 1991 until the present day.

## **4.2 Physical Education Provision – First Opportunities**

Compulsory education for both boys and girls was introduced into Kuwait in 1940. However, all schools had a single-sex arrangement and the curriculum in boys' and girls' schools was different. At the start, physical education was on the curriculum of boys' schools only and it was not until 1950 when the subject became compulsory for both sexes that all girls throughout Kuwaiti society had regular experience of physical exercise and sport and this provided the basis for them to take part in some form of physical activity in later years. Most importantly, Sheikh Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who was an important member of the royal family, was also appointed to the position of Director of the Department of Education in 1936. Since that time until the independency, the Department of Education was changed as the Ministry of Education; Sheikh Abdullah was the first minister of the Ministry of Education in 17 of January 1962 and worked till 6 of December 1964, (Al Khurafi, A. 1998, p1202). The Sheik was an unusual man for his time – not only did he believe in the value of education for boys and for girls, but he also held radical views about the importance of physical exercise for everybody – old and young, male and female. Because of his

position in the royal family, he had a great deal of power and influence and was therefore able to implement developments in physical education at all school levels and also to influence developments in extra-curricular sport for the community in general. As a result, he became known as the leader of a movement in Kuwait to establish physical education and sport throughout Kuwaiti society. During the Sheik's time in office, scholastic physical education had significant importance and the sports movement flourished also. As Behbehani (1992 p.79) notes:

*The sports movement expanded in schools under the supervision of Sheik Abdula Al-Jaber Al Sabah 'the father of Kuwait sports', who promoted sport in schools during the time he was the Director of the Department of Education.*

But in the 1950s there were no qualified women teachers of physical education and, furthermore, no opportunities in Kuwait for Kuwaiti women to study to become teachers of the subject. The first Institute for Teachers was not founded until 1966/1967, but this Institute only made provision for students between the ages of 14 and 18 years to train as teachers of physical education in primary schools (age 6-10 years).(Al Saleh,2004;Bugait,2004) They obtained only a teacher's certificate. This system was stopped in 1973/1974 after which time students were admitted to the Institute at the age of 18 after highschool and could become certificated tow years later as intermediate school teachers (10-14 years) of physical education, as well as elementary teachers of physical education. Because there were still no physical education degree programmes in Kuwait the Department of Physical Education contracted personnel with higher qualifications from other Arab States (almost all from Egypt) to be the Institute tutors and to teach physical education in Kuwaiti high schools (14-18 years) in order to complement the small numbers of certificate-qualified Kuwaiti teachers (Hashem, 1997 p153). But it was considered to be important that Kuwaiti women themselves gained higher qualifications and so during the 1960s promising high-school graduates competed for scholarships to study to become specialist teachers of physical education in other countries. In the first place, they went to Egypt because it was an Arabic country where there was an established Bachelor of Education degree programme with the opportunity to specialise in Physical Education. The first Kuwaiti woman to study in Egypt in this way was Sherefa Al-Omar, who went to Cairo University in 1965 (Sport Management),

graduating in 1969. On her return to Kuwait Ms Al-Omar worked as Sport Supervisor in Kuwait University and after two years she became Assistant Director for the Sport Department in the University (Telephone Interview 07/02/04). There was a steady flow of other women going to Egypt during the following years and then later on, Kuwaiti women started to gain qualifications from US universities. The first two female students to travel to the US to study physical education were Ghanima Al-Haidar (the researcher) and Mona Basheer who both went to the University of Lavern and in 1983 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education. Ms Basheer returned to Kuwait, but Ms Al-Haidar remained in the US and qualified in 1985 with a Masters degree in Sport Psychology from the Azusa Pacific University. Although Ms Basheer never used her physical education qualifications, Ms Al-Haidar became a teacher in the higher education sector after she returned to Kuwait.

In 1982 the Institute of Teachers was closed and was replaced by the Basic Education College under the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) (See Chapter 5). At the start, a Department of Physical Education and Sport was established at the College and students could qualify for a Bachelor of Education degree specialising in Physical Education and Sport. Graduates of this programme were qualified to teach at any level of their choice – primary, elementary, high school. This system of qualification is still in place today. As a result of the improvements in the training of teachers of physical education over the years – and particularly during the period between 1950 and 1990 - girls have been offered a consistently improving curriculum and more and more high school graduates have become interested in the opportunity to become specialist teachers.

The increase in the numbers of qualified teachers of physical education between 1950-1990 was the result of the government's keen interest in education in general, made clear as follows in the Constitution of Kuwait published in 1962:

*Education is a fundamental requisite for the progress of Society... assured and promoted by the State. (The Constitution of the State of Kuwait, Article 13, Kuwait 1962 p.7)*

A large rise in investment in education was made possible by oil revenue secured since 1946. For example, the number of teachers trained between 1957 and 1977, represented a 20 per cent increase over the twenty years. This made possible the teaching of rising numbers of school children. Although from 1950 education was compulsory for all children from the age of 6 to 18 years, many of the parents who had originally withheld their children from school, were encouraged to allow them to be educated. For example, it was estimated that in 1946 there were 3,962 students, including females, while in 1967 the number increased to 101,728, and the government spent about \$560 per student (including non-Kuwaiti students) (Middle East and North Africa, 1999).

Part of the plans to utilise the revenue for education was directed not only towards physical education but also towards extra-curricular physical activities. During the time compulsory physical education was becoming established in schools, school facilities were also used as leisure centres and sports clubs after the school day, providing extra-curricular opportunities for school pupils and for adults as well. The Department of Social Affairs established the first school centre for girls in 1956 with the aim of occupying girls' leisure time by – amongst other activities - practising sport, games and physical recreation. In the first year of the centre's establishment, it was recorded that fifty-two girls attended the centre during a period of six months (Department of Social Affairs, 1957).

Early in the 1960s, the growth of the subject in schools and the development of extra-curricular sport and physical activities was formalised through the Department of Physical Education and Scouting (DPES) which was set up within the Ministry of Education and through the PE Curriculum Development Committee. The DPES played a very important part in the organisation of sport and physical education in schools, and also in the leisure pursuits of young Kuwaitis when not in school. Its roles included:

- Conducting the PE Curriculum Development Committee;
- Drawing up, in co-operation with other ministry officials, the plan for PE and Scouts;

- Planning and preparation for all sport and scouting activities, and the supervision and resolution of any problems arising;
- Supervision of competitions between schools;
- Estimating the needs of PE in schools.

There was also some involvement in internal competitions. Kuwaiti national female teams in different sports were selected from different high schools across the country. For example, in 1974 the Ministry of Education organised the first female sport teams with the intention of them taking part in the Arab School Championships in Libya. However, the girls were withdrawn from the competition and only the male teams took part. The girls' parents had dissented from their daughters' participation because they wanted them to achieve good academic results at school and, as Almgghni (2001 p64) said, "*Women in Kuwait are put under the protection of men, whether their father or husband or kinsmen. Men are in charge of maintaining the family and women are required to be obedient*". During the same year, 1974, the Ministry of Education also organised a female table tennis team to participate for the first time in an external championship in Lebanon (Interview with the Director of the Department of Activities in the Ministry of Education, May 2002).

#### **4.3 The role of the University of Kuwait**

In 1966 the University of Kuwait was established and a further impetus to the expansion of sport was given by the initiative of Kuwait University, which, through its Department of Sport Activities, played a significant role in supporting female sport. This was evidenced through the competitions held for female students in various games thereby giving the students the opportunity to participate in university championships whether inside or outside Kuwait. Kuwait University organised trips for female students to visit other counties so that they could participate in friendly matches. These trips were usually made during the spring semi-annual vacation in January/February. The Kuwait University Annual Reports indicate that since 1972 female university students attended a number of sport tournaments, and whilst the following list may not be comprehensive (see Chapter 1), it includes the only references to female university student competitions available:

- In 1972 a trip was made to Algeria to play friendly matches in basketball, volleyball and handball.
- In 1974 female students visited Egypt where matches in basketball, volleyball, handball, athletics, tennis, and table tennis were held.
- In 1975 a trip was made to Syria to participate in friendly matches in basketball, volleyball, handball and table tennis.
- In 1976 a trip was made to Morocco where basketball, volleyball, handball, tennis and table tennis matches were held.
- In 1980 a trip was made to Iraq where matches in basketball, volleyball and handball were held.
- In 1982 Kuwait participated in a cultural week in Oman; the university teams at that time were not up to an advanced level, so the Kuwait University team was compelled to play matches against secondary school girls.
- In 1983 university females' students participated in the international university tournament in Mexico.
- During the period 1-27 December 1984 a trip was made to Bahrain where the students participated in basketball and volleyball matches. Kuwait University won by 49/9 in basketball and 3/0 in volleyball
- In 1987 Sharja University in the United Arab Emirates witnessed the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. Kuwait participated in basketball, volleyball and table tennis matches as part of the celebrations. The basketball team achieved victory.
- In 1988/1989 the University organised in Kuwait an open championship for government teams in basketball, volleyball, table tennis, tennis, and squash.

(Kuwait University Annual Report, 1983/1984; Kuwait University Annual Report, 1989; Interview with Head of the Department, University of Sport).

The list above makes it clear that with the exception of the international tournament in Mexico in 1983, all the competitions were held in Arabian countries, against teams from those countries. The Kuwait University women's teams only took part sporadically in competitive sport and it is likely that this was because of a lack of support from the students themselves possibly because of parental pressure and the

influence of traditional ideas (see Chapter 5). But there were also opportunities for girls and young women to participate in sport in other locations outside the school and university context.

#### **4.4 Club Sport for Girls and Young Women**

Kuwait is very hot during the summer and because it is a rich country it is possible for many Kuwaitis to travel to the countryside or to other countries for relaxation. But this still leaves a large percentage of the population behind during the summer holiday. For this reason, in 1961 the Ministry of Education sponsored Summer School Clubs in order to provide activities for boys and girls to occupy their leisure time during the long summer vacation, especially for those who did not travel to the countryside (Behbehani, 1992 p203). In the first year, two clubs were opened with 2,000 participants; following Kuwaiti independence from Britain in 1962, more clubs were established, and the numbers increased over the years until in 1988 there were 42 clubs with 27,024 participants. The clubs were open from June to the end of August for boys and girls<sup>1</sup> (between approximately 12 and 22 years) of all religions and nationalities. However, the clubs were all single-sex clubs and because the overall figures do not distinguish between the girls' and boys' clubs, it is impossible to estimate how many of them were for each sex or the comparative figures for participation. However, evidence from observations and experience indicates that there were many more clubs for boys and many more boy club members than female equivalents. The activities offered to the young people included social, cultural, artistic, and musical activities, as well as sports and the old traditional games<sup>2</sup>. Some teams were constructed and a few competitions were arranged against teams from other clubs (see below).

The development of opportunities for schoolgirls and some young women was not paralleled during the early years of the period under discussion (1950-1990) by opportunities for adult (including married) women. It was not until the mid-1970s that club facilities – outside the education sector - were established. The first of these was an all-female club (Al Fatat), the others were mixed clubs (Kadsia; Kazma; Al-Sahel)

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<sup>1</sup>Like Huda Sarawi, Ashbeliah, and Al nahdah Club.



which allowed some female membership and participation. Another member of the royal family, Sheik Fahad Al Ahmad Al-Sabah, was exceptionally enthusiastic about sport and exercise and devoted much of his life to the development of sport in his country. He held numerous important positions nationally and regionally<sup>3</sup> and championed the development of women's sport over many years. He recognised that there was a need for sports opportunities for girls of high school age or after they left school and went to college or university or got married. He therefore encouraged mixed clubs to allow female membership and the Kadsia, Kazma, and Al-Sahel Clubs responded. Sheik Fahad Al Ahmad Al-Sabah was enthusiastic in his support of the benefits of sport and physical exercise, actively encouraging females to join these sports clubs. Because of his powerful position in sport and his popularity in the community, his support of women's participation was particularly significant.

The Al Fatat, Kadsia, Kazma and Al-Sahel clubs are listed below with brief details:

**4.4.1 Al Fatat Club:** The Al-Fatat Club was founded as a public welfare society under the patronage of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour in 1975, its focus was on various social, cultural and artistic activities for women, including sport. A small general committee was set up; it worked hard for several years to improve and enrich the lives of women. The foundation of the Al-Fatat Club reflected the new recognition of the particular needs of women who had traditionally been prevented from, and lacked the resources for, activities outside the home, which opened up for them new and stimulating experiences. The Al-Fatat Club team participated in the First Arab Volleyball Tournament in Tunisia, in 1980.

**4.4.2 The Kadsia Sports Club:** The Kadsia Club was originally an all-male club. It was the first male *sports* club in Kuwait to set up a female section in 1974. The

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<sup>2</sup> For example: Hip Hop, Skipping, blindman's Buff; and Hide and seek.

<sup>3</sup> Sheik Fahad Al Ahmad Al-Sabah was exceptionally active in a whole range of sport and held numerous key positions in different organizations including President, Kuwait Olympic committee 1974 - 1985 and re-elected in 1989. President, Kuwait Football association 1978 - 1985 and re-elected in 1987. President, Kadsia Sports Club, 1969 – 1979. President, Kuwait Basketball Federation. 1974 – 1977. ([http://www.asianhandball.com/Asianhandball/Pages/martyr\\_sheikh\\_fahad\\_al.htm](http://www.asianhandball.com/Asianhandball/Pages/martyr_sheikh_fahad_al.htm) 7-4-04)

Kadsia women's section had teams in several sports, but it was the basketball team that was the most notable, quickly becoming the top women's team in Kuwait. The women's team won the cup in an annual national tournament in basketball for five consecutive seasons from the 1974/1975 seasons until the 1978/1979 season. However, in 1979 the women's section of the Kadsia Club was closed in response to male opposition based on arguments about the un-Islamic nature of mixed clubs and facilities (Al-Shatti, 1990 p8).

Following the lead of the Kadsia Club, two other sports clubs – the Kazma Sports Club and the Al-Sahel Sports Club - took great interest in women's sport and opened women's sections so that within one year there was a very active women's sports movement and several competitions were held in various sports. Tournaments were held on the basis of "loser goes out" and the competition was very fierce among the clubs.

**4.4.3 The Kazma Sports Club:** The Kazma Club opened a women's section in 1974, shortly after the Kadsia Club. Straight away it adopted a radical policy regarding women's active role in sport and formed ladies' basketball, volleyball and handball teams. The club participated in friendly and competitive matches organised by various sports unions. The Kamza women's club team achieved second position in Kuwait in volleyball in 1974/1975, after the Kadsia Club (History of Modern Sports in Kuwait, 1976 p290).

**4.4.4 Al-Sahel Sports Club:** Despite the hard weather conditions for training and the poor state of the fields, the Al-Sahel Sports club took a remarkable step by forming various women's teams for basketball and track and field events in 1975. In its attempt to expand its base, and taking into consideration the potential for the development of women's sports, the club selected young girls' to train and prepare for the future. The Al-Sahel women's team achieved second position in track and field competition when they participated in a national championship held for women in 1975 (History of Modern Sports in Kuwait, 1976: p319).

Nineteen seventy-four until 1979 marked an exceptional, but very short-lived period of development for women's sports. Following the closure of the women's section of the Kadsia Sports Club, the others followed suit. It seemed that the more active and successful the women became, the more the opposition to their activities grew. The opposition was based on the non-Islamic sports clothing that the women wore and the opportunities for mixed-sex contexts. In all the sports clubs, in common with other cultural settings, men are in the positions of power to make decisions about whether or not women can participate and therefore women are dependent on men for any improvement to occur and are affected by men who stop their opportunities. In all there were 14 men's sports clubs and, ironically, although women could not be members in any of the clubs after the women's sections were closed in 1979, they were allowed to vote for men who had been nominated for leading positions in the clubs. Some male members used these female votes to enable them to win elections. This corrupt system has survived until the present day (See Chapter 5).

During the period of expansion in the 1970s, several national women's teams were formed with the best female players from all the clubs making up teams for basketball, volleyball, table tennis and handball. These teams participated in a number of matches with Iranian, Chinese and Korean teams during the 1975/1976 season (Modern Sports in Kuwait, 1976: p269). However, all these matches were held in Kuwait. In 1977 two championships were also held in Kuwait; the Asian Women's Championship, in which the best teams from Asia participated and the 4<sup>th</sup> Youth Championship in which the Kuwaiti team participated (Afro-Asian Basketball Championship publication 1998 p56). Although the Kuwaiti sportswomen competed always in their own country, they were competing against teams from many different countries, including non-Islamic countries.

During the era 1981 to 1990, the administration of Kuwaiti sport was firmly established and men and women's teams had notable successes, leading to an increase in grants for all sports and recreational institutions. However, in 1982, a crisis arose in the Kuwaiti Stock Market, which led to a reduction in government grants, the cutting of programmes and the cancellation of plans. However, not everything was negative, a number of positive achievements also occurred. For example, the

women's equestrian team won the first three medals in the ninth Asian Games in Delhi in 1982. Kuwaiti women have been outstanding in equestrian sports, made possible because equestrianism is specially promoted by the government institutions. In 1984 in the Arab Championship in Baghdad Kuwaiti women secured the individual gold medal and the team gold medal and in 1986 at the Asian Games in Seoul, Kuwait won the individual silver medal.

#### **4.5 Kuwait Disabled Sport Club (KDSC)**

Disability is a widespread but a neglected feature of social life. Owing to the different and contested definitions and political interventions, it is impossible to arrive at precise global statistics for people with disabilities. Figures for the disabled across the world tend to be underestimated because many disabled people are not registered and live hidden lives (Hargreaves, 2000 p174). However, in Kuwait disabled people are in general not hidden and there has been an established disability sports club for many years. In 1977, Kuwait established the Kuwait Disabled Sport Club (KDSC). The activities of this club include a track and field arena, football pitches, basketball courts and a new indoor swimming pool. People of all nationalities, ages and sexes are allowed to use these facilities and there are several supervisors, coaches and officers who are specialised to work with the disabled. The most renowned Kuwaiti disabled sportswoman is Adelah Al-Roumi, known as the "Strongest Women in the World". Despite being wheelchair-bound she has won a number of medals, including two gold medals and one silver in track events in the Paralympics in Holland in 1980; one gold medal in the discus, one silver medal in the shot put and a bronze medal in the slalom in the UK Paralympics Games in 1984; one gold medal in the shot put, one gold medal in the javelin, and one silver in the discus in the Seoul Paralympics in 1988; one gold medal in the shot put, one silver in the javelin and one gold medal in weightlifting at Stoke Mandeville in 1989; one silver medal for the discus in the Barcelona Paralympics in 1992 (Al Eradah Magazine, 2002 p28).

#### **4.6 Recreational Opportunities**

The Ministry of Education limited its activities outside schools to competitions, championships and festivals which were organised in Kuwait by several agencies including Kuwait University, the Public Authority for Applied Education and

Training, and the Tourist Enterprise Company (TEC) which was established on 3rd April 1976<sup>4</sup>. TEC's objectives were to organise and manage state projects in the field of entertainment and tourist recreation, as well as the management of hotels and parks. TEC offered sporting activities as well as other cultural hobbies for both young people and adults. There was a range of sporting activities and facilities throughout the country, however, there was only very limited opportunities available to females. Moreover, as women were dependent on men they had to rely on their approval in order to take part in any of these activities.

The Ministry of Oil became involved in sport through the Kuwait Oil Company. Ahmadi City was the residential area for the oil company's employees, and the company's sports facilities were all located in the Ahmadi Governorate. The facilities included playing fields for hockey, rugby, cricket, American football and soccer with a 10,000-seater stadium. It also had two sports clubs: the *Unity Club* which has a swimming pool, a social club, and a snooker club; and the *Habara Club* which had squash and tennis courts, a swimming pool, and basketball, volleyball courts, and a golf course. In addition there was a sports centre with a multi-purpose gymnasium, fitness room, bowling alley, and weight-lifting equipment. Until the present day it has been possible for all male and female employees and their families to use the Ahmadi City facilities free of charge. The Habara Club is for the exclusive use of senior staff of both genders; the Unity Club and the Sport Centre are for the use of other employees. Some of the sport, social and physical activities, which are arranged by the Kuwait Oil Company, reflect the influence of foreign investment in Kuwait, for example, rugby and cricket fields laid by an English company. Large numbers of non-Kuwaitis are resident in Ahmadi City and it is certain that a greater percentage of females use the facilities than is the case in other areas.

The Kuwait Oil Company also supported a number of sports events. For example, the Company sponsored a special multi-sports day, or "festival of sport" This day was named the "*Ahmadi Sports Day*". The Ahmadi Sports Day has been one of the

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<sup>4</sup> TEC is a Kuwaiti Joint Stock Company in which the Kuwaiti government has shares; represented by the Investment General Authority at a rate of 98% of capital amounting to 20 million Kuwaiti Dinar (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 1996).

distinctive features of Ahmadi City and has created a rising interest in sport and recreation in the city. It first began in the 1960s when 45 bodies (eg ministries; departments; schools; sports associations; clubs) were involved with 1,772 participants. In 1981, the number of bodies rose to 310 with 14,000 participants taking part (Hashim, 1997 p214). The girls' as well as the boys' schools from the Al-Ahmadi Governorate were actively involved (especially in parades) and women had a major share in the events of the day including playing specially-organised matches in several sports. Employees from several authorities participated, including students and staff from Kuwait University, staff from the Public Authority for Applied Education, corporations, companies, and firms from various sectors. Not only was this day a sports gathering, but it was also a recreational day for Kuwait and a social event as well involving people of all ages and both sexes.

During the 1970s, the Touristic Enterprises Company (see Figure 4.1) provided a large number of recreational activities providing greater opportunities for women than they had during the previous years. Among these were the sea clubs, which first started in 1976. These were located on the beaches, with areas ranging from 15,000 to 73,000 square metres. The facilities provided – which are still in use today - include covered and open swimming pools and diving boards, for both children and adults. There are some special days allotted to females only. There also exist sand beaches, playgrounds for all kinds of sports, halls for physical fitness and bowling, marinas for yachts and boats, halls for karate, parks equipped with children's games and coffee shops. An ice rink complex was opened to the public on 25 February 1980, with a total area of 8,378 square metres of which 2,600 square metres is the ice rink. It has two halls, one of Olympic size (1,800 square metres) with seating facilities for 1,600 spectators. The smaller hall is designed specifically for females and for special functions. Families take their sons and daughters for lessons on the ice (Touristic Enterprises Company, 1989 1994; Kuwait Facts and Figures, 2002 p246).

Since 1983 there have been three recreational parks established by the TEC, with an area of one million square metres of green land. The parks have played a major sporting, recreational, and entertainment role by providing many facilities for different games. Both males and females regularly practice walking, jogging and running and

# Touristic Enterprises Company "Recreational activities centres"



- 1-Kuwait towers
- 2-The sea front
- 3-Bnied al Qar Club
- 4-Green Island
- 5-Swimming pool complex
- 6- Ice Skating Rink
- 7- the Musical Fountain
- 8-Shaab Club
- 9-Yachts Club
- 10- Al Sheeab port
- 11-Shaab Garden
- 12-Ras-alard sea Club
- 13-Showbiz
- 14-Sea said
- 15-Al Bida Sea Club
- 16- Missila Public Beach
- 17- Touristic Garden
- 18-The Entertainment City
- 19- Al abdlly rest Area
- 20- Al Salmi rest Area
- 21- Al Sabahiyah Garden
- 22- Al Oqala Beaches
- 23- Al Mangaf Beaches
- 24- Al Nivaweb rest Area
- 25- Al Nivaweb rest Area

visitors are attracted by the physical recreation activities, celebrations and festivals organised for special national occasions and public holidays.

Entertainment City, owned by TEC and inaugurated in 1984, is a huge recreational facility and the only one of its kind in the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. The City was divided into many 'worlds' (Arabian, International and Future), each providing its own brand of entertainment, rides and attractions; there is also a regional garden containing a zoo, children's games and restaurants. Public schools for both males and females usually arrange day trips to Entertainment City. Entertainment City is one of the most popular recreational and sports locations in the country that has attracted people of all ages and backgrounds to take part in walking, jogging and running during holidays and weekends.

The Al-Kairan Resort, also run by TEC, is considered to be a complete tourist city in itself. The resort was inaugurated in February 1987 and is still flourishing today. It consists of 195 chalets that are fully furnished and offer the most modern hotel services. The resort includes swimming pools, a yacht club, a sports playground, a small entertainment area for children, and a hall for computer games, a health club and restaurants. This resort offers excellent recreational and sports activities where families can enjoy swimming, walking and barbecuing. The TEC pays a great deal of attention to this resort as it arranges many entertainment and sports activities during festivals and public holidays such including music, dancing, and tournaments in many kinds of sports for both sexes (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 2002 p247).

Most importantly, in 1988, TEC established the Ras Al-Ardh Club, *exclusively* for women, including all-female staff. Facilities were provided for swimming, yachting, boating, volleyball and basketball. Massaging, a sauna, a jaccussi, a restaurant are also available. The Ras Al-Ardh Club has become extremely popular and becomes very crowded, indicating the demand and need for more facilities of this sort (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 2002 p245).



#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The opportunities for sport and physical recreation for girls and women progressed rapidly in Kuwait from the inception of physical education into the education system in the 1950s until August 1990 when the nation was invaded by Iraqi forces. The occupation lasted until February 1991, and the infrastructure of Kuwait, including sport and recreational facilities, was ravaged. Tragically, two of the leading advocates of female sport, Sheik Abdul Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sheik Fahad Al Ahmad Al-Sabah, were both assassinated during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The sports infrastructure that had been established in the country by 1990 incorporated school and university sport, club sport, and a range of recreational sport activities. The private sector was also increasing its opportunities which will be referred to in Chapter 5. And there were a growing number of skilled and qualified personal to teach in schools and the university and to provide expertise for the practical work in clubs and fitness centres. However, these generalisations mask the fact that male sport was always very much better resourced than female sport and that men always had the power to make decisions about what women could do.

Overall, the forty-year period can be characterised as a period of steady growth, with a particular acceleration of opportunities for girls and women during the 1970s. However, there was also resistance to the advances that women were making and when the women's sports club sections were closed in 1979, some of what had been gained was lost. There were liberal-minded men who supported moves for better opportunities for women in sport and physical recreation, but there was always a fluid relation between them and the opponents of such developments. The stage that was reached in 1990 incorporated contradictions – although Kuwait was quite liberal in many ways towards its women, there was a constant tension between allowing women more physical freedoms and imposing much stricter Islamic codes on women in sport and physical recreation.

Since 1991, many efforts have been made to restore normality to Kuwaiti's infrastructure, including the organisation and provision of sport and physical recreation. The progress made from 1991 to the present time is the focus of the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Physical Education, Sport and Physical Recreation from 1991 to the Present Day**

## **5.0 Introduction**

As we have seen in Chapter 4, Kuwait had started on the road to developing a programme of sport and physical activities when Iraq invaded the country on the 2 August 1990. This invasion set back the programme of sport and physical recreation for girls and women, which was, anyway, still in the early stages of development and so time and effort was needed to restore the situation and then to build for the future. It was during the 1990s that increased attention was paid to the need for exercise to improve health, and global influences accelerated the growth of public and private provision. The extent of the devastation meant that sustained efforts were required to return to a state of normality so that the future progress of sport and recreation would not be impeded. His Highness the Amir encouraged post-invasion developments and generous state support was given to all sporting clubs and federations. Many government ministries played some part in the promotion of sport, but it was the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour that was the main supporter and regulator of organised social and leisure activities, including sport. Moreover, as well as providing public facilities, the Kuwaiti government made special provision for government officials and employees. The arrangements that were established in the 1990s continue today.

In post-invasion Kuwait, in the schools, colleges and Kuwait University the curriculum has been modified and the re-building programme has included the building of gymnasias in all the educational institutions. In the years since 1991, better opportunities for physical education and sport for girls and young women have been established throughout the sector and more and better-qualified staffs have been employed.

There has also been an increase in the influence of the western-style commodification of sport and an increasingly significant private sector has been established. The growing visibility of sport throughout Kuwaiti society is reflected in the enthusiasm shown for it by fans and by the media. At many levels, and through many different channels, sport has become a popular aspect of leisure for Kuwaitis and there is a wide range of sporting activities, facilities and organisations throughout the country.

However, there are certain sections of society that continue to be under-represented or excluded from sport: they include the disabled, those from ethnic minority groups, and girls and women. As in the previous period, at all levels there are marked gender inequalities and discrepancies between male and female participation. Social relations through society exist within an unequal gender order. Kuwait is based on patriarchal values and male domination and traditional femininity prescribes a subservient role for women. Not surprisingly, sport in Kuwait reinforces patriarchy male relations and traditional masculine and feminine values. However, sport can also act as a site for women – or men on their behalf – to challenge traditional values and practices and there are a number of institutions and members of society who are working towards gender equality in sport. In recent years Kuwait has had some small success in addressing numerical inequalities in participation rates between men and women, but women are still institutionally excluded from the governance of sport.

This chapter looks at the organisation and administrative structure of sport and physical recreation in Kuwait in the public, private and voluntary sectors since the liberalisation of Kuwait from Iraq in 1991 up to the present day.

### **5.1 Sports Organisations in Kuwait**

The most important government organisation seeking the improvement of sport and physical recreation in Kuwait is the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. A key aim of the organisation is to address the inequalities between male and female participation and to arrange a suitable environment in which females can practice sports. The Ministry incorporates various departments with special responsibilities for sport and physical recreation, especially the Public Authority for Youth and Sport, which is an autonomous authority under the umbrella of the Minister of Social Affairs. Other government organisations involved in the provision of sport and physical education are the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. Both of these ministries have expressed concern for the development of girls' and women's sport and physical recreation. There are three other state ministries – namely, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Oil (As mention in Chapter 4) and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which also make provisions

for female participation in sport and physical education. These organisations and departments are summarised in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: State involvement in Kuwait concerned with female sport and physical recreation activities.**

<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Departments/area(s) of control</b>
Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour	<p>The Public Authority for Youth and Sport Sport Affairs: -(PAYS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sport for All Department Abdullah Al-Salem Leadership Centre (male &amp; female)</li> <li>- Youth Centres Department Women's Sport Centre</li> <li>- Al Fatat Club (Girls' Clubs)</li> </ul> <p>The Kuwait Disabled Sports Club</p>
Ministry of Education	<p>Department of Physical Education</p> <p>General Supervision of Physical Education</p>
Ministry of Higher Education	<p>Kuwait University</p> <p>Public Authority for Applied Education and Training</p>
Ministry of Finance	Touristic Enterprises Company
Ministry of Oil	Kuwait Oil Company
Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Health and Fitness Clubs

## **5.2 Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS)**

On 10 August 1992, the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS) was established under the Ameer's Decree No.43/92. The Public Authority for Youth and Sport was formed because the government of Kuwaiti recognised the real need for a particular institution specialising in the welfare of youth and sports in the country (Public Authority for Youth and Sport, 2002 p2). There are a number of reasons for the establishment of PAYS which concern:

- Young people (male and female) and the protection of their potentialities;

- The enhancement of their physical, moral, intellectual and physical abilities;
- The provision of effective ways of bringing up good citizens religiously, socially, physically and culturally

In addition, the work of PAYS is intended to reinforce loyalty to the nation through the promotion of a sport movement throughout the country, and conformity to the principles of the International Olympic Committee (Ameeri Decree, 1992).

The aims and objectives of PAYS relate to youth in general and do not distinguish between males and females. There is an assumption throughout the discourse of youth provision that both girls and boys should be treated equally and there should be no distinction between the official pronouncements and plans for gender equality and actual practice. The general aims and objectives apply to all the departments and clubs that PAYS is responsible for; they, in turn, have more specific plans and programmes some of which take into account in a practical way the particular needs of girls and women. The objectives of PAYS are as follows:

1. To work for executing general policies of the state in the field of Youth and Sport and to supervise plans and projects of a national nature in these fields.
2. To work for the manifestation of the cultural image of the country in the field of Youth and Sport and to make it known locally as well as internationally.
3. To bring up young people within the framework of religious and ethical values of the society and to supervise Youth and Sport programmes.
4. To train young people and make them fit to contribute to public services, which will be to the benefit of the country, and to enhance their faculties, awareness and talents.
5. To promote and facilitate sports programmes and activities and the provision of necessary buildings in accordance with the abilities and aspirations of the individual within the framework of the general policy of the State.
6. To provide all means to build the personality of the citizen and to reinforce loyalty to the country and to strengthen feelings of community through healthy competition in the field of youth and sport at local and international levels.
7. To organise festivals, exhibitions and competitions to inculcate the spirit of

competitiveness amongst young people and to give awards and incentives as well as moral encouragement for them in the field of Youth and Sport.

8. To assist in the provision of resources and the conduct of studies, which will accelerate the promotion of standards of Youth and Sport and to reinforce the external relations in this sphere (Public Authority for Youth and Sport Annual Report, 1996).

The establishment of PAYS and its aims and objectives clearly point to an emphasis on youth and nationhood in the state's plans for the future. The character-building and psychological benefits of sport are also valued in the work of PAYS and sport is also valued for health and for the spiritual growth of young people. The growing awareness of the political and social significance of sport is clear in the objectives of PAYS and brings the official discourse closer to that of other countries who have used sport for nation-building and for social cohesion (Riordan, 1986). However, although males and females are both mentioned in the PAYS documents, there is no objective which shows an awareness of the particular need for positive action in respect of gender inequalities. To address this issue (as well as other forms of discrimination) the government has set up a 'Sport for All' initiative under the direction of the Sport for All Department.

### **5.3.1 Sport for All Department (SFAD)**

The Sport for All Department (SFAD) first started as a division under the Department of Sports Activities in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. In July 1993 it became a department under the Deputy Director-General for Sport Affairs (Hashem, 1997 p191). The government's Sport for All initiative is concerned to target all the major needy groups of Kuwaiti society and includes youth development and programmes for women and children and the disabled. One of the aims is to provide accessible community and facility-based activities and opportunities in order to meet the needs.

The idea of Sport for All in Kuwait is linked to political awareness about the benefits of changing the traditional culture of non-participation in sport and physical

recreation among a large percentage of the population to a new 'lifestyle' culture that has the potential to create a sense of well being and empowerment for all Kuwaiti citizens. The Sport for All movement incorporates a discourse of inclusion for those groups who have been excluded from sport and recreation in the past. The largest traditionally non-participatory group comprises Kuwaiti females – particularly those of post-college age and those who are married.

The Kuwaiti Sport for All movement has characteristics in common with sport for all movements in Western countries (e.g. UK, Canada, Norway) that have previously established women as a target group for higher participation. The philosophy of Sport for All is clearly embodied in the objectives of SFAD which include (Hashem, 1997): raising the awareness of people about the importance of participating in sport and physical activities as a regular and essential part of their daily life in order to lead to healthy well-being no matter their age or gender; organising sports and recreational physical activities for all people and developing their abilities in those fields; raising the physical fitness of people according to their sex and age and encouraging social integration to enable people to cope with the negative aspects of modern life; putting forward suggestions for research and encouraging researchers to carry out studies to enable the department to develop and improve the status of Sport for All; and preparing leaders for Sport for All programmes.

A plan was drawn up in July 1993 for Sport for All including the objectives of:

- Promoting in conjunction with the media campaigns and programmes to educate people about the benefits of practising sport and engaging in physical recreation activities;
- Working in conjunction with the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fish Resources to develop parks and open spaces to build sports fields, physical activity stations and areas for recreational games;
- Creating playing fields and courts with any necessary floodlighting and providing new centres with administrators;
- Organising recreational sports activities for the people in the desert during the spring vacation;



- Establishing exercise stations for walkers on the seashore and other suitable areas;
- Using facilities in Ministry of Education schools to provide more Sport for All Centres for men, women and disabled people;
- Establishing a private club for government ministries and public authorities, providing all the necessary facilities (e.g. playing fields, gymnasiums and swimming pools);
- Publishing a periodical to provide news and information about Sport for All activities;
- Establishing sports and health institutes in the governorates (PAYs, 2002; Hashem, 1997 p193).

There has been a growing awareness that the particular issue of gender inequalities has in part resulted from the global discourse about gender in sport. A major event in the development of this global discourse was The Brighton Declaration (1994 See Chapter 3) which aimed to encourage the development of women's sport across the world (Hylton and Totten, 2001 p55). As Hargreaves (2000, p222) has said, "*The Brighton Declaration envisions a sporting culture that will enable and value the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport; it incorporates principles relating to facilities; school and junior sport; women's participation; high performance sport; leadership in sport; education, training and development*". This Declaration was a statement which governments across the world were invited to sign indicating their intentions to promote opportunities for sport and physical exercise for girls and women in their respective countries. In 1994, Kuwait signed the Brighton Declaration making public and official the willingness to improve opportunities for girls and women in Kuwait reflected in the establishment of female-only provision and the development of girls and women's clubs and classes (See following sections).

### **5.3.2 Abdullah Al-Salim Training Centre**

The Abdullah Al-Salim Training Centre, for both males and females, is one example of the incentives of the Sport for All Department to develop opportunities. The Centre organises courses for coaching and provides leadership training in sport and recreation, not only in Kuwait but in other countries in the Arabian Peninsula as well.

This is done with the co-operation of the other PAYS departments. The Centre monitors the implementation of programmes and plans; prepares special budgets for the centre and audits the accounts. It assesses research studies and presents regular reports; maintains communication with sporting organisations, institutes and centres overseas and it organises lectures, debates and courses to discuss various topics relating to sport and youth (Hashem, 1997 pp176-177; PAYS, 2002).

### **5.3.3 Youth Centres Department**

The particular focus on youth is further reflected in the foundation of this department. The Youth Centres Department prepares annual projects of activities for males and females in the youth centres. The department organises activities for both males and females of a religious, cultural, social, technical and recreational character, in order to develop the physical and intellectual abilities of youth and enhance their talent. It provides resourcing, prepares and supervises competitions, evaluates activities, and produces reports. Because it is under the Sport for All Department, it works with an awareness of the particular problems of gender differences and inequalities and the special needs of young females (Public Authority for Youth and Sport, 2002).

### **5.3.4 Women's Sport for All Centres**

The special needs of girls and young women in sport and physical recreation has been addressed by the Department of Sport for All in co-ordination with the Technical Guidance Department of the Ministry of Education. The aim has been to provide sport premises especially for women using the facilities in schools at the end of a school day. They are known as Sport for All Centres. Table 5.2 supplies the name of the school, the area and the governorate where these sport centres are located. (Because Al Kabeer is a new governorate, a special sports centre was built and so the school facilities are not needed – see below).

**Table 5.2: Women's Sport Centres (Kuwait Public Authority for Youth and Sport, 2000)**

	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Governorate</b>
1	Arwa Intermediate	Al-Andalos	Farwaniya
2	Mishrif High school	Mishrif	Hawalli
3	Odelia High school	Al-Odelia	Capital
4	Tollaitella	Al-Qareen	Mubarak Al-Kabeer
5	Um Waraqa	Al Jahra	Al Jahra

Females aged 18 and over can obtain membership of women's Sport for All Centres. This is on condition that they obtain a suitable medical certificate and have the appropriate "Islamic-style" sports wear for the activity. There is a small membership fee with a range of payment options. At the present time the cost is 7KD<sup>1</sup> for one month's membership, 20KD for three months and 42KD for six months (PAYS Annual Report, 2000/2001). Although the centres are open five days a week, from Saturday to Wednesday, and for four hours a day, the hours of opening differ during the seasons. In summer, the opening hours are from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., and in winter from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. During Ramadan (the Islamic fasting month) hours are restricted from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m.

The General Supervisor of Physical Education (a PAYS Board member) proposed a joint venture for the establishment of centres for 8-12 year-old students with PAYS carrying the financial responsibility for these centres. Agreement was reached in October 1995 and the PAYS Board established 10 centres in schools. These included two centres for each educational area (governorate) and offered eight sports (football, basketball, volleyball, track and field, fencing, gymnastics, swimming and table tennis). The centres started operating in November 1995 staffed by teachers who had obtained training certificates. There were 850 students by the end of the 1995/96 academic year. However, because of the low response of female students, the girls' centres have closed (Hashem, 1997 p203).

Although PAYS supplied these centres, the number of female participants in the year 1995-1996 was very low because of the unwillingness of parents to allow their daughters to attend. Parents appeared to be more concerned for the educational

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<sup>1</sup> KD=2 English pound

progress of their daughters at such a young age and not for their physical welfare. In addition, traditional and cultural attitudes have made it more difficult for girls than for boys to participate in sporting activities. Financial support has been another obstacle for girls' sport and physical recreation, but although there is now official recognition of the importance of physical exercise for health and fitness, and thus the financial side has been improving, it has still been difficult to overcome the parents' opposition.

In contrast, there was an increase in the number of participants in the women's sport centres, in 2000/2002. This shows the greater interest in sport and physical recreation activities with increased age and level of education. Owing to the increasing demand on the school centres, and following a subsequent request from PAYS for funding, the government has provided money for building a new facility in each governorate. One new Centre has already been completed as an integral part of the construction of the new governorate of Mubarak Al Kabeer – entitled the Al Qurien Sports Centre for Women; the other special female-only centres for the other governorates are in the process of being built (written in spring 2004). They will incorporate top-quality sports facilities (for swimming and diving, track and field, gymnastics, tennis, volleyball, basketball etc) as part of a cultural centre including facilities also for artistic and musical and social activities (Annual Report PAYS, 2002 p18).

A number of objectives have been prepared for the Women's Sport for All Centres and they are, to:

- Provide sports and recreational opportunities for the female public;
- Revitalise women's sport by increasing the number of participating females across all age groups;
- Develop awareness of the benefits of sporting activities to the widest possible number of females as a stimulant to increased family and social participation;
- Provide a suitable environment for sport and physical recreation activity in keeping with Islamic and Kuwaiti culture;
- Raise levels of physical fitness in women;
- Define and refine the idea of Sport for All.

Training programmes in the centres will cover:

1. Physical exercises, aerobics;
2. Swedish exercises (practising aerobics-steps-dieting) during pregnancy and after giving birth;
3. Physical training for using sports equipment;
4. Individual games (tennis-badminton-walking-running);
5. Team games (basketball and volleyball);
6. Physical fitness (by following videotape instructions);
7. Follow-up fitness programmes for overweight members.

Attendance figures have already been produced for the existing Centre at Al Kabeer which demonstrate that it has already been successful in attracting a promising number of girls and young women. Table 5.3 below gives the monthly and daily averages of attendance for female participants for the period 2000/2002.

**Table: 5.3 Attendance at the Al Qurien Sports Centre for Women**

Total number during July 2000	2069	Daily Average	94
Total number during August 2000	3873	Daily Average	175
Total number during September 2000	2564	Daily Average	121
Total number during October 2000	2302	Daily Average	102
Total number during November 2000	1561	Daily Average	74
Total number during December 2000	582	Daily Average	52
Total number during January 2001	526	Daily Average	38
Total number during February 2001	833	Daily Average	47
Total number during March 2001	747	Daily Average	50
Total number during April 2001	1781	Daily Average	82
Total number during May 2001	1569	Daily Average	95
Total number during June 2001	1113	Daily Average	56
Total number during July 2001	2993	Daily Average	132
Total number during August 2001	3003	Daily Average	143

(Source: Public Authority for Youth and Sport 2002; Sport for All p20)

It can be seen from the above figures that from July 2000 to August 2000 there was a considerable rise in attendance (from 2,068 to 3,873) – being the summer vacation period, more girls and young women were able to find time to attend the Centre. However, following the summer, the attendance then dropped. In January 2001 the number of females attending the Centre was only 526: this was because of the holy month of Ramadan<sup>2</sup> when most women are fasting and they need more energy for worship. However, at the end of Ramadan an increase in attendance was again noted so that by August 2001 the attendance number had risen to 3,003.

The numbers of attendances at the centres in the schools and at the Al Qurien Sports Centre for Women may be due to the increasing awareness that females have of the importance of exercise for health and also because of the establishment of these well-equipped centres around the country and the recent provision of excellent training programmes. There has also been an increase in the levels of achievement and there has been greater sponsorship.

#### **5.3.4.1 Achievement of Women Sport Centres (2000-2001)**

It has been possible only to find some details about competitive sport – whilst in no way comprehensive, the following list gives some idea of the types of events that have taken place in recent years: basketball matches sponsored by Kuwait University on 12-1-2000; basketball matches held for all women's sport centres on 27-2-2000 at the Al Shaab Club; national basketball championship held on 22-9-2000; national badminton championship at the Al Odelia Centre on 26-9-2000; sports day at the Al Qurien Centre on the 11-10-2000; badminton match was on 23-10-2000; football match at Kuwait University on 9-4-2001; women's badminton sponsored by PAAET on 11-4-2001, national badminton championship on 3-5-2001; basketball matches on 8-5-2001 respectively.

In addition, women's sport centres hold regular seminars, some of which concern issues to do with health and exercise – for example the dangers of being overweight

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<sup>2</sup> Ramadan is the ninth month in the Muslim year. It is the Islam's holy month of fasting and abstinence. Muslims may not eat or drink from dawn to sunset. The sick, nursing mothers and soldiers on the march are exempt, but must make up days missed

and the importance of a proper diet. Finally, the centres are involved in organising many festivals and open-days – for example the Al Qurien Centre organised a sports open-day in 2000, the Third Diplomatic Festivals Sports Championship in 2001; and a Sport for All Festival on the fortieth anniversary of Independence Day, also in 2001 (Public Authority for Youth and Sport Annual Report, 2001/2002).

### **5.3.5 Al-Fatat Club Girls' Club**

At the same time as the women's centres in the schools have been working to improve opportunities and resources for women's sports during the post-invasion period, the Al-Fatat Club Girls' Club has continued its special role as the first government-sponsored female-only club (see Chapter 4) and its focus on sport has steadily increased. This was clear when, in 1993, it came under the authority of the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (Kuwait Sports Achievements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century). The Al-Fatat Girls' Club has played a major role in the development of female sport and competition and there has been greater investment in the Club. For example, the director of PAYS (Fahad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah) has agreed to the construction of a new indoor swimming pool for girls in the Al-Fatat Club in 2004 (Al-Watan Newspaper, 2003). Before the invasion it was the only girls'-only club over many years, and in post-invasion Kuwait, with its major commitment to sport, it has played an even more important role for the development of sport and physical recreation for girls and young women. The Al Qurien Centre now also provides female-only sport facilities that girls can use, but until the other centres are completed, the Al Fatat Club will continue to make provision for the majority of women's sport in Kuwait and for the organisation of sport competitions. It was necessary to go to newspaper archives to collect information about some of the competitions that the Club took part in between 1997 and 2002. The following list is indicative of the involvement of the Al-Fatat Club in competitions in different sports:

**Tennis:** The Al-Fatat Club participated in an Arabian tournament for women, held in Morocco in August 1998 (Al-Watan Newspaper, No. 8083: p24). The team won a bronze medal in the Arabian Championship for Women held in Tunisia, also in 1998 (Al-Sayasa Newspaper, 4/8/1998, No. 10666 p25). The team participated in an Arabian tournament in Tunisia in July/August 2002 (Al-Qabas Newspaper, No. 9731).

**Volleyball:** In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf Championship, held in the UAE in October 1998, the Girls' Club team won a bronze medal (Al-Watan Newspaper, No. 8144 p33). The team participated in the Arabian Championships for Women in Cairo, in November/December 1999 (Al-Qabas Newspaper, No. 9495 1999, Sports page). In addition, the team won a bronze medal in the Gulf Championship for Women in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2001 (Al-Watan Newspaper, February 2001, No.8983 p35).

**Basketball:** The Al-Fatat Club won first and second places in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf Championship, organised by the Women's Clubs in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). This tournament was held in February 2001 (Al-Qabas Newspaper, No. 9929 p2).

**Handball:** The Al-Fatat Club team for handball participated in the Fajr Championship in Iran 1997.

**Table Tennis:** The Al-Fatat team participated in the Arabian–African Championship held in Tunisia in June/July 2000 (Al-Anbaa Newspaper, No. 8658 p35). The team also competed in the 18<sup>th</sup> Arabic Championship held in Jordan in August 2002 (Al-Watan Newspaper, 2002). The team won two table tennis medals, one gold and one bronze, in the 11<sup>th</sup> Arabic Championships for Juniors from 12 to 14 years. The tournament was held in Egypt in September 2002 (Al-Qabas Newspaper, 10/9/2002 p34). In addition, the team represented Kuwait in the West-Asian Championships for Juniors aged 13-16, held in Tehran in September 2002. They won two silver medals (Al-Anbaa Newspaper, Sport pages, 2/10/2002).

**Tae kwan-Do:** The Al-Fatat Club team participated in the Arabian Championships in the Tae kwan-Do Games in Morocco in July 1998. The team won three silver and four bronze medals (Al-Watan Newspaper, 11/7/1998, No.8046 p36). The team also won four silver medals and two bronze medals in the First Arabian Junior Championships held in Jordan in early July 2000 (1-7/8/2000 Al-Sayasa Newspaper, No.11385 p25). The team participated in the Al-Hasan Championships in Jordan in August (20-25/8/2001 Al-Rae Al-Aam Newspaper, No. 9160: p34). The team came third in the First Open Alexandria Junior Championships in Egypt in August 2002. The team won five medals: two gold, one silver and two bronze (Al-Watan Newspaper, Sport pages, 4/9/2002). Finally, the team won two medals, one silver and one bronze in the Arabian Junior Championships in Yemen (Al-Watan Newspaper,



Sport pages, 10/8/2002).

**Fencing:** The Al-Fatat Fencing Club team has participated in many tournaments and championships, both locally and nationally. The main one was the 8<sup>th</sup> Arabian Tournament for Women held in Beirut in 1997 (Kuwait News Agency, KUNA, 14/12/2002).

However, although developments of women's sports and events are promising, there are still large discrepancies between male and female involvement overall and the social obligations and norms that regulate women's lives do not necessarily mean that all women have similar experiences. Access to resources and privileges, which are mediated by kinship and class relations, divide women and set them apart from each other. (Almughni, 2001 p16). By virtue of class membership, upper class women have much wider opportunities than other social groups. It is therefore more possible for them to find the time and opportunities to go to clubs- especially in the private sector. It is also quite common practice for women to use the clubs as recreation centres for them to meet and kill time, rather than use the sports facilities – and so the attendance figures may be misleading.

### **5.3.6 The Kuwait Disabled Sports Club**

One of the most notable divisions between different groups of women are those between able-bodied women and disabled women. However, disabled women have been encouraged to take part in sport and there has been provision for them for nearly thirty years since the Amir of Kuwait established a Disabled Sports Club in 1977. Its aim at that time was to integrate disabled persons into society by giving them the opportunity to take part in sport, social, cultural, and other such activities (see Chapter 4). Following the invasion, sport and physical recreation provision specifically aimed at the disabled community in Kuwait was further developed as part of the Sport for All programmes. At the beginning the programme was limited to blind athletes and those with Cerebral Palsy. Some time later, the Kuwait Disabled Sports Club (KDSC) invited members with a wider class of disabilities to join, and the numbers by 1998 had increased to 923. At the present time (2004) there are more than 1,500 members from all disability groups and members come from all sectors of Kuwaiti

society, including those of 17 different nationalities who live in Kuwait, which effectively makes the Club international. However, as with the able-bodied community, far fewer females than males are members of KDSC - around 80 percent are male and 20 percent female. Festivals and championships were organised for the disabled by the Department of Sport for All and the department plans to extend the number of playing fields for cross-country open-air sports for the disabled.

During the club's history there have been a number of championship and competition successes and more than 1,000 medals have been won at either local, regional, continental or international level. When comparing this total to able-bodied events this is a considerable achievement. KDSC participated in the African and Middle East Championships for Track and Field events, which was held in Tunisia from the in 2000, and the club won eight medals: 2 gold, 2 silver and 4 bronze (Al-Qabas Newspaper, No. 9712, Sport Page, 4 July 2000).

In comparison with other sporting clubs, the Kuwait Disabled Sport Club receives greater financial support from individuals and companies than any other sports club in Kuwait. A large number of organisations, companies and agencies<sup>3</sup> give donations facilitating the development of disability sport in Kuwait – for example, they sponsor competition prizes, give donations via the government authorities, and fund sport-related commercials. The General Director of the Public Authority for Youth and Sport, Sheikh Fahad Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, confirmed that KDSC's achievements are "*An honour to all Kuwait*". During his meeting with the Chairman and the Clubs' athletes; he confirmed the Amir's paternal care for the disabled and those with special needs. He said that the PAYS would continue to offer help to the Club's athletes and to eliminate all obstacles facing them (Kuna, 8-11-2002).

#### **5.4 Formal Education and Sport**

Kuwait's education system is one of the best in the area; it is well funded, modern, and comprehensive. Its literacy and education rate is also one of the highest. Books, uniforms, meals, transportation are free to all school children and there is even an

allowance for parents. University education, which is also free, includes tuition, dormitories and meals; there are incentives such as free sportswear, transport, and field trips, students are also sent overseas on State fellowships (Aldekhayel, 2000).

One of the most important considerations for the future development of sport and physical recreation is persuading young people in schools, colleges and the university of the enjoyment as well as the health benefits gained from participating. Although the whole of society should be aware of this message, targeting the young Kuwaiti female population through the formal education system has the greatest potential for increasing female participation and changing the lifestyles of girls and young women from in-active, unhealthy ones to lifestyles in which regular physical exercise plays an important role. There is official support of, and growing social awareness of, the benefits of healthy lifestyles, however, although PE is part of the National Curriculum at all stages of girls' education, PE lessons do not motivate and encourage girls and, unfortunately, there is a tendency for both teachers and girls to believe that PE lessons are not important lessons. This is due to many reasons: firstly, the neglect of images of sportswomen in the media; secondly, the absence of female involvement in sports administration and decision-making; and thirdly, social attitudes towards sportswomen are generally negative. The following official objectives of physical education, laid down by the Ministry of Education (1987-88 pp9-11) are, therefore, not being fully met. The objectives include helping pupils to enjoy well-planned PE programmes, to develop the spirit of co-operation among pupils, and to help them work as members of a group; to help pupils fulfil their love of adventure; and to provide them with mental as well as physical stimulus. A further objective is to develop healthy habits which will become a part of their life-styles; and enhance fitness, motor skills and the ability to use sports equipment (Ministry of Education, 1987-88 pp11-12).

The governmental bodies responsible for education services in Kuwait include the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education (under which is Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET).

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<sup>3</sup> Such as banking, Co-operation society, Big Company, Wealthy people.

The Ministry of Education is responsible of supervising private and public sectors of education up to the end of the secondary stage (18 years), while PAAET is responsible for vocational education and Kuwait University is responsible for higher education (Kuwait Facts and Figures, Ministry of Information, Seventh Edition, Government Press, 2002: p138).

## **5.5 Ministry of Education**

Since the end of the invasion of Kuwait, there have been several initiatives to address the problems of the lack of interest and non-participation among girls and young women. The girls' physical education programme has undergone several stages of modification and modernisation and attention has been given to facilities and the provision of modern equipment up to international specification and standards. The Ministry has also focused on preparing specialist teachers to be the keystone for the achievement of programme goals. Accordingly, the number of Kuwaiti women physical educational teachers has increased over time to the extent that the majority of physical education teaching staff in Kuwait are now Kuwaiti nationals. It is the intention of the Ministry of Education that young girls are encouraged from the earliest years of schooling – at age six – through to the senior years of school – at age 18 – after which students enter higher education to take part in physical exercise.

As Kuwait has developed and schools have increased in number and additional educational areas have been set up, the Ministry of Education's responsibilities have expanded and its focus on the development of sports has increased. The Ministry has organised and is still organising competitions and tournaments between schools in throughout the educational areas of Kuwait.

### **5.5.1 Department Of Physical Education (DPE)**

The Department of Physical Education has a fundamental part to play in the organisation of sport and physical education in schools, as well as in the organisation of recreational pursuits for young Kuwaitis. The functions of the DPE include:

- Conducting the PE Curriculum Development Committee
- Drawing up, in co-operation with other Ministry officials, the plan for PE

- Planning and preparation for all sport activities
- Supervision of competitions between schools, and
- Estimating the needs of PE in school.

Changes have been introduced whereby female teachers are now teaching boys as well as girls in some elementary schools. Physical education is compulsory for everyone and the curriculum (Table 5.4) consists of two elements: games (soccer, basketball, handball, volleyball, tennis); and educational movement (running, balancing, exploration, jumping and hopping) (Hashem 1997, p200). At high school level, students gain credits towards their leaving certificate.

**Table 5.4: PE lessons in the Kuwait school system**

School Level	Grade	Lessons	Lesson length	PE Staff
Elementary 6-10 years	1	3 per wk	40 minutes	Male for boys Female for girls, <i>And boys</i>
	2	3 per wk		
	3	3 per wk		
	4	2 per wk		
Intermediate 10-14 years	1	2 per wk	45 minutes	Male for boys Female for girls
	2	2 per wk		
	3	2 per wk		
	4	2 per wk		
High school 14-18 years	1	2 per wk	45 minutes	Male for boys Female for girls
	2	2 per wk		
	3	1 per wk		
	4	1 per wk		
Credit Hours <sup>4</sup>	-	3 per wk	45 minutes	Male /females

Source: Ministry of Education, 2002

Official statements about the physical education and sport curriculum do not differentiate between boys and girls. However, there is a discrepancy between philosophy and practice. Over the years, boys have been given priority and girls have had fewer resources and opportunities. However, there has been, and continues to be, a shift in practice towards greater gender equality. Efforts are being made to

<sup>4</sup> Credit Hours is an American system under which each student has to complete certain hours of sport as in other subjects. Introduced into Kuwait secondary education in 1978/79 for both girls and boys,. (Ministry of Education, 1992)

construct a curriculum better suited to the needs and interests of girls, and extra-curricular sessions are available in high schools to further encourage girls to enjoy sport and physical activities and to continue participating after they have left school at college and university or in clubs.

## **5.6 Ministry of Higher Education**

### **5.6.1 University Of Kuwait**

There is a range of education opportunities open to students at the conclusion of the high school level. Students with good grades can go into higher education, which is attracting more and more female students each year. For example, in 1999/2000 there were some 39,612 students enrolled in the University of Kuwait and female students out numbered male students by 27,491 to 12,121. In 2002/2003 female students outnumbered male students by 29,493 to 14,329 (Ministry of Planning 2002; Statistical Review 26<sup>th</sup> edition 2003 p11).

With a large majority of female students, Kuwait University has played a significant role in supporting women's sports. This is evident from various competitions held for female students, giving them the opportunity to participate in university championships, both inside and outside Kuwait. Kuwait University has taken an interest in a range of games for its female students, such as basketball, volleyball, handball, tennis, table tennis and squash. The Sports Activity Department at Kuwait University plays the key role in the promotion of sport and physical recreation in the University and its colleges. Its objectives include:

- Providing suitable facilities and equipment for student participation in the activities of their choice;
- Developing students' physical and technical abilities to enable them to participate in activities of their choice;
- Raising sporting awareness in students and directing them to practise sport and physical recreation activities;
- Organising competitions between the University colleges;
- Representing Kuwait at home and internationally;
- Exchanging experience, ideas and knowledge with others by attending

conferences and sporting occasions;

- Propagating a sports culture and Olympic spirit; organising festivals on national holidays;
- Co-operating with institutions on the sports field;
- Strengthening the relationship between Kuwait and other Gulf and Arab countries by participating in all Gulf and Arab tournaments;
- Exchanging information and experience with other sports bodies in the Arabian Gulf, other Arab countries and internationally (Hashem, 1997: p.207; Meeting with staff in university).

There are eight colleges in Kuwait University, all of which provide a wide range of sports facilities. The facilities are open to all students, academic staff and other employees and are free of charge for everyone. These facilities include a number of gymnasiums, three tennis centres, squash courts, a 25-metre indoor swimming pool, soccer pitches, and on the main campus a stadium with a seating capacity of approximately 20,000. The PE Department organises annual activities of (a) intra-mural, (b) extra-mural, and (c) voluntary activities.

- (a) Intra-mural activities include a range of different sports competitions held for males and females within each college and between the colleges (one-day sport and 'recreational physical activities gala' for the whole university and for each college). There are competitions for new students to integrate them into university life and in order to spot talented students in different sports. Academic staffs together with students are encouraged to participate.
- (b) Extra-mural sports activities that feature in the annual programmes for non-members of the university; however, teams or individuals representing the university normally participate as well these programmes include male and female open competitions for all Kuwait's sporting bodies. All competitions are single-sex competitions: those for females include swimming, volleyball, basketball, and track and field events
- (c) Voluntary activities include spring vacation visits to Arab countries for "friendly games" and participation in the International Universities Games (Kuwait has been represented in nine of the series since 1971).

### **5.6.1.1 The University's International Connections**

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to an immediate decline in international sports activities, but the lack of interest among female students (and supervisors and coaches) in sport evidenced even before the invasion continues to be a problem. However, Kuwait University has been proactive in the last few years in its encouragement of women's sports which has resulted in an expansion. Furthermore, increasing numbers of women have studied in other Islamic countries and in non-Islamic countries in the West, and have become qualified sports scientists and physical education specialists and have worked on their return to Kuwait to improve opportunities for women in sport.

### **5.6.2 The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET)**

In 1982, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) was established, and since 1991 there have been modifications and expansion in the scope of its work. PAAET is responsible for the work of eight different colleges (4 male and 4 female) and many training centres which differ in quality and size. In spite of improvements, some of them are still dated and substandard. Two of the colleges are Basic Education Colleges (one male, one female) which provide four-years of training for students of physical education; the other six colleges are for commerce (2 years only); health studies (2 years only); and technology (2 years only).

The Basic Education College for females has a Department of Physical Education and Sport, which is the one responsible for training PE teachers to work in the governmental elementary and secondary schools. In common with the aims of the Ministry of Education and its Department of Physical Education, the major target of the Department of Physical Education and Sport at the Basic Education College is to instil in girls and women in Kuwait an interest in sports and give them the motivation to practise sport and recreation activities, thereby enabling them to be active exercisers as a necessity in their daily lives.

PAAET's Division of Sport Activities has the responsibility for activities organised exclusively for students in all its colleges and centres and the Division has an office in



each college responsible for the supply of equipment for students for extra-curricular sport. The construction of new academic and sports facilities for all the colleges, which will include swimming pools for girls and boys and PE departments, were recently outlined in a new plan. Different programmes and facilities are available for male and female students. These include:

1. College and centre sports leagues in football, handball, volleyball, basketball and table tennis;
2. Open competitions with other bodies (e.g. army academy, police academy and national guard);
3. 'Friendly' matches between the authority's team and sports club and clubs in friendly other countries;
4. The annual sports festival for students (Behbehani, 1992 p208-9; Interview with the Head of Division of Sport).

### **5.6.3 Division of Ministries and Governmental Activities**

The High Sport Committee (HSC) for Ministries and Government Establishments was established in 1993. It has the responsibility for promoting, making plans, organising, and supervising programmes of physical recreation activities in the ministries and government establishments and for creating a social and cultural awareness among its employees (male and female). The HSC also organises programmes, competitions and championships for various sports. Its responsibilities also include collaborating with sporting federations and sports clubs to facilitate matters with them, following-up the implementation of sporting activities, reviewing and resolving any problems that may arise, and circularising reports on the execution of the plans and programmes. It is also responsible for imposing sanctions and penalties on players, coaches and officials for breaches of regulations, approving regulations and conditions of sports championships made by the technical committees and proposing new competitions that may help raise the standard of sports (Hashem, 1997 p196).

### **5.6.4 Other Ministries**

There are a number of other ministries also involved in sport and physical recreation activities. These include:

- The Ministry of Finance (see Chapter 4)
- The Ministry of Oil (see Chapter 4)
- The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (see below)

### **5.7 Ministry of Commerce and Industry – Private Sector**

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry's involvement in sport and physical recreation could be described as being very indirect. Apart from programmes for staff in governmental ministries, which have already been considered, the Ministry of Commerce is partly responsible for hotels and health and fitness clubs, whose relationship with sport and physical recreation is perhaps better considered as part of the private sector contribution. However, contributions are growing rapidly for the provision of sport and physical recreation activities. Facilities are available in eighteen hotels (Kuwait Facts and Figures, 1996), and non-resident members can use some hotel facilities and some hotels arrange sport competitions (Behbehani, 1992).

In 1996 there were 60 fitness and healthcare clubs; this was a significant increase in a four-year period from the 15 clubs available in 1992. Recently, the number of clubs has increased dramatically and reached 171 in 2003, most of which are especially for women. Many of these clubs possess the latest quality equipment, indoor swimming pools, qualified female trainers, dietary programmes and special cafés that offer slimming products. The fees for membership to these women's clubs differ according to the quality of services, but none of them are hugely expensive. They attract women who are employees and outsiders from varied social backgrounds (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce Registration, 2002). The private sector has now become a major provider for women's participation in physical recreation and fitness activities are increasing in popularity all the time.

### **5.8 Conclusion**

The Kuwaiti government has encouraged the people of Kuwait to take part in sport and physical education, in response to the recognition that exercise is crucial to health and fitness. The country now has quite an extensive sport and physical recreation infrastructure and there are different ministries, government departments, institutions,

and agencies, as well as public and private clubs that are involved in the provision and development of sport and physical recreation for girls and young women. As a group, they are especially being targeted through the formal education system in the attempt to increase female participation and to change the lifestyles of girls and young women from non-active, unhealthy ones to ones where regular physical exercise plays an important role.

But in spite of the positive developments outlined above, there are continuing problems arising from tensions between liberal attitudes to female exercise and more traditional Islamic views about the female body and the female role in society. There are many contrasts in the situation regarding females in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait – for example they have the freedom to wear swimming suits on the private beaches and in private swimming pools, but have to adhere to modest standards of clothing in public contexts. Women themselves also differ in their levels of participation and in their attitudes to sport, and the following chapter provides details of an empirical field study focusing on this issue.

# **CHAPTER SIX**

## **Field Study:**

### **Investigating Girls and Women In Sport and Physical Recreation In Contemporary Kuwait**

## **6.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides full details of the field study - a major feature of this research project - designed to investigate the possibilities of and the barriers to participation in sports and physical recreation for girls and women in contemporary Kuwait.

The field study concentrates on the opinions of five groups of participants:

1. Female pupils in the final year of their high school education.
2. Female students in the Department of Physical Education at the Basic Education College of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.
3. Female members of the Al Fatat Club.
4. Female members of private sport and fitness clubs.
5. Male and female 'experts' – people with particular expertise/ and or interest concerning sport and physical recreation in Kuwait.

The data was collected by means of questionnaires in the cases of the first four participant groups: high school pupils, college students; members of the public and private clubs; and open-ended interviews were used with the experts.

This chapter describes the methodology as well as the statistical results obtained from the data.

## **6.1 The Objectives of the Field Study**

Are characterized as follows:

1. To investigate the involvement of Kuwaiti females in sport and physical recreation.
2. To investigate the main barriers that prevents Kuwaiti females from participation in sport and physical recreation.
3. To investigate the opportunities for sport and physical recreation provided for females by the government and private organisations.

4. To investigate the opinions of participants from varied backgrounds about sport and physical recreation for Kuwaiti girls and women

The particular research problems associated with the objectives listed above include such questions as, 'Are Kuwaiti females involved in sports and physical recreation?'; 'What are the main barriers that prevent Kuwaiti females from participation in sport and physical recreation activities?' 'Do the Government and other public organisations give adequate opportunities for Kuwaiti females to participate in sport and physical recreation activities?' 'What opinions do girls and women themselves hold about sport and physical recreation for females in Kuwait?'; 'What opinions do "experts" and people with influence hold about sport and physical recreation for females in Kuwait?'.

An important feature of the field study research is recognition that the girls and young women who are the research participants are not a homogeneous group. They are all Muslims, but they are different from one another in significant other ways. During the processes of investigation attention was paid to significant differences between Kuwaiti females in relation to:

1. District
2. Participant group
3. Age
4. Marital status
5. Education
6. Occupation

The field study represents an original investigation of a particular aspect of the lives of Kuwaiti girls and women that has not received academic' attention before. It is also significant that it touches on sensitive issues to do with women's bodies, and religious, family and traditional influences etc outlined in the previous chapters, which are not always easy for girls and women to talk about. For these reasons, it was decided that data should be collected from the largest feasible number of people and that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews be used to cover as many questions

as possible in order to provide a reasonable indication of the present situation regarding sport and physical recreation for girls and women in Kuwait.

## **6.2 Methodology**

### **Sample Descriptions:**

Both purposive and random sampling was used to select the research participants (Neuman, 1997 p 201:224). Because the power to make decisions about sport and physical recreation for girls and women in Kuwait resides with men, the intention in this field study was to gather information from *as many* girls and women as possible in order to find out what they do, what they expect, how they think and feel about the issue – in other words to position them as “knowers”, to give them a voice. The vast majority of participants in this project could be characterized as ‘young women’. It was decided not to involve anyone under the age of 17 years – firstly, in order to make the research manageable and, secondly, in order to involve those who would be more likely to have informed opinions. Most members of the first participant group – the high school pupils – were 17 years old and some were older (up to 21 years of age). The second group who were student teachers of physical education ranged between 18 and 25 years of age. Participants from the other groups were of different ages over 17 years – some from the private clubs were over 50; the fifth group – the mixed-sex ‘experts’ - included some of the oldest participants (up to the age of approximately 55 years).

### **6.2.1 First participant group - high school pupils**

In Kuwait no co-educational schools exist. Therefore, as the thesis is about female participation in sports and physical recreation, in addition to the reasons outlined above, and for logistical convenience as well, only single-sex female schools participated in the sample. Two schools from each of the six governorates of Kuwait were selected in order to ensure that each geographical area was represented. By doing so it was possible to ensure that demographic differences between schools were included, that inner urban schools were part of the sample, and that those with pupils from traditional religion backgrounds (such as Al-Jahrah) as well as those with pupils from liberal, more westernized families were included (such as Capital). However,

the two schools from each governorate were selected randomly: twelve in all. The names of all the schools from one governorate were typed onto card and “put into a hat” and two were “pulled out”. The procedure was repeated for each of the other five governorates. From all the final-year classes, just one from each of the 12 participant schools was randomly selected and all the girls in those classes completed the questionnaire. Taking into account the importance of reliability (Neuman 1997 p138), thirty high school students completed a pilot questionnaire; the questionnaire was distributed to females chosen from the different participant groups as follows:

- School Students (11)
- PAAET Students (6)
- Government club (6)
- Private Club (7)

Data collected was entered and analyzed by using the computer and the statistical package SPSS, “Statistical Package for Social Sciences”. Results showed that the questionnaire is reliable and could be applied on the “first sample” of the field study. 218 additional students completed the amended questionnaire. Due to the high number of final-year high school pupils throughout Kuwait, the participants selected represent only 12% of the overall population of pupils in their last year of schooling (In Kuwait the classroom sizes are regulated and the maximum in each class is 20 to 25 pupils).

### **6.2.2 Second participant group – physical education students**

Altogether there were 56 female college student participants. They were all training to be teachers of physical education in the Department of Physical Education at the Basic Education College of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. This is the only college of higher education in Kuwait that provides a course for trainee physical education teachers. The students were randomly selected from the total cohort (280) of physical education students at the college. They represented 20% of the total number.



### **6.2.3 Third participant group – members of the Al Fatat Club**

The Al Fatat Club is a female-only Sports Club. It was selected because it is the only public government sports club for girls and women in the country. Furthermore the Al-Fatat Club has a programme of competitive events and so members of this participant group would be more likely to take part in sport competitions than girls and women from the other participant group. It has a membership of 250. 50 of the members of the A-Fatat Club, representing 20% of the total, were randomly selected to complete the questionnaire.

### **6.2.4 Fourth participant group – members of private clubs**

There are a growing number of private clubs in Kuwait - numbering around 12 women's clubs with approximately 990 members in all, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce. Two clubs from each governorate were randomly selected. Twelve clubs in all were involved in the project and participants were randomly selected from the membership register. 119 members are participants in this project. They represent approximately 12% of the total number of women who take part in sport and fitness activities in the private sector.

Different 'proportional samples' were selected from these groups. Participants comprised only approximately 12% of those groups with the higher total numbers – ie high school students and private club members; whereas participants comprised approximately 20% of those groups with the lower total numbers i.e. student teachers; and Al Fatat Club members.

### **6.2.5 Fifth participant group - 'experts' with particular expertise and/or interest**

These participants, characterized as 'experts', are individuals with particular knowledge, expertise, and/or interest and involvement in the development of sport and physical recreation for girls and women in Kuwait. They number 30 in all and are in government, the national assembly or are professionals working in government departments, the education sector, or are members of the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee or those with positions in other sport organizations. Because of the patriarchal character of these institutions, not surprisingly most members of this participant group

are men, numbering 24, while there are only seven women. However, all the participants are in favour of the development of more equal opportunities for females in relation to males and so represent a liberal view. It is particularly important to elicit the opinions of the members of Parliament because they are the decision-makers for the future of female participation in sport and physical recreation. Generally, these groups of people are older and more experienced and have influence and access to those in decision-making positions. For a full list of their names and positions, please see Appendix 2.

### **6.3 (Semi)-Structured Questionnaire (First Sample)**

The questionnaire was given to the first four participant groups – the high school pupils; the trainee physical education teachers; members of the Al-Fatat Club; and members of private clubs. There were 26 questions in all concerning the participant's background; involvement in sports and physical recreation; details of activities; involvement in competitive sport; barriers to participation; opinions about the benefits of physical activity, opportunities, and provision; and opinions about Islam, sport and physical recreation. The questionnaires were written originally Arabic for the Muslim Arabic-speaking participants, and have been translated into English in order to be included as Appendix 1. The questionnaire was clearly structured allowing for most responses to be in the form of a tick. Some questions had space enabling the participants to give more details, and the last question was open-ended and invited participants to give a fuller answer. There was also space at the end of the questionnaire for any additional comments. The structure of the questionnaire made it possible to complete it in approximately 30 minutes.

This procedure may appear to be very formal. However, the questionnaire was administered by the researcher which made the process much more personal. It is for this reason that the first person 'I' will be used from this point on. As outlined in the introductory chapter, I have excellent contacts with the schools, the college, and the clubs and close relationships with many of the staff. I was given access and made welcome, and arrangements were made for me to hand out the questionnaires and stay with the participants while they were filling them out. I was able to explain the purpose of the questionnaire and to ask the participants to elaborate if they wanted to

– especially at the end where there was ample space for them to make any comments they wanted to about sports and physical recreation for females in Kuwait. I was able to answer any questions they had after the introduction and while they were completing the questionnaire. Because of the co-operation of the schools, college, and clubs the return rate was 100% of all those pupils and students present on the day. It is typical that this self-administered method of data collection ensures a high response rate and also gives the benefit of a degree of personal contact (Oppenheim, 1992 p102).

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part investigates the General Information of the participant: “District, age, marital status, education and occupation”. While, the second part consists of 26 major closed questions and various open and closed sub- questions - see Appendix 1.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections:

▪ **Section One: Involvement of Kuwaiti Females In Sport and Recreation Activities**

This section aims to identify the level of women’s current participation in sport and recreation. It also covers current opportunities and sport facilities offered to women.

▪ **Section Two: Main Barriers That Prevent Kuwaiti Females From Participation In Sport and Recreation Activities**

The section is concerned with problems and obstacles affecting the level of women’s participation. This section includes the following:

- Whether there are equal opportunities for male and females in policy-making and decision-making.
  - Social attitudes
  - Authorities’ attitudes
  - Women’s social commitment, time, interest, priorities.
  - Facilities and equipment.
  - Family and its importance
- **Section Three: Opportunities Given to Females by the Government and Public Organizations Regarding**

Their Role in Sport and Recreation Activities. This section aims to identify the level of women's current participation in sport and recreation organizations and the image of the sports woman. This section also covers current opportunities for women.

- A number of experts (see Appendix 2) in the fields of sport, computer, statistics and education evaluated the questionnaires (and interview cards – see next section) that were used in this field study and modifications and coding methods were decided upon in response to their comments.

All the questionnaires were completed during a two-month period in Kuwait, as were the interviews described below.

#### **6.4 Structured Interviews (Second Sample)**

The 'expert' interviewees were both Kuwaiti males and females, associated with organisations within the government legislature, listed below. The list provides a guide to the numbers of males and females from each organisation (some of them are associated with more than one organisation, but listed below in relation to their main role). For a full list of names, see Appendix 2:

- Five members from National Assembly (all male)
- Six members from the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (2 female/4 male)
- Five members from the PAAET (Basic Education College, PE department)
- Five members from Department of Physical Education (Ministry of Education).
- Five members from Kuwait Olympic Committee.
- Four members from Kuwait University.

The experts were chosen for their knowledge and involvement with women in sport and physical recreation. The members of the National Assembly were chosen because they are the decision-makers for the future of female participation in sport and physical recreation. The tables and figures on pages 126 - 135 reveal the distribution of the Second Sample, according to the district, person answered the questions, sex, and education. Because of their seniority and reputations, out of courtesy, I did not ask them their ages.

An Interview Card was designed to collect data from this "Second Sample".

### 6.5 Open interviews

The interviews with the 30 'experts' were quite different in character from the questionnaires. Because of the seniority and experience of the experts, it was possible to carry out interviews that were open in character. An important feature of the interviews was their interactive nature – I was able to be responsive to the participant being interviewed, as he or she could be to me. I had more opportunity to probe and some of the resultant exchanges were lively and insightful. Open-ended interviews allow for greater sensitivity to the variety of participant backgrounds and the different levels of knowledge about and involvement in the research issues. The experts were, by definition, more aware of the wider issues involved in the development of sport and physical recreation in Kuwait than the participants in the other groups. Most of the interviews were carried out in the participants' places of work, which was their choice. The average time for each interview was 30 minutes. Each of the interviews proceeded smoothly and was 'much like a long, intense, conversation (Roseneil 1993 p198). The participants in general did not want the interviews to be recorded on tape and so I made notes throughout and at the earliest opportunity after each interview I made further comments in writing.

An interview card was constructed including similar questions to those on the questionnaire. However, this was used only as a guide when the participant was hesitant and did not talk readily and to remind me of the issues I was keen to explore. (See Appendix 3 for the interview card.)

Most of the participants in this group were most known to me personally. I was most fortunate because of my position as Assistant Dean for student affairs in the Public Authority for Applied Education And Training, to be able to involve many of the leading figures concerned with the developments of sport and physical recreation for females in Kuwait.

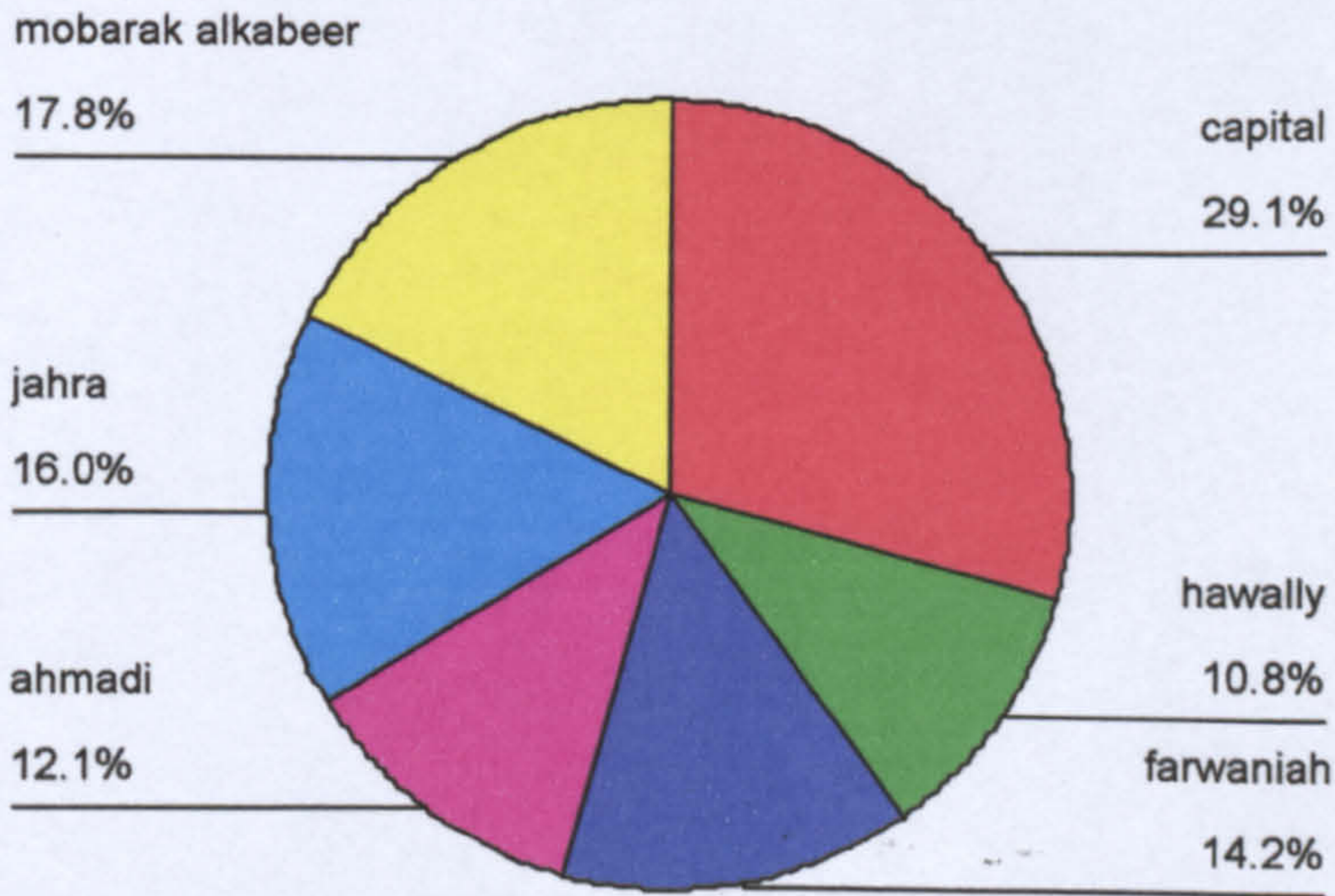
### 6.6 Major Sample and Analysis

The questionnaires filled out by the first four groups were analysed together. The following tables and figures reveal the distribution of this major sample according to the district, participant group, age, marital status, education, and occupation.

**Table 6.1**  
**Distribution according to the District**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Capital	129	29.1
Hawalli	48	10.8
Farwaniah	63	14.2
Ahmadi	53	12.1
Jahra	71	16.0
Mobarak AlKabeer	79	17.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.1**

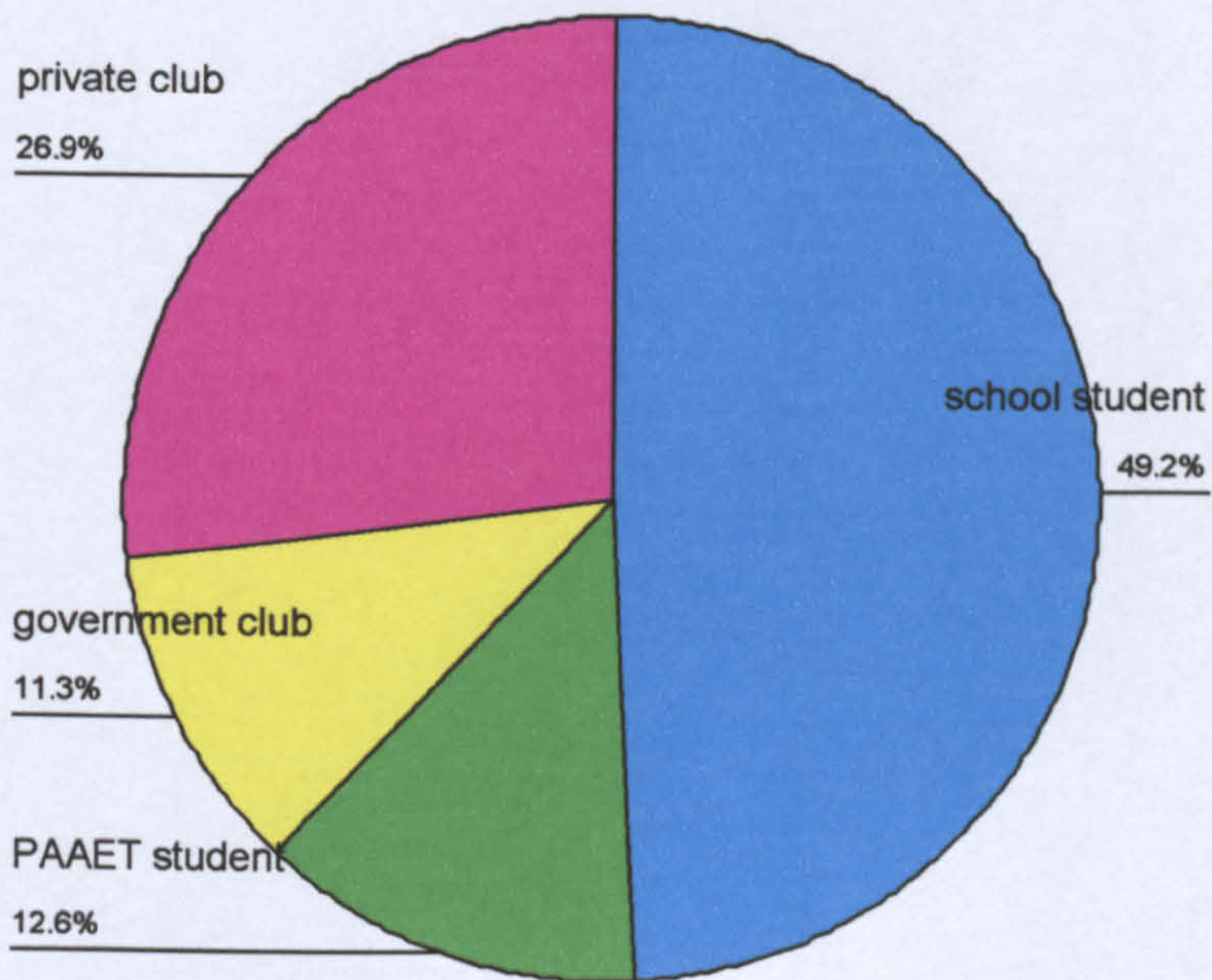


**Table 6.2**

**Distribution according to the person answering the questionnaire**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
School Student	218	49.2
PAAET Student	56	12.6
Government Club	50	11.3
Private Club	119	26.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.2**

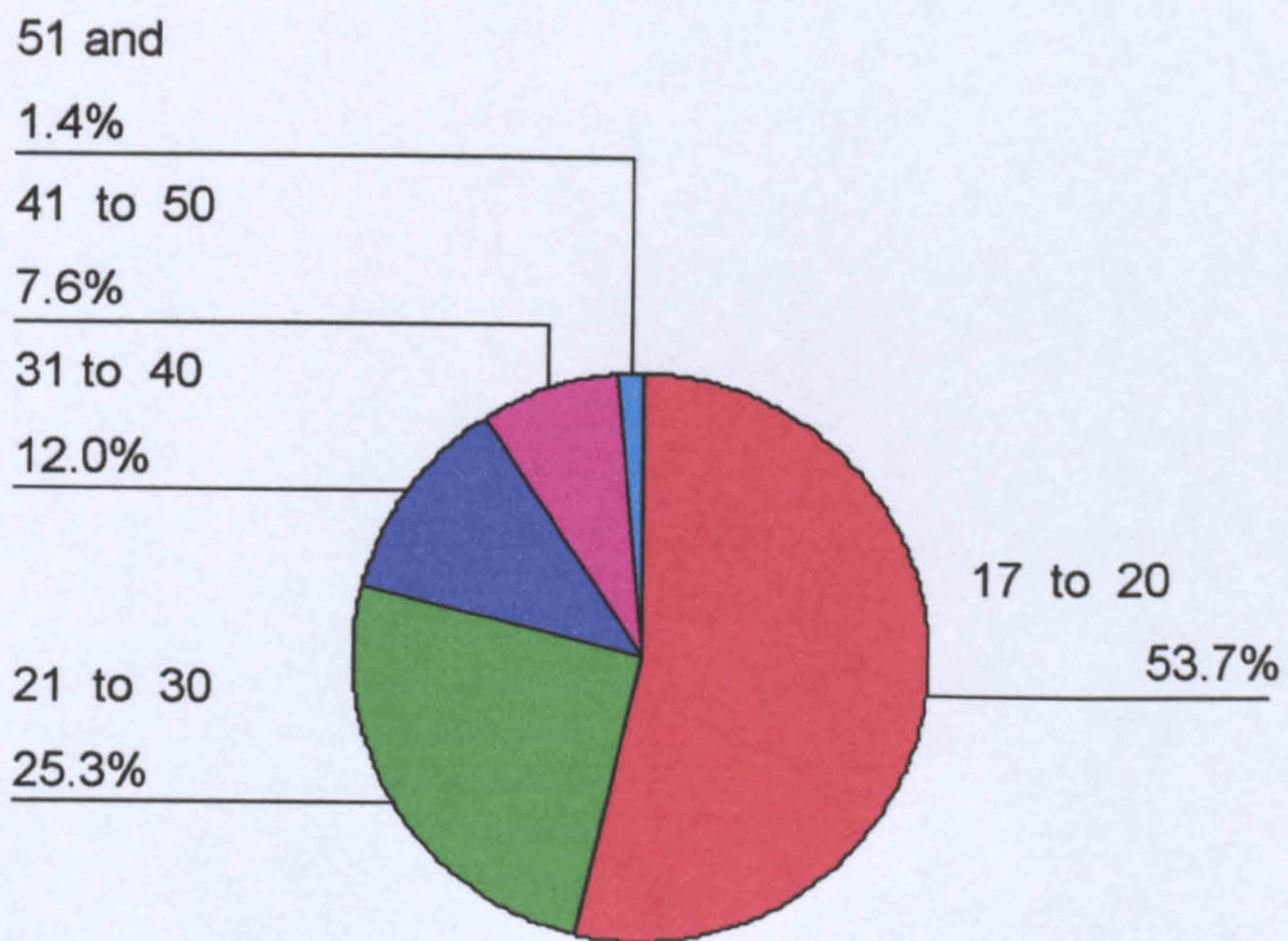


**Table 6.3**

**Distribution according to age**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
17 to 20 years	238	53.7
21 to 30 years	112	25.3
31 to 40 years	53	12.0
41 to 50 years	34	7.6
51 and above	6	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.3**



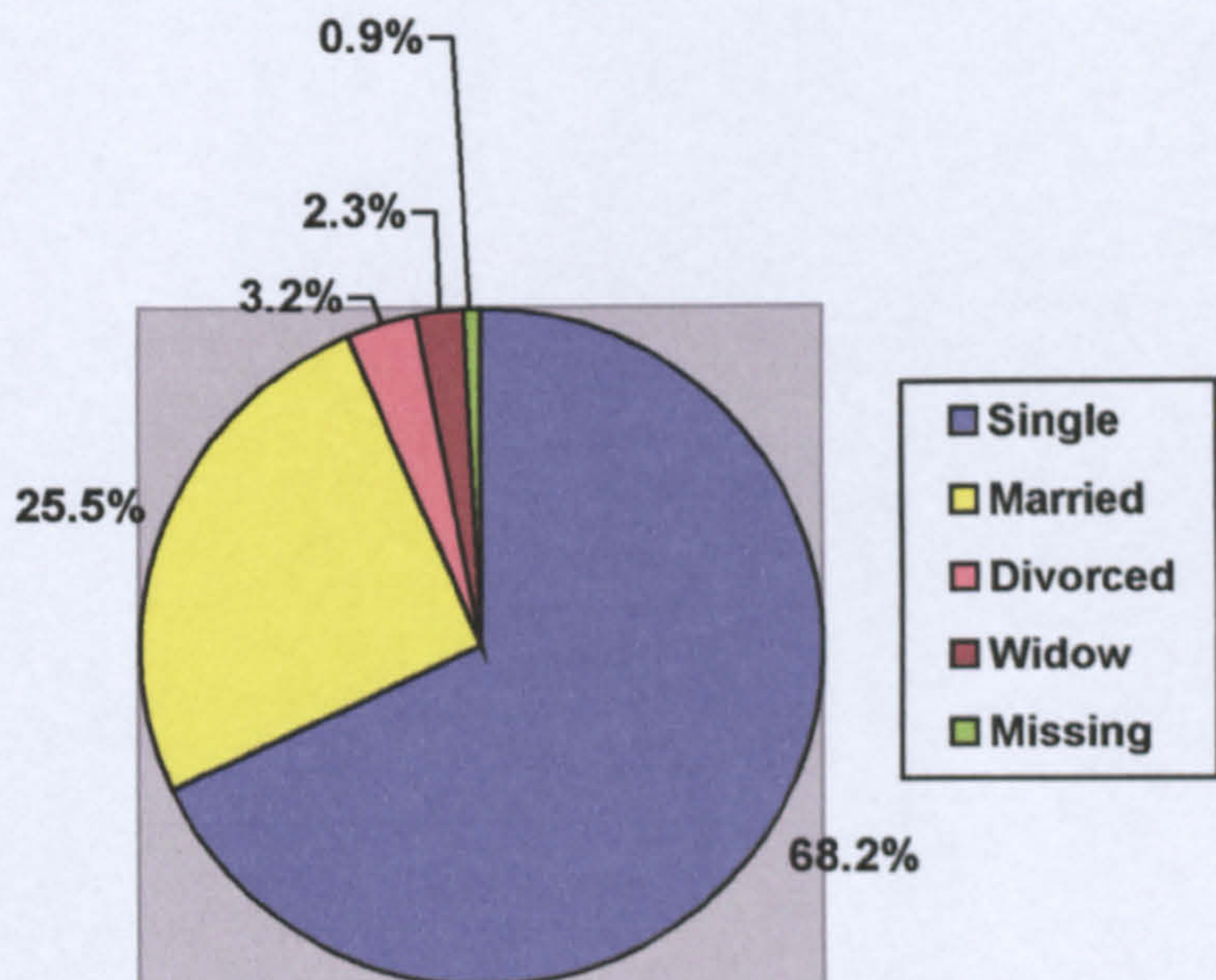


**Table 6.4**

**Distribution according to the marital status**

		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Single		302	68.2
Married		113	25.5
Divorced		14	3.2
Widow		10	2.2
Missing	System Missing	4	0.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

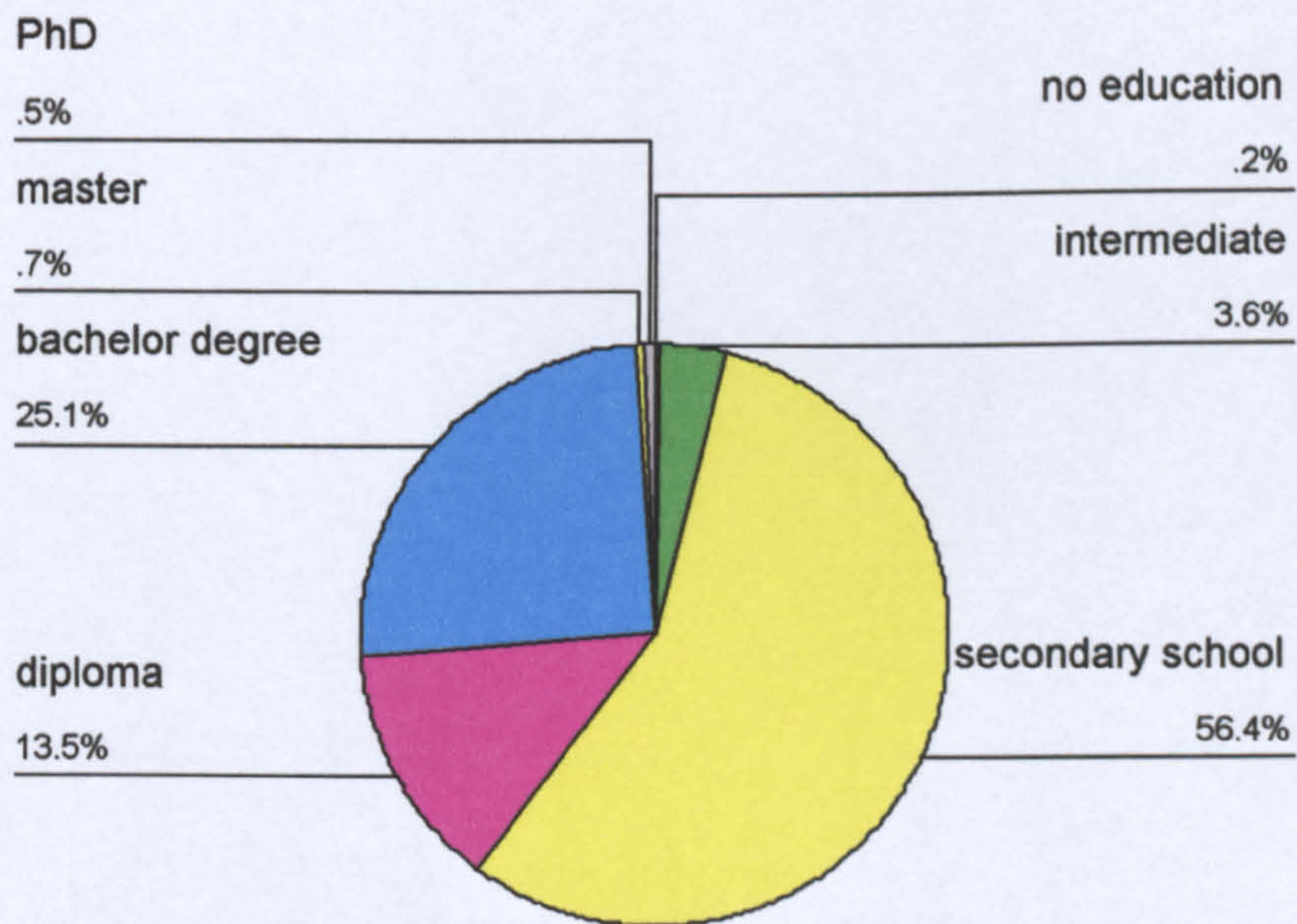
**Figure 6.4**



**Table 6.5**  
**Distribution according to the education**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Education	1	0.2
Intermediate	16	3.6
Secondary School	250	56.4
Diploma	60	13.5
Bachelor Degree	111	25.1
Master	3	0.7
PhD	2	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.5**

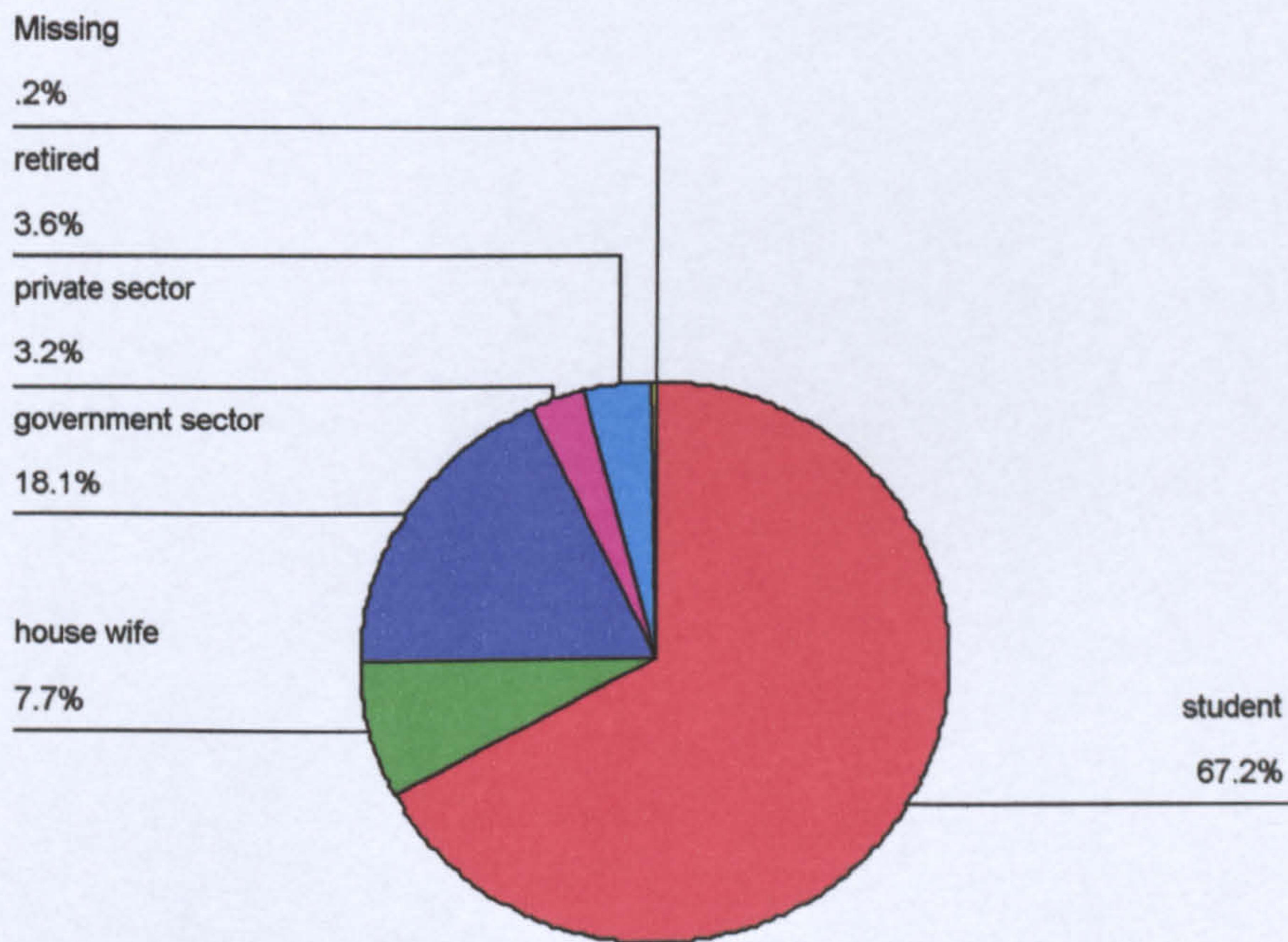


**Table 6.6**

**Distribution according to the present occupation**

		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Student		298	67.2
House wife		34	7.7
Government Sector		80	18.1
Private Sector		14	3.2
Retired		16	3.6
Missing	System Missing	1	0.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>443</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.6**



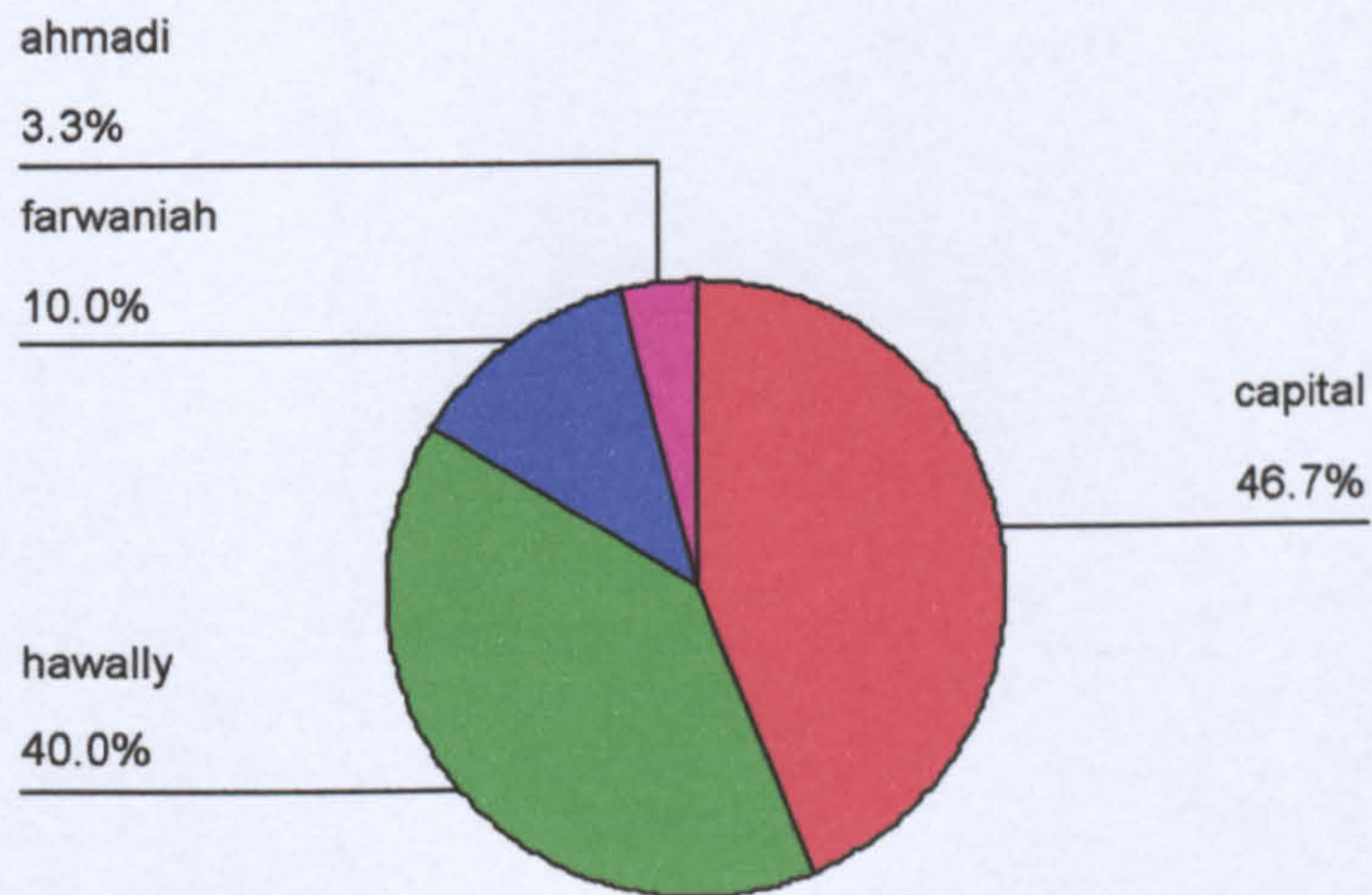
The fifth participant group – the ‘experts’, comprised a sample, which was analysed on its own.

**Table 6.7**

**Number of Interviewees according to the district**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Capital	14	46.7
Hawally	12	40.0
Farwaniah	3	10.0
Ahmadi	1	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

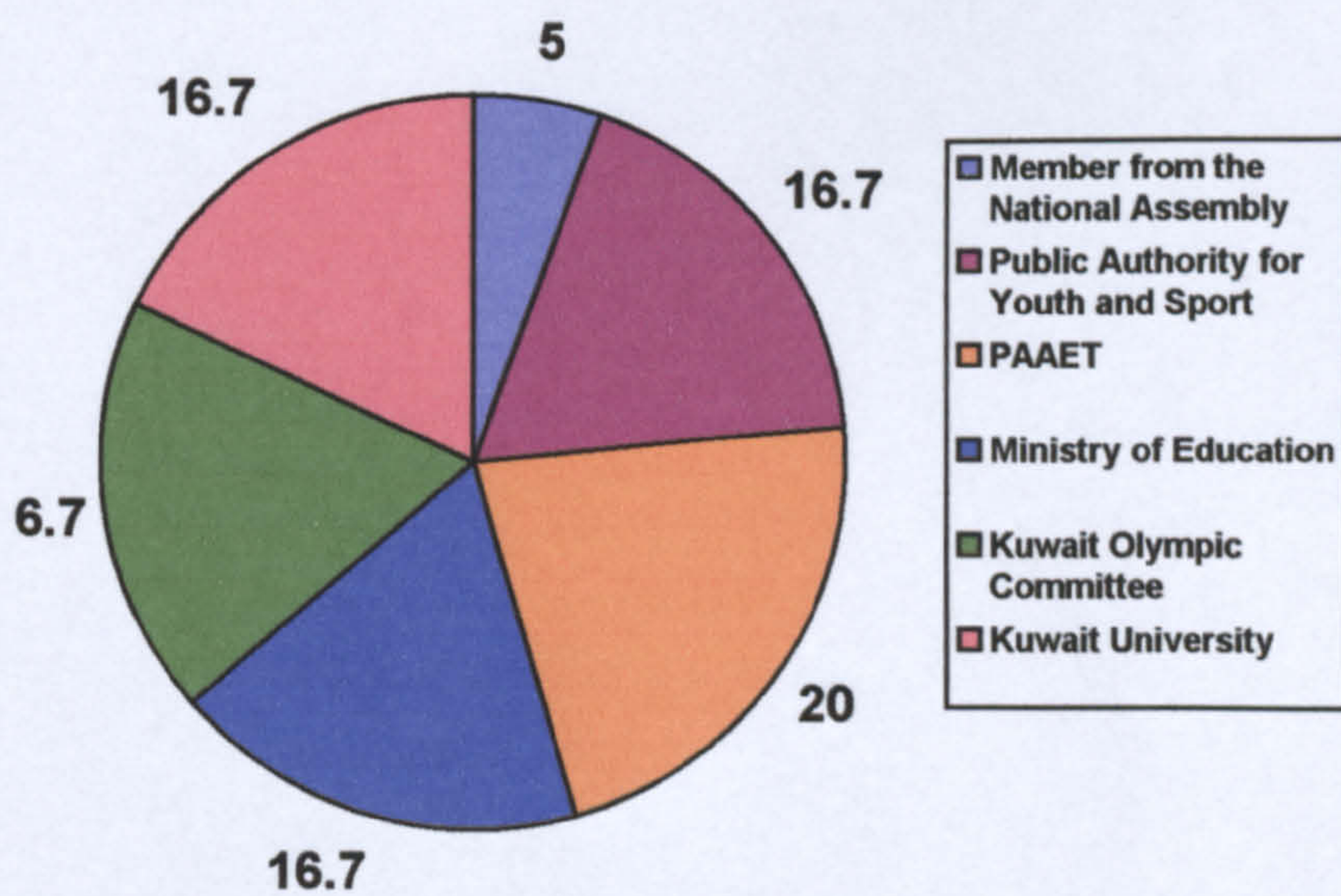
**Figure 6.7**



**Table 6.8**  
**Number of Interviewees according to the**  
**Government legislation structure**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Member from the National Assembly	5	16.7
Public Authority for Youth and Sport	6	20.0
PAAET	5	16.7
Ministry of Education	5	16.7
Kuwait Olympic Committee	5	16.7
Kuwait University	4	13.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Figure 6.8**

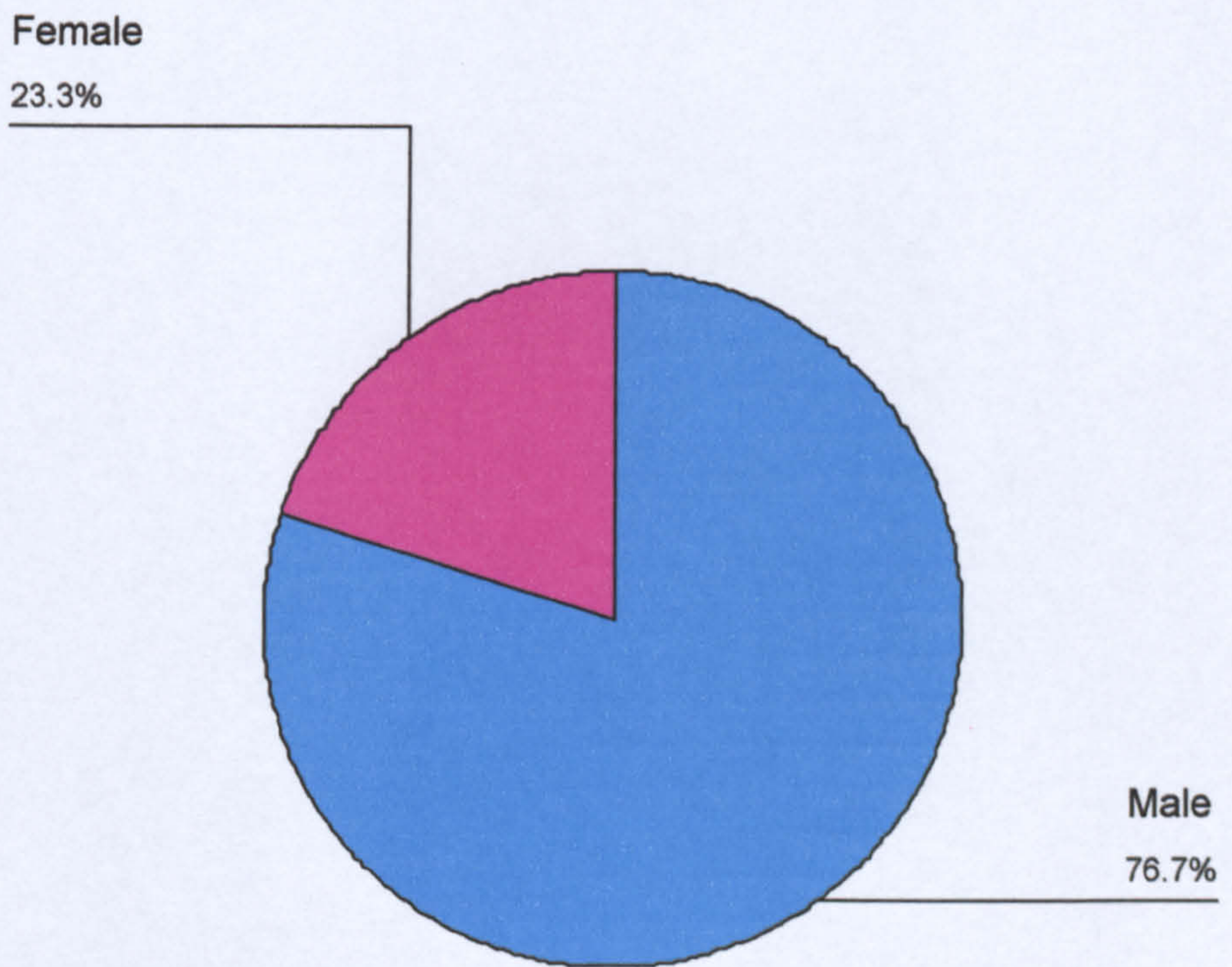


**Table 6.9**

**Number of Interviewees according to gender**

	Number	Percent
Male	24	76.7
Female	6	23.3
Total	30	100.0
Total	30	100.0

**Figure 6.9**

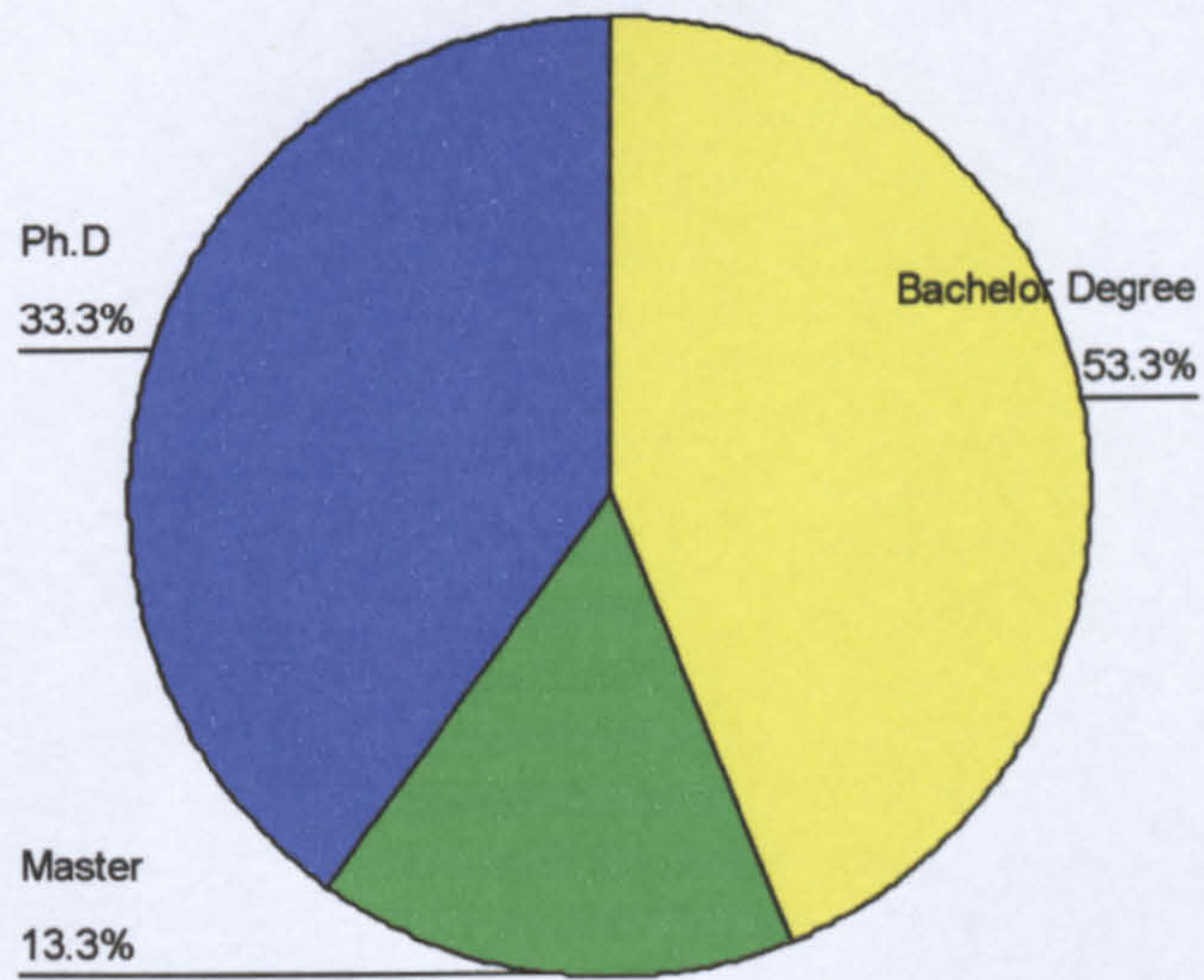


**Table 6.10**

**Number of Interviewees according to education**

	Number	Percent
Bachelor Degree	16	53.3
Master	4	13.3
Ph.D	10	33.4
Total	30	100.0
Total	30	100.0

**Figure 6.10**



## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined details of the field study procedures – selecting the participants, the methods, and collecting the data. Altogether there were 473 participants, most of who completed a questionnaire, and 30 of whom were interviewed. This was the largest number of participants that it was possible to include in the time allocated for this PhD project. Importantly, they included high school pupils, college students, and public and private club members, as well as men and women who hold official positions in government sport organizations so that ideas as representative as possible could be gathered. The statistical results of the field study, which provide the basis for discussion about the contemporary situation regarding girls and young women in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait in the following chapter, are included in Appendix 4.



**CHAPTER SEVEN**  
**Outcome and Comments**  
**On The Field Study**

## 7.0 Introduction

Since 1991, the Kuwaiti government has made some interventions into sport and physical recreation in an attempt to re-establish a sports infrastructure and to build for the future. Part of the initiative has focused on girls and young women and more attention is now being paid to their needs. Together with facilities provided by the private sector, there are now growing opportunities for females and more are being planned. But the available evidence suggests that Kuwaiti females overall do not take part in regular exercise and one of the main reasons for carrying out this research project was to find out why. The field study was, therefore, planned specifically to reach as many girls and young women as was feasible and to ascertain what activities, if any, they took part in and the reasons for non-participation, as well as their hopes and expectations for the future. The questionnaire was constructed to collect opinions from females of high school age through to those who were in their fifties. However, although the questionnaire was constructed with some open-ended questions and space for extra opinions at the end, very few of the participants chose to elaborate about any features of their experience or future plans. It seemed that most of them were not 'in touch' with issues about sport and physical recreation and did not hold firm opinions about the topic or place sport and physical recreation as central to their lives. In this respect, there were similarities between the attitudes of the participants and students that I had contact with in my role as Assistant Dean for PAAET. Before starting this specific research project, I frequently observed students from four different colleges and was able to talk to them about their interests in sport. Even those students who were outstanding athletes and members of the college teams said, "No", when I asked them if they would like to take part in the future in national or international competitions at a higher level.

The questionnaires were designed to collect more detailed information about the participation, opportunities and barriers related to sport and physical recreation from larger numbers of Kuwaiti females. In addition, the interviews were carried out in order to have the opinion of 'experts' about the situation as well. The rest of the chapter outlines the findings from the questionnaires and the interviews that are useful for this research, and assesses them in relation to issues discussed in previous chapters.

## **7.1 Kuwaiti Females and Free Time for Sport and Physical Recreation**

### **Activities**

Most of participants (297=67 %) indicate that they have some daily free time for sport and physical recreation activities. However only (129=29.1%) have this daily free time regularly. Results show that the participants have on average 17 hours free time per week for such activities. There is no significant difference between responses in relation to age, marital status or education, but there is a significant difference between responses in relation to district, persons answering the questionnaire, and their occupations. The highest response comes those living in the Hawalli district, the lowest response from those living in the Al Al Ahmadi district. Those with most free time are government and private club members; those with the less free time are PAAET and school students.

It is not surprising that most of the participants do have free time – one of the likely reasons is the present economic organisation in Kuwait which is based on an oil economy for revenue generation that has rapidly influenced the development of all aspects of life. Most Kuwaiti families have very high incomes, helpers, drivers and cooks for domestic services in their home that give most Kuwaiti females free time to take part in sport and physical recreation. Free time to take part in sport and physical recreation is also linked to their home locations. Hawalli – with the highest response rate – is a commercial district with a high population of people from other Arabic countries (e.g. other countries from the Arabian Peninsula and those outside the Peninsula – e.g. Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine) and other foreign countries (e.g. Pakistan, Iran). Hawalli residents have more daily free time partly because they live in small apartments with little upkeep, and also the area has a lot of health clubs and its location is near the seaside providing easy access. The fact that the responses also show that government and private club users allocate more of their free time to sport and physical recreation is also partly because many of the private clubs are located in the Hawalli governorate, and government clubs also provide easy access. These clubs are also liberal and flexible in the way they are run.

One category of participants who have less free time for sport and physical recreation are residents in the Al Al Ahmadi governorate. Most residents are foreigners, are employees of the Kuwaiti Oil Company, and have long working hours. Another reason for their lack of free time is because this Al Al Ahmadi area is far away from the capital city. Furthermore, there are a very limited number of health clubs throughout the Al Al Ahmadi governorate. (There are generally more amenities in those districts that are closer the Capital). The other groups who indicate that they have less free time are the PAAET college students and the high school pupils. The high school participants spend most of their time studying at school, seeking better results in order to enroll at university, whilst PAAET students in the Physical Education (PE) Department have specific classes when they take part in all kinds of sports as part of their curriculum.

Overall, the results show that it is not necessarily a lack of available free time that is the reason for non-participation, but other factors as well.

## **7.2 Places Where Kuwaiti Females Practise Sport and Physical Recreation Activities**

Concerning the places where Kuwaiti females practise sport and physical recreation, the results show the following: home (sometimes: 63.4%=277 participants; regularly: 17.4%=76); the beach (sometimes: 54.8%=239); and the shopping malls (sometimes: 54.2%=237). It is clear from these results that a substantial number of the participants practise sport and physical recreation more at home than anywhere else. In his PhD 1992 Sport and Recreation in Kuwait: Administration, Provision and Participation Behbehani (1992, p.274) had similar results concerning women's leisure time, showing that "home is the most popular (57.92%) place to spend free time". Similarly, in a comparative study concerning Sport for All: Concept and Practise Implications for Implementation in Kuwait' Hashem (1997 p.259) also shows that "home was found to be the most frequent site where respondents spend their free time". The results are not surprising because Kuwait has an unfavourable hostile climate, especially in the summer (Al-Sanousee, M. 1990) and so many Kuwaiti females choose to remain within the confines of comfortable air-conditioned homes

and buildings. In addition, most modern houses in Kuwait have special rooms with exercise equipment and indoor swimming pools and many women follow exercise aerobic-style regimes with the use of video taped programmes. It is also the case that the gardens of many homes are very extensive and people walk and jog on their own property.

The second most favoured place where the participants in this study spend their free time is at the beach. In his research, Hashem (1997, p.259) states that, "The seaside was found to be the most frequently cited location for almost every one in Kuwait", although his percentages (which included men), were higher. The public beach areas in Kuwait are very inviting. As well as clean shores and fresh air, there are specific areas for swimming and other sports facilities. For example, the "Green Island" has gym equipment, beach volleyball, and trampolines etc. Other aquatic sports including yachting, rowing, snorkelling and windsurfing are also catered for. Two beaches are especially for women - the "Messilla and Ugaila Beaches" and the "Aqua Park" is for families. Importantly, there are numerous sea-side walks, which attract many people, and there are open areas with ample seating and up-to-date facilities, including toilets, showers, ice machines, restaurants and cafes. Such projects cost the government millions of Kuwaiti Dinars and were constructed by international designers and constructors.

The shopping malls were the third most favoured place for the participants to take part in sport and physical recreation. In Kuwait, the malls are large in size and fully air conditioned in the summer seasons, and many people spend quite long periods of time walking in the malls. The largest shopping mall in Kuwait is the "Sharq Mall" established in 1999. It is a modern mall that contains 4 cinemas, restaurants, rest areas, and coffee shops. It has indoor and outdoor walkways, and long tracks with beach views. In addition, some of the malls have health clubs and sport centres. Most of the shops in the malls are international stores such as "Debenhams, Next, Lacoste, Channel, Christian Dior, etc., and shoppers who are attracted to use them also go to walk and exercise – in other words, they 'kill two birds with one stone'.

In Table 6.13 of Appendix 4, which shows the full results, it is clear to see that the participants favoured other locations for sport and physical recreation less than the home, the beach and the mall. For example, although just a quarter (25.3%=110) of the total sample used clubs regularly, more than half the sample (56.9%=247) never go to clubs at all. Although in every area in Kuwait, there are pathways specifically designed for walking, with rest areas and drinking water available, they are clearly less popular with the participants. More than half the total sample (60.2%=262) never walk in their neighbourhoods, and only 34.3%=149) sometimes do so. The long hot summers and cold winters clearly influence the decisions of women not to use outside facilities. Again, more than half (56.2%=245) the total number of participants never visit resorts either. There is only one main resort area in Kuwait (Al-Khairan), which caters for sport and physical recreation (there are a few private ones for very wealthy people – eg Al-Juleaah; Mina Abdallah; Shalley). Although Al-Khairan is owned by TEC (see Chapter 5) – it is very expensive and located in a remote area around 150-200 miles away from the residential areas. The excellent beach facilities within reach of people's homes provide more practical and less expensive opportunities for sport and physical recreation.

The education sport centres are also not popular locations for use in the participants' free time. Although there does seem to be a growing demand for the new Al Qurien Sports Centre for Women (see Chapter 5), the established centres which are located in schools are less convenient because they are not open to women during teaching times, and the equipment is also rather old and well-used by the children and lacks the variety available in the Al Qurien Sports Centre and in the private clubs, explaining the low participation in these locations. Similarly the participants only use the youth clubs and parks in tiny numbers. Firstly, the youth clubs are very few in number and are organized and available more for males than for females. Girls and young women feel less at home in these clubs than in other facilities. Secondly the reason that so few women go to the parks (which are numerous) is almost certainly because of the harsh weather conditions and unpleasant temperatures. More than half the participants cited the weather as the main barrier to participation (see Appendix 4, Section 2, Table 6.24).

Above all, the women participants in this study stay at home to practise sport and physical recreation. In the confines of the home they can share their responsibilities for the home and the family with their interest in exercise. They are also protected from the weather conditions that militate against outdoor activities in the summer and winter months (more women probably go outside in spring and autumn when the weather is ideal), and they can also completely relax at home without being in public view.

### **7.3 Ways of Practising Sport and Physical Recreation – Individually, or with Others**

A substantial percentage of the participants (59.6%=264) answered that they sometimes practise sports and physical recreation activities alone, a much smaller percentage (25.1%=111) never do so, and a smaller still percentage (14%=62) take part on their own regularly. However, more participants (33.4%=148) take part regularly in team sports; and 49.2% (=218) do so sometimes. It is easier for girls and young women to exercise individually so that they can avoid conflicts between the timing of team activities and the demands of their personal circumstances.

The highest percentage of women practising sport and physical recreation activities alone are PAAET female students; from the answers they gave to another question (Question 11) this would appear to be because they have a much greater awareness of the advantages (particularly the benefits to health) of sport and physical recreation and also because their major college subject – physical education - requires them to be constantly fit and to use the training facilities found in their college. Furthermore, the PAAET students are under a great deal of pressure to obtain their degree qualifications and spend time studying for their examinations. Although many of them are in college teams, any extra time they have is usually spent on their own. In contrast, members of the only government female-only Al Fatat Club are in general less pressured by other commitments and are also encouraged by the club to take part in team sports, rather than individually. The Al Fatat Club is also heavily sponsored by the government, which provides money for journeys to competitions in different parts of Kuwait, as well as in other countries. There is also funding for female trainers

and the up-keep of large indoor and outdoor facilities. Most of the most successful teams come from the Al Fatat Club, which encourages more young women to join the club in order to take part in competitive team sports. The above figures which show that over one third of the whole sample take part regularly in team sports indicates a greater commitment to regular exercise than those who participate on their own. The large number of participants taking part in team sports includes high school pupils and college students who do so as a part of their compulsory curriculum.

Many of the participants who do individual activities are members of private clubs, the numbers of which have increased dramatically in recent years and have reached about 171 clubs in 2004. Most of them are exclusively for women. Many of these clubs have the latest quality equipment indoor swimming pools and qualified female trainers (See Chapter 5) (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce Registration, 2002). It is also clear from the results that the percentage of divorced females who sometimes practise sport and physical recreation alone is quite high and this is almost certainly due to the absence of family barriers and responsibilities.

#### **7.4 Women's Favourite Sports**

By far the most popular activity among the participants is walking. Nearly half of the total sample (44.6%=195) walk regularly, and just over half (51.7%=226) do so sometimes, leaving a tiny number (3.7%=16) who never walk. The second most popular activity is swimming. Those who swim regularly number 20.2% (=89); and nearly half the sample (48.4%=213) sometimes swim, but as many as one third (31.4%=188) of all the participants indicate that they never swim. The majority of females who swim are in the younger age groups – girls and young women. Older women and retired women and widows may be more affected by Islamic traditions, or have never learnt how to swim. Aerobics is also a quite popular activity among the participants of whom 18.4% (=79) take part regularly; 43.4% (=186) sometimes do aerobics; but a substantial number (38.2%=164) never do this activity. About two thirds of the total number of participants (65.2%=284) exercise with fitness equipment either, some (17%=74) do so regularly. Jogging also attracts quite a number of



women, but most of them (47.6%=209) only indicate that they sometimes jog, not many (13.4%=59) do so regularly. Walking, swimming, aerobics, exercise with equipment, and jogging are the most popular activities with the participants – the other sports that were listed on the questionnaire, namely, basketball, cycling, gymnastics, handball, horse riding, skating, karate, squash, tennis, table tennis, volleyball and track and field were less popular in general (See Appendix 1, Table 6.17). Horse riding was the sport that the fewest number of participants took part in – only one of the participants rides regularly, and only 26 sometimes ride. Although Kuwaiti women have been very successful in international equestrian events (see Chapter 4), it remains an extremely expensive sport accessible only to the very wealthy and out of the reach of most of the participants. The participants were given the opportunity in the questionnaire to mention sports not listed and the ‘extra’ ones they take part in are football (5 participants), yoga (3), dancing (2), ballet (1), step aerobics (1), and bowling (1).

It is clear from the data that many of the participants who live in the Hawalli governorate practise walking, aerobics, jogging, exercise equipment *and* swimming. It is also obvious that PAAET students are among the most energetic in taking part in walking and jogging, while the highest percentage doing aerobics, using exercise equipment and swimming is found amongst the members of the Al Fatat Club. The factors mentioned previously – for example, the number of available facilities in the area, the presence of female trainers etc and the financial motivation to improve fitness for competition – clearly influence the participants involvement in specific activities.

The data from this study indicates that participation among the 30-40 age group is well established in a range of the different sports listed. This group showed awareness of the importance of practising sports activities for health. As Hayat (1996, p.184) has mentioned the most important health problems in Kuwait are high blood pressures and being overweight. Awareness of the health problems concerning obesity and cholesterol among Kuwaitis has increased in the past few years leading to the

increased involvement of Kuwaiti females in sport and physical recreation (Ibid p219).

The data also shows that divorced women comprise the highest percentage of all groups in their involvement of one or more of the listed sports. It was also found that the majority of females practising walking, aerobics and using exercise equipment are mainly from the educated sector maybe by reason of their knowledge of the advantages of sport and physical recreation activities. The present data shows that retired females represent the highest number among those practising aerobics and using exercise equipment, while those working in the private sector walk more than those from other groups.

On the other hand, the low percentage of females practising the different sports varies between the different districts. For example, the percentage of females practicing walking is very low in Al Al Jahra and few of the participants who live in Farwaniya go jogging. There are likely to be a number of factors that can explain this pattern of low participation, but the main reason is certainly because most residents of these two districts are extremely strict in their religious beliefs and cautious in their social perspectives. Their customs and religious traditions negatively affect women who might wish to take part in different sporting and recreational activities. Hargreaves (2000, p 47) mentions that the issue of female participation in sport and physical recreation is tied to strongly held beliefs about traditions, culture and religion. Moreover, the main nature of these two districts is multicultural, with a high percentage of single residents who are deterred from walking and/or jogging on their own in these particular areas for reasons of safety as well as modesty. A final reason for non-participation is because the areas are built-up with very few suitable pathways for walking and jogging.

### **7.5 Practising Sport in the Future**

A large majority (87.4%=387) of the participants would like to practise sport and physical recreation in the future. The highest response was amongst females at high school and members of private clubs; and single women in the age group between 17

and 20 years. There is certainly a growing awareness of the availability of a whole range of sports and forms of physical recreation in Kuwait today and of the advantages and pleasures of taking part. The awareness comes through television programmes, newspapers, books, playing sport at school and at college and so on. Hayat's study (1996, p.20), mentioned previously, shows that Kuwaiti people are knowledgeable about the benefits of exercise for health and concerned to take care of themselves.

## **7.6 Females and Competitive Sport**

Approximately half the numbers of participants in this study (50.6%=224) have never taken part in competitive sport. But those in the Hawalli, Capital and Farwaniah governorates showed more interest than others in taking part in competitive sport. This is not surprising because these three districts are located close to the Al-Fatat Sports Club which as we have already discussed (see Chapters 4 and 5) has been the only and best equipped female-only sports facility until the Al Qurien Sports Club for Women was opened in 2000. The high profile of the Al Fatat Club in providing the best opportunities in the country for competitive sport and organising national and international events has also been discussed. However, most females at private clubs do not take part in competitive sport at any level – presumably their attraction to the private clubs is because they are more interested in other types of exercise. The data shows that it is mostly single females, without family commitments, who take part in competitive sport.

But in spite of the interest in competitive sport among some of the participants (28.7%=127) who play regularly at local (i.e. national) level, the data shows that over 90% have never played in Gulf area or other international competitions. There are many possible reasons. Firstly, the Islamic view that women are not permitted to travel alone without a guardian (Mehrem) prevents them going to other countries; secondly, (other) religious, family and social traditions claiming that sport may ruin a female's reputation and status (See Chapter 3) militates against their participation. Those girls and young women who do play competitive sport at local level do so under the supervision of their family members. When the participants were answering

the questions about competitive sport in the gulf area and in other countries, they were surprised at the idea of travelling outside Kuwait and completely negative about the possibility of doing so. Only 11 participants had taken part in Gulf area competitions regularly (some of which could have taken place in Kuwait), and only 4 participants had played in Arab country competitions. Only one participant indicated that she had played 'sometimes' in international sport. Bearing in mind that the participant members of the Al Fatat Club are some of the best young sporting talent in the country, the negative indications about the development of international female sport in the future are bleak.

### **7.7 Main Barriers that Prevent Kuwaiti Females from Participating in Sport and Physical Recreation Activities**

The survey results show that more than half of the participants consider the weather conditions (53.6%) to be the main barrier preventing them from participating in sport and physical recreation. As already mentioned, this is due to Kuwait's harsh, unstable climate, characterized by long hot summers with high temperature in August that reach up to 50°C and extremely cold winters dropping to -3°C. Other significant barriers for quite a number of the participants related to the breaking up of sports groups or members of the groups leaving. (10.6%=46 believe this to be a very important reason; 51.9%=223 believe it to be a moderately important reason). The numbers of participants who indicate that family commitments are a serious barrier for them are quite low (Only 17.4%=76 believe this to be a very important reason, and 51. %=223 believe it to be a moderately important reason) – but this is not surprising because the majority of participants are young and unmarried. As many as one third of the whole number of participants (31.6%=138) believe that family commitments are in no way a barrier to their participation. For most of the participants family crises (51.0%), injury (87.1%), health problems (79.5%), aging (98.2%), poor facilities in the home area (52.3%), financial reasons (69.0%), work duties (65.4%), customs and traditions (65.1%), and finally, marriage (84.7%) are also not barriers that prevent them from participating in sport and physical recreation activities.

In addition to the list of barriers mentioned in the questionnaire, some of the participants added the following barriers to the list as a response to an open question: lack of free time (30), laziness (21), busy at study (10), lack of government places for females to practise sport and physical recreation (8), lack of publicity about opportunities for sport (3), people interested in entertainment more than sport (1), difficulty in losing weight quickly (1), pregnancy (1), and depression (1).

The data also shows that the barriers listed apply to most participants in general regardless of age, married status, education and occupation.

The data from the interviews with the 'experts' (See Appendix 5) varies quite considerably from the data collected from the Questionnaire results. The experts consider that customs and traditions, family crises, lack of facilities, financial reasons and marriage, as well as weather conditions, are the main barriers that prevent females from practising sport and physical recreation activities. The different result suggests that the age differential and the different levels of experience are the main reasons for this difference. Furthermore, many of the participants are those who are already interested in sport and physical recreation and lead active lifestyles in relation to other women in the general population. It may be that they are not representative of those other women. The experts are older and because of their positions, more knowledgeable, with a broader vision of the barriers facing women throughout society. They are all actively immersed in one or more aspect of Kuwaiti sport and motivated to aid in the development of sport and physical recreation for Kuwaiti women.

### **7.8 Opportunities for Sport and Physical Recreation**

Just fewer than half the full number of participants (48.1%=213) answered that they are happy to some extent with the opportunities available for females in sport and physical recreation. Most of the females in the Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah, and Mubarak Al-Kabeer districts think that the opportunities given to them by the government and public organizations are adequate. But those from the Al-Al Ahmadi and Al-Jahara districts are not satisfied with the role of the government and the public

organizations due to the lack of sporting clubs in these areas. The characteristics of Al-Jahara have already been discussed in relation to the answers to previous questions – but to elaborate slightly, many of the residents of this area are very strict, severe Muslims, and some of the women from this background wear a shalah (a long black scarf wrapped tightly around the head) with a burqa (a black veil for the face with openings for the eyes only) and an abbaya (women's long black cloak, worn over the dress and covering the entire body). In spite of their strict wear for public view, if they go to the all-female sports clubs they wear up-to-date sports gear, including swimming costumes. Their outward public appearance masks their need and desire for more opportunities to take part in sports and physical recreation.

Most females in government clubs as well as in the private clubs are satisfied to some extent with the opportunities that they have, while most of the high school pupils and the PAAET students were dissatisfied. In the case of the PAAET students, the facilities need up-grading – many of them are old – and the students want new facilities as well so that more sports can be accommodated. There is also a demand for an increase in the number student places available in the Department of Physical Education – there are around 300 applicants annually, but only approximately 30-35 places available and not enough academic teaching staff. The high school pupils and the PAAET students are also both aware that in the parallel boys' schools and in the male colleges, there are far better opportunities. Young people are more conscious of, and more open about, gender inequalities than previous generations.

Nearly one third (28.4%=126) of the participants believe that people in Kuwait society understand the benefits of sport and physical recreation; nearly half the number of participants (48.1%=213) believe that people in Kuwait society have, to some extent, knowledge about the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities. The most positive response came from those living in the Mubarak Al-Kabeer district (in the Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah, and Al-Al Ahmadi participants believe that people in Kuwait understand the benefits of sport and physical recreation only to some extent). It may be that the recent opening of a massive sports centre in Mubarak Al-Kabeer (Al-Qurien Sports Centre for Women) has brought attention to

the people living there of the benefits of sport and physical recreation and, in particular, is helping to shape the attitudes of girls and women who live in the area to the benefits.

Answering the question about whether Kuwaiti girls and women understand the benefits of sport and physical recreation, nearly one third of the participants (31.8%=141) believe firmly that they do and over one half (55.1%=244) believe that they do, to some extent. The results are similar to the participants' answers to the previous question which was about whether people in general throughout Kuwaiti society recognise the benefits of sport and physical recreation. But the highest response about girls and women came from participants living in the Capital possibly because, in comparison, in the suburban areas there is a lack of the massive advertising that is seen in the Capital and a shortage of seminars and lectures regarding the benefits of sport and physical recreation for female health. In addition, there are high numbers of economically developed, highly educated and high status families in the Capital district who are most likely to be informed about the benefits of sport and exercise in general. During my visit to the high schools and to the private and government clubs, many of the participants themselves showed a considerable understanding of the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities, which was reflected in their positive response about the understanding of females in general. Interestingly, almost all the experts (96%) who were interviewed answered that Kuwaiti females in general do understand the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities. Because Kuwait is a liberal Arab state and television and advertisements are available to everyone, 'propaganda' programmes about the benefits of sport and exercise are commonplace to most Kuwaiti people. In addition, Channel 4 is a special sport-only channel which shows not only sports events, but also feature programmes including those about the benefits of sport, physical recreation, and exercise in general.

### **7.9 The Role of PAYS**

Only a small percentage of the participants (15.3%=68) have real confidence that PAYS tries to improve opportunities for female sport and physical recreation, 41.1%

(=182) believe that they do so only to an extent. The rest of the group (42.2%=187) have no confidence in the efforts of PAYS at all. Their opinions are linked to their view about the lack of facilities. Nineteen of the 30 experts who were interviewed are much more supportive of the work of PAYS. (Understandably for some of them who are member of PAYS!). But 11 are critical of the efforts made by PAYS to improve sport and physical recreation for girls and women. A major factor in their criticism is that there are no qualified women in PAYS. They also mention the deficient budget for girls and women's activities, the fact that women are viewed in sport as inferior to men and, finally, PAYS is connected with the National Assembly which always objects to any decisions in support of women's interests.

### **7.10 Programmes and Staffing for Girls and Women in Sport**

Over half of the participants (56.9%=252) answered that they are not aware of the programmes about girls and women in sport and physical recreation – very few (12.9%=57) answered confidently that they did know about programmes. As we have seen already, apart from in the Capital, there is a marked lack of audio and visual advertising about sporting facilities and clubs, and the problem is greater for females than for males. In addition, the government organizations, as well as the private clubs and organizations have not given much attention to extending sports programmes and recreation activities specifically for girls, which can be judged from the answers given by those in the age groups 17 to 40 years. Just over half the total sample of questionnaire participants (54%=239) believe that there are not sufficient staff in the sport and physical recreation centres that care for the needs specifically of females, whereas 100% of the experts that were interviewed argued that this is the case. The experts gave very many explanations for their responses about this issue, including the reduced demand from females themselves, the lack of a decent budget, the lack of experts who understand and can study female affairs, the fact that those making decisions do not take females into account, customs and traditions regarding women's participation, the absence of future plans and a clear policy towards women, and, finally, they state that there is discrimination between men's and women's rights regarding sport and physical recreation.



An associated problem related to programmes and staffing is, of course, also related to the provision of facilities and financial resourcing etc. Over half the participant group (57.3%=254) indicate that there are not enough modern sport and recreation centres that care for girls and women in Kuwait. Apart from the Al-Fatat Club, as mentioned (previously, there is only the recently-constructed Al-Qurien Centre that caters specifically for girls and women). The other 10 centres that have been planned are still in the process of construction.

### **7.11 Islamic Attitudes to Female Sport and Physical Recreation**

Answers to the questions about Islam and female sport and physical recreation were very uncontroversial. A large majority of the participants (96.4%=427) and all the experts (30) believe that Islam is a religion of soul, mind and body. A large majority of the participants (92.1%=408) also agree that Islam does not oppose sport and physical recreation activities for females and, again, all the experts have similar opinions that Islam consents to the participation of females in sport and physical recreation. Several of the experts elaborated about the issue of the relationship between Islam and sport/physical recreation arguing, for example, that problems arise from misunderstandings, especially by fundamentalists who do not recognise the value of the physical, psychological and social roles of sport and recreation in peoples' lives, and how sport can be used to develop positive behaviour and good health. They argue further that there is a need to re-educate Islamists, in particular, about the values of sport and recreation and the sense in which they should not be inconsistent with the principles of Islam.

### **7.12 Sport Policy, Decision-Making, Coaching and Management**

Surprisingly, only about half the participants (50.8%=225) answered that Kuwaiti women do not play a role in sport policy and decision-making, similarly, 51.7% (=229) answered that Kuwaiti women do not play a role in sport coaching and, finally, the similar figure of 53.7% (=238) answered that Kuwaiti women do not get involved in sport management. One would expect that these figures would have been differentiated. Because of the Islamic demands on single-sex activities, it is essential that women are trained to be coaches and teachers if females are going to be involved in sport at all and they are given that opportunity. The Abdullah Al-Salim Training

Centre puts on courses for female as well as male coach and leadership qualifications (See Chapter 5), but in sport management there is a dearth of women, and in sport policy and decision-making, there are no women whatsoever. In their interviews most of the experts (26) were clear that for many reasons decision-makers are men who do not care for females, and that there is no clear policy for women from the decision-makers, and that the government policy pays less attention to sport and physical recreation for women in relation to men. But they also believe that women are not sufficiently organized and do not demand their rights for better opportunities in sport and physical recreation as women in other spheres have done.

It is encouraging that, without exception, the experts say that they believe that women should be involved in the power structures of sport, that they should be in decision-making positions, and that they support the demands of women to do this. But putting such ideas into practise remains a serious problem. It is interesting to note that all the six women 'experts' that were interviewed reflect the gender inequalities in the organisation of sport in Kuwait. None of them are in powerful, decision-making positions able to influence the direction of sport in the country as a whole: most of them were originally qualified as physical education specialists, two of whom work as lecturers in the Basic Education College Education; one is the General Supervisor for Physical Education, overseeing the work and curriculum relating to girls' physical education in schools; one is the Supervisor of Sports activities at the all-female Al Fatat Club; one is the Head of the Section of Female Student Sport at the University of Kuwait; and the last female expert is the Chief of Protocol for the Public Authority for Youth and Sport, ensuring that events are properly managed. Ironically, PAYS is the most significant organisation for the making of policy decisions about the development of sport in the country, and although the last female 'expert' in this study works for PAYS, it is in an administrative and organizing role only. Apart from female-only sports contexts, there is complete domination by men in all the sports organizations, ministries, and clubs and there is huge resistance by most men to the development of equality of opportunity and resourcing for women.

Although Kuwait was a signatory to the Brighton Declaration in 1994 (See Chapter 3) indicating its willingness to work towards gender equity in sport, in the ten years since that time there have been only a minimal number of advances for girls and women.

### **7.13 Conclusion – Looking to the Future**

An open question at the end of the questionnaire enabled the participants to write about barriers that could affect the future of women's participation in sport and recreative activities and then there was space for them to make suggestions for improving sport and recreation they wanted to. It is difficult to analyse the responses about problems for the future because not all the participants answered the question and in general, those who did confirmed the opinions they expressed in the earlier questions. Some of the participants do, however, make specific points that are not mentioned in exactly the same way in responses to earlier questions. For example, the lack of modern equipment in sport clubs, and the lack of encouragement for women especially from men. The Islamic religion is also picked out in different ways as being a problem for the future including a common misunderstanding about Islamic ideas regarding women taking exercise. Related to the question of Islam they also mention customs and tradition, marriage and motherhood, and lack of free time as being deterrents to participation in the future.

The barriers to future participation picked out by the participants are linked to their suggestions about improvements for the future, is linked to past.

Although in a more elaborate way in conversations, the experts made many similar points. In particular they stress the need for firm plans for the development of women's sport and physical recreation and focus on government intervention. Seventeen of the thirty experts stress the need for the government to establish more centres for sport and recreation for females in all districts in Kuwait and argue that the budget for girls and women should be increased. Importantly, they also stress the need for co-operation between establishments such as the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, PAAET, and PAYS regarding the creation of new legislation and policies in order to give more opportunities for Kuwaiti females to be involved in

sport and physical recreation at local through to international levels. They also argue for more co-operation between the public and private sectors in order to create plans and provide financial support.

However, one of the key factors that has emerged from both the questionnaire and the interviews is that there are clear inequalities between men and women in Kuwaiti sport – in particular in terms of a comparative lack of resourcing for girls and women's activities, a lack of expertise for girls' and women's affairs, and no clear policies regarding the development of girls' and women's opportunities, a lack of understanding about the position of Islam regarding influence of Islamic customs and traditions.

Lack of real commitment – discrepancy between support for girls and women and real situation.

Five of the experts are members of the National Assembly who do have the power to persuade their colleagues in parliament to vote for changes that they have declared they believe that women are not outspoken enough about their needs and demands.

# **CHAPTER EIGHT**

## **Looking To the Future: Conclusion and Recommendations**

## **8.0 Introduction**

This project has set out to examine the participation in sport and physical recreation of Kuwaiti females, the barriers that prevent participation, and the opportunities available for participation. Central to the project has been the issue of inequalities in Kuwaiti sport and physical recreation between males and females. At all levels of involvement there are gender inequalities – there are unequal participation rates, unequal resourcing, and unequal representation in organizations and contexts where decisions are made. Alongside education and health infrastructures, sports resources and achievements for all social groups has become one of the general indicators by which the social and cultural levels of any society is measured, and so the situation of unequal gender relations in Kuwaiti sport is unacceptable and needs to be addressed urgently. This chapter highlights and develops some of the main issues that have emerged from the earlier chapters and lays out some recommendations for the future.

### **8.1 Encouragement and Opposition**

Physical education has been a compulsory subject on the curriculum in girls' schools since 1950 and from that time provision has been made for girls and young women to participate in sports and recreation in schools, and also at university, in public and private clubs, and in the local environment. In the early years and through until the present day it has been in the education sector that girls and young women have been given the most systematic opportunities for participation in physical activities, but after they leave high school many young women never take part in these activities again. However, in the mid-1970s there was a really radical development when some previously all-male clubs opened their doors to females for the first time and the all-female Al-Fatat Club focused more on sport (See Chapter 4). The enthusiasm among the girls and young women that joined these clubs was apparent as the membership numbers of the women's sections grew rapidly. Opportunities for competitive sports, in particular, expanded rapidly, and competitions took place in Kuwait against foreign teams. But the success of female sport led to growing opposition and after just five years, the women's sections were closed in 1979. However, this brief period of growth indicates the potential for the development of girls' and women's sport and physical recreation in the future. It also demonstrates that development is not straightforward and without complications and that because men hold the power to

decide what women can and cannot do, and according to what rules, women are dependent on men either to decide to support the development of women's sport and physical recreation or to oppose it.

There has been official encouragement for girls' and women's sport in recent years - in particular since 1993 when the Sport for All Department was set up. The Department of Physical Education in the Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Higher Education responsible for the Physical Education Departments in both Kuwait University and the Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and the Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYA - responsible for the Sport for All Department) all have a responsibility for, and encourage, Kuwaiti females to participate in sport and recreation. But several of the experts that were interviewed for this research argue that their needs to be much better resourcing and also better communication between the different government bodies. But in the case of physical education, for example, negative practises have not been stopped by the authorities - for example, Physical Education and sports at schools, colleges and the university are considered to be less important than other subjects in the curriculum (for example, Arabic, Mathematics and English). This is apparent in several ways:

1. Less time is allocated to the later years of schooling: by the fourth year of elementary school (10 years old) there is a reduction from three to two lessons per week, after the second year of high school (16 years) a further reduction occurs when one lesson per week becomes the norm.
2. Physical Education lessons are removed from the programme towards the end of the school year in order to create more time for other subjects to be examined
3. Many teachers are happy if PE lessons are cancelled and clearly dislike teaching the subject
4. There has been a cut in the budget so that *female* students from the colleges and the university no longer have opportunity to take part in competitions outside Kuwait and can no longer participate in the World Student Games
5. Some sport grounds at Kuwait University have been changed into parking areas

In the data that was gathered from both the questionnaire participants and the experts who were interviewed, it is clear that girls and young women often find themselves in a contradictory position. They are encouraged to take part in sport and physical recreation in official statements and by some individuals, but in practise, they are very aware that males have far better opportunities than females. A feature of this contradictory position that girls and young women are in relates to traditional ideas about Islam, and, specifically to ideas about female exercise.

## **8.2 The Role of Islam in Sport and Physical Recreation Activities for Women**

Many Islamic nations, including Kuwait, now officially recognise that sport and exercise are beneficial to health and that both men and women should be encouraged to take part. However, as was pointed out by both the questionnaire participants and the experts, there is misrepresentation of, and misunderstanding about, the positive position in Islamic thinking about the importance of exercise for all members of society – women as well as men. But the solution is not simply to do with providing more facilities in Islamic contexts where Muslim women can go to the gymnasium or play a sport in an all-female setting, or that Muslim women should take care about the way they dress in public situations with regard to modesty (Tabtabai, Interview 2002). A major problem relates to the traditional values placed on women in family situations once they get married. It is interesting to note that when the younger (unmarried) participants answered the questions about family commitments and marriage, they indicated that they are not affected, but they saw family commitments and marriage as problems for the future. It is also the case that those participants who are divorced or widowed indicate that they have, in general, more free time and can take part in different activities if they want to. It has been discussed earlier that there is a need for girls and young women to be educated about the values of sport and physical recreation, but on its own this would not be a solution, either. In many families the male head of the family strictly controls his wife's and daughters' use of free time and the types of activities they choose to do, and it is still a popular idea among men in particular that sport is not suitable for Muslim women. The argument here is that education programmes about the values of exercise should be aimed at the male population as well as the female population.



It is also the case that since the end of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the influence of conservative Muslims has become stronger and so girls and young women very often experience a clash between what *they* want and what their parents or husbands expect. It is commonplace that girls are very cautious about what they do and it is clear that many of them are very much influenced by conventional thinking. For example, it was outlined in the previous chapter that girls are increasingly wary about playing sport outside the closed context of their school and so, no matter how good they are at sport, they appear to have no aspirations to compete at a higher level involving travel to other countries. This may seem surprising since many older Kuwaiti females travel freely around the world and are influenced by western values in other aspects of culture, such as fashion and music, as well as exercise for fitness. The issue of control is more relevant to younger females, in particular those of teenage years, when parents are especially concerned about their daughters' reputations. From the age of 18 years, some young Kuwaiti women travel on their own to study in other countries such as the USA. It is another example of the complexities of the issue of female participation in sport and physical recreation and the way in which girls and young women's lives can be influenced by conflicting ideas.

### **8.3 Greater Expectations, Continuing Conflicts**

Another important factor that influences girls and young women's interest and involvement in sport and physical recreation is the concern of parents and young women themselves to achieve good qualifications at high school so that they can go on to study at university, and then go on to secure well-paid work. If women work for 15 years, the government guarantees financial support for them after they retire, and they can still work in the private sector if they wish. Independence at work is an increasingly popular aspiration for females. There are a notable number of exceptional Kuwaiti women who have achieved very high positions in recent years – for example, the first woman from all Arabian countries to become a Director of a university (Kuwait University) is Professor Faieza Al-Khorafi; Professor Rasha Al-Sabah (a member of the royal family) is the Deputy Minister of Higher Education; and Nabila Al-Mula is the Kuwaiti Ambassador at the United Nations. Other Kuwaiti women are Deputy Ministers in different government departments, and there are a large number of highly successful women in top positions in business. In line with

these developments, there is a growing number of women who are getting qualifications in sport and physical education, many of whom travel to other countries to do so – for example, Australia, Canada, England, Northern Ireland, and the USA, as well as other Arabian countries. There is a small, but growing, group of women now who have greater knowledge than ever before about the values of sport and physical recreation, as well as the skills and qualifications for teaching and lecturing, sport management, coaching, community work, and sport development etc., but there is also growing frustration among them that the powerfully patriarchal character of Kuwaiti sport excludes them from the decision-making processes about the future of sport and physical recreation for girls and young women and prevents them from working at the higher levels of sport administration or in important positions in sport organizations etc. There is a feeling that sport is ‘especially for men and not for women’. But as we have discussed above, there are some men who do support the development of girls and women’s sport - for example, the issue of women being used to vote men into key positions in sport organizations but not being allowed to play a role in these organizations themselves (see Chapter 4) is now being challenged by the Director of the Authority of Sport Affairs in the Public Authority for Youth and Sport. He has asked PAYS to take control and to change this rule so that women can become members of the all-male clubs again, in which case he will then support women voting for members<sup>1</sup> (Al-Watan Newspaper, 28-3-03; See Recommendations).

This research project has demonstrated clearly that girls and women are constantly in a position of conflict – between the very traditional influences in the country and more liberal ideas about women’s involvement in all kinds of physical activities.

We have seen that although Kuwaiti women have openings in other areas of work and culture, they have no hope at present of being integral to the way that sport and physical recreation develop. Although there is an active feminist movement in Kuwait members of which lobby the National Assembly, hold meetings, write

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<sup>1</sup> To my knowledge, the suggestion of Ahmed Ayesh Al-Salmin, the Director of PAYS, to change the voting and membership arrangements of all-male sports clubs, has not been resolved.

articles, initiate press campaigns etc (Al-Mughni 2001), there is only a handful of active sport feminists (around 20 in number), all of whom work in the education sector, who are struggling to improve the situation concerning sport and physical recreation for all girls and women throughout Kuwaiti society. In spite of the fact that these women do bring their problems to the attention of those men who are in positions of authority and power in the fields of physical education, sport, and physical recreation, it is clear that they are not making a sufficient impact because one of the issues that came out clearly from the questionnaire and interview data is that women in general are not making their voices heard, are not making loud enough demands. History shows that when women group together in organizations, they can become stronger in their struggles for equality – a development that could help the sports feminists in Kuwait. It is also the case that the ‘mainstream’ feminist movement has not addressed the problems and inequalities faced by females in different physical activities. Even in countries in the west where there have been well-organized and quite successful sport feminist organizations since the 1970s (Hargreaves 2004), there has been very little co-ordination between these organizations and the mainstream feminist movements. A liaison between sport-specific and mainstream feminists in Kuwait would undoubtedly strengthen the efforts to improve the position of Kuwaiti females in sport and physical recreation.

#### **8.4 Hopes and Expectations for the Future**

The majority of Kuwaiti females from all districts state that they would like to practise sport and physical recreation activities in the future. But it is clear from the evidence that the way forward is full of complexities. As we have seen, an important finding from the research is that some girls and young women, as well as older and more experienced ‘experts’ in the field, believe that Kuwaiti females are not demanding enough about when they need and want in relation to sport and physical recreation and that there should be more encouragement through the media to propagate the importance of sport and physical recreation activities for the whole of society. But even if girls and women do become more knowledgeable and do shout louder about what they want, it does not necessarily follow that radical changes will be made to improve the opportunities for them. Kuwaiti society is an Islamic society in which the gender relations of power are very unequal and the way forward in the

immediate future rests almost entirely with men. If this thesis is read by those men who are in the powerful decision-making positions in sport, it is hoped that it will influence them to make the changes that women want and need. Most importantly, future plans and policies for girls and women's sport and physical recreation in Kuwait rest with those men who are members of the National Assembly. This thesis is an attempt to break the pattern of silence and non-intervention about women's role in sport and physical recreation, and it provides a link between information and ideas, and practise. In other words, it is an important basis for the following recommendations for change.

**Recommendations:  
Looking to the Future**

A major driving force for this thesis during the past three years has been to provide evidence to argue for changes in the future, and the following recommendations have been drawn up as a result of the findings of the research. However, the research project is in no way comprehensive, although it is the very first study of its kind and is therefore a good starting point for further discussion and negotiations. But the questionnaire participants for this project were drawn from high schools, or were PE students, or women who were members of sports or fitness clubs. In other words, they are all *active participants* in sport or physical recreation and, except for the high school pupils who have one compulsory session of physical education each week, have chosen freely to play team sports, or do PE as their major, or go to the fitness gym etc. What this research does not tell us is why other women choose not to take part in physical activities. One of the recommendations, therefore, is that further research should be carried out, precisely in order to find out more about those girls and women who are not interested in sport and physical recreation and who do no exercise after they leave school or college or university.

The recommendations arising from the research are listed below. They are not in any order of priority:

### **8.5 Focusing on Sport in Education**

It is recommended that the officers in charge of improving education processes should play far greater attention to the role of physical education in the curriculum of the school *at all stages*. It is argued here that the **Ministry of Education** has a responsibility to help children to develop an interest in, and knowledge about, physical activity, which is essential for healthy development. The physical education curriculum should help children to develop respect for their own bodies and those of others, should introduce children to a wide vocabulary of movement, and should help children to establish regular patterns of participation in order to lay the foundations for adult healthy lifestyles. Physical education is the only comprehensive way of providing all children and young people (from the kindergarten to high school) with skills and knowledge for life-long participation in sport and physical recreation activities. The importance of paying attention to the physical education curriculum of

girls in particular, and ensuring that boys and girls in all schools have equality of resourcing is also an essential recommendation.

It is also recommended that the **Ministry of Higher Education** through the Departments of Physical Education at **Kuwait University** and the **Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET)** should assist in developing an understanding of the role of physical activity in promoting health among all the students. The benefits of healthy lifestyles to other aspects of life and work should be integral to the college and university programmes, and a wide variety of extra-curricular sport and regular physical recreation opportunities should be provided and publicized widely among the student body (eg on notice-boards across the campus and through the students unions). More facilities should be provided, the present ones should be up-graded, and those that have been removed for car parking should be re-established. Resources for female students should be of an equal standard to those of the male students, and female students should be encouraged to take part in competitive sport as well as physical recreation activities. There should be coaching support and funding for female teams to compete in competitions in Kuwait and in foreign countries. The opportunities and funding for female teams should be equivalent to the opportunities and funding for male teams. Provision should be made for family guardians (muhram - father or brother or husband) to accompany members of female's teams when travelling outside Kuwait

#### **8.6 Organizations and Sport and Recreation Development for Females**

The **Public Authority for Youth and Sport (PAYS)** should address the inequalities in resourcing between males and females across Kuwait. For example, at present there are 14 clubs for men and only one (Al Fatat) for females. It is recommended that Al-Fatat Sports Club branches should be opened in all the six governorates and that the facilities should be up-graded in the existing club. It is also recommended that in the meantime the existing male clubs should (re-) open female sections and give women full membership and voting powers (Al-Watan Newspaper, 28-3-03). The construction programme for Women's Sports Centres (in addition to the Al-Qurien Centre) should be completed on schedule by the end of 2004, and then plans

should be drawn up for further all-female centres until there are a similar number to the male centres in the country.

All the divisions of PAYS (including the Sport for All Department and the various committees) should have female members with full voting rights, and a special Committee for Women's Sport should be set up which should include no fewer than 20% of female members with the intention of increasing the numbers to no fewer than 50% of female members within the next five years.

It is recommended that there should be co-ordination of and co-operation between the different government organizations that have some responsibility for girls' and women's sport and physical recreation - such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, PAAET, PAYS, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Information and Communications, and the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) - in order to boost the participation of women in sport and physical recreation. Meetings should be held with representatives from each of these organizations, fully worked out policies and plans should be constructed, and decisions implemented and put into practise in order to:

- Set up introductory courses for different sports and physical recreation activities at weekends and during holidays for girls and young women, to be located in each of the governorates and in different locations, including schools, colleges, the university, clubs, sports centres, and outdoor locations.
- Organize evening and weekend coaching courses at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels in different sports for young women from different backgrounds (not just Physical Education students) who would like to be coaches during their free time
- Co-ordinate the relationship between schools and recreation institutions such as youth centres for girls and sports clubs, so they benefit from the experiences and capabilities provided by each of these institutions
- Increase the opportunities for female competitive sport and raise the budget for elite female sport



- Increase the number of tournaments for various sports in order to encourage and increase female students' interest in sports and recreational activities

In addition, there are many private sector organizations, such as businesses and banking associations that can provide financing for new facilities, equipment, travel expenses, the training of more coaches etc, and, importantly, the co-operative society that since the 1960s has supported community projects, is also a possible sponsor. It is recommended that these organizations, as well as some individual wealthy people, should be encouraged to provide resources for girls' and women's sport and physical recreation – in particular the provision of new centres (in a similar way to their resourcing of new mosques and wedding halls etc). It is also recommended that representatives from these organizations join the co-ordinated meetings of the government organizations, described above, so that co-operation between the public and private sectors is established and developed.

### **8.7 Focusing on Indoor Facilities**

Evidence from the questionnaire participants of this project supports the findings of existing research (Behbbehani 1992; Hashem 1997) confirming that by far the most popular place among females for taking exercise is in the home – major reasons are because of the harsh weather conditions and for privacy. It is therefore recommended that when building new houses, thought must go into the provision of sport facilities such as a private room with sport equipment and/or a swimming pool, to replace the existing practise of building many rooms for visitors, which are rarely used.

It is also recommended that all government and private sector funders pay special attention to the provision of indoor places so that more women in Kuwait will be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation. For example, there is a shortage of swimming pools, which many people see as an ideal way of gaining and retaining fitness. At present there are six pools that are up to Olympic standard, however, they are outdoor pools and not under cover. Open-air pools are limited in their use because of dust storms, winds and even the cold weather, and there are only a few indoor pools, which are situated in educational or government institutions and are not

available to the public. Also, a number of schools have been built without a gymnasium and sometimes are not even equipped with air conditioning. It has also been found that the Touristic Enterprises Company (TEC) has a shortage of indoor recreation centres. It is therefore highly recommended that, in order to avoid the problems generated by adverse environmental conditions, priority be given to the construction of indoor/covered facilities.

### **8.8 Role of Islam in Sport and Physical Recreation Activities for Women**

It is recommended that links are forged between scholars and teachers of Islam (such as the Head of the Supreme Consultative for the Completion of the Implementation of the Islamic Sharia Rules, and the Dean of the Faculty of Sharia<sup>2</sup> and personnel and professionals in the fields of physical education, sport, and physical recreation. It is also recommended that the **Ministry of Religious Endowments**, the government ministry responsible for the practise of Islamic philosophy and principles throughout Kuwaiti society, should play a larger role in directing Muslim women to participate in sport and physical recreation activities. It should co-operate with the sports bodies and committees to positively enhance women's sport under the umbrella of Islamic regulations and acceptable social traditions. During these processes, the Ministry of Religious Endowments should aim to correct the misunderstandings about girls and young women taking part in sport and physical recreation that are at present prevalent in Kuwait.

The following recommendations are offered to help create an atmosphere that would encourage girls and women to feel emotionally and physically safe while taking part in sports and other physical activities under the Islamic rules:

1. Encourage the participation of women in sport and physical recreation activities locally and nationally by providing an allowance for the expenses of female athletes' muhram so that they can be accompanied while travelling to foreign countries (see above).

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<sup>2</sup> Dr.Khaled Al Mathkor and Dr.Mohammed Altabtabai,

2. Increase the importance of sport and physical recreation activities for women through lectures and seminars that should be held monthly, in the annexe area of one mosque in each governorate.
3. The weekly speech that occurs every Friday in the mosques should draw to light, in the prayers, the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities.
4. Muslim parents, teachers, community leaders and the Ulama should educate and advise children and youth regarding participation, spectating and involvement in sport.
5. Muslim newspapers, newsletters and other print media need to constantly publish literature in order to educate the Muslim public about Islam and sport.
6. Islamic institutions (such as the Social Reformation Society) should encourage girls and women to participate in physical activities.

### **8.9 Sport Policy, Decision-Making, Management and Coaching**

It is recommended that the National Assembly and other government organizations should give women the chance to be involved in sport policies and decision-making. It is important that women are involved in decisions made about sport and recreation in general and in particular for all decisions that are made about girls' and women's participation. A growing number of female professors in universities, colleges and schools in Kuwait have studied in Islamic and non-Islamic countries in the west and are qualified sports scientists and physical education and recreation specialists. It is recommended that they should be involved in the decision-making procedures, in some cases as full members of organizations and committees, and when appropriate as consultants. A related recommendation is that more management positions should be created specifically for women – as mentioned above, there are increasing numbers of women who hold specialist qualifications (some at doctoral level) in various aspects of sport sciences, including sport psychology, sport physiology, bio-mechanics, and sport sociology who are well-qualified to take senior positions in sport management.

Many female students want to be PE teachers but there are not enough college places, therefore it is recommended that the Physical Education Department in the Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET) should increase funding and capacity in order to fulfil this shortage. There would then be more graduates who would be well-qualified coaches. It is also recommended that more coaching courses for females are organized by the Abdullah Al-Salim Training Centre (see Chapter 5) in equal numbers to the courses provided for male sport. In addition, it is recommended that the government of the State of Kuwait should authorize the private sector to establish colleges for students who want to specialize in Sport and Physical Education.

### **8.10 Raising Awareness**

Television viewing in Kuwait is the most popular means of media usage and could be used effectively to encourage people to take part in sport and physical recreation. It is therefore recommended that the **Ministry of Information and Communication** should include on Channel 4 more documentary programmes about fitness, health, sport, and physical recreation and should ensure that the importance of these activities to girls and young women should be included. Similarly, it is recommended that the print media regularly transmit ideas about the values of sport, especially to females, through feature articles and through coverage of events. At present, the media's main coverage of sport concentrates on competition rather than on the educational values inherent in sport and recreation. It is recommended that this pattern is changed to include educational programmes more regularly. During the past years, TEC has presented a weekly programme about forthcoming activities in the company. It is recommended that in addition to TEC information, other information about different programmes and events is regularly included as well and that always female events are covered. In summary, it is recommended that the media to positively portray and significantly cover the breadth, depth, quality and benefits of girls and women's involvement in sport and physical recreation.

### **8.11 Organizing Women for Action**

A few of the questionnaire participants and several of the experts that were interviewed argue that women do not make enough demands about what they want and need and this observation has been mentioned several times already in this thesis. It is clearly very important that the women who are especially interested in the development of sport and physical recreation for all Kuwaiti females make their voices heard. It is therefore highly recommended that these women get together and form a feminist sports organisation with the specific aim of improving the opportunities and levels of participation in sport and physical recreation for Kuwaiti females and moving towards equality of opportunity with men in these areas. The creation of a mission statement and aims and objectives would be a first step, and deciding about strategies for action would come next. It is suggested that the membership of this organisation should be open to all women who are interested – those who are sports scientists and highly qualified in the field, as well as those who are interested in participation. The organisation could follow a similar pattern to the successful female organizations in other countries, such as Norway, the UK, and the USA (Edwards and Hargreaves 2001). Making links with mainstream feminist organizations in Kuwait, in particular in relation to women's health, would be an important consideration, as would making links with the women's international sports movement (Hargreaves 2000: pp.215-233).

The final recommendation is that another research project about girls' and women's sport and physical recreation should be carried out as soon as possible. The participants in this study fall into two categories: firstly, girls and women who already actively participate in different sports and physical activities; and, secondly, experts who are involved through their work in the field or are in decision-making positions. It would be interesting and very important to set up a research project in the future in order to seek the opinions of girls and women who are disinterested in, or unable to take part in, sport and physical recreation. It would be very important to ensure that a wider sample would be included in the next project in order to incorporate girls and women from different social and educational etc backgrounds (See below). The previous recommendations are suggested in order to increase female participation and to move towards greater equality with men – it is clearly vitally important to find out

the opinions of those girls and women who are non-participants in order to find out the reasons why.

## **8.12 Conclusion**

*Struggling for a Right: Islam and the Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation of Girls and Women in Kuwait* is the first research project on this topic that has ever been carried out. It is therefore introductory, setting the scene for future projects and making recommendations for the future of female participation as well. Data has been collected and collated about participation, barriers and opportunities and, not surprisingly, gender inequalities have emerged as centrally important. The 'call for action' laid out in the recommendation is addressed to all men and women in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait – those in government organizations, public authorities, development and management agencies, educational institutions, businesses, educational research institutions and women's organizations etc.. In other words, all those who are responsible for, or who directly influence the conduct, development or promotion of sport and physical recreation activities for girls and women. Most importantly, it is hoped that members of the National Assembly who have an interest in sport and physical recreation in general, will have access to this thesis and will support the recommendations for girls and women laid out in it. No significant changes can take place without the endorsement of the National Assembly and there are still no female members and so women have no direct voice.

But for sport and physical recreation to enrich the lives of more and more girls and women, it is vital that they are all given a voice - girls from elementary and intermediate schools as well as high school pupils; young women; older women; those who are disabled as well as the able-bodied; those who are keen to become elite competitors, as well as those who want to take part for health and social reason; those who are educated as well as those who have had little education; and women from different Muslim backgrounds and who live in different areas. In summary, it is hoped that in the future Kuwaiti girls and women will be allowed and encouraged to play a meaningful and visible role in sport and physical recreation at all levels.

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**APPENDIX (1)**  
**THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**Brunel University**  
**Department of Sport Sciences**

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
**The Public Authority for Applied**  
**Education and Training**  
**College of Basic Education**  
**Department of Physical**  
**Education and Sports**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**To Investigate The Opinion Of Kuwaiti Females Regarding Sports  
And Physical Recreation In The State Of Kuwait**

**GHANEEMAH M. OTHMAN AL-HAIDAR**  
**MAY - 2002**



## Questions

TICK IF APPROPRIATE (✓)

NO.	QUESTIONS	Regularly (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
1	Do you have daily free time for sport and physical recreation? If your answer is Regularly.			
2	How many hours (weekend) .....			
3	Where do you practice if you have free time for sport?			
	3-1 At Home			
	3-2 Club			
	3-3 In the neighbourhood			
	3-4 At the beach			
	3-5 Resort			
	3-6 In Educational Centres			
	3-7 In youth clubs			
	3-8 In the park			
	3-9 In the shopping mall			
	3-10 Others specify: .....			
	.....			

NO.	QUESTIONS	Regularly (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
4	Do you practice sports and recreation activities alone?			
5	Do you take part in team sport?			
6	Which sports/activities do you practice regularly?			
	6-1 Walking			
	6-2 Aerobics			
	6-3 Exercise by equipment			
	6-4 Basketball			
	6-5 Cycling			
	6-6 Gymnastics			
	6-7 Handball			
	6-8 Horse riding			
	6-9 Skating			
	6-10 Jogging			
	6-11 Karate			
	6-12 Squash			
	6-13 Swimming			
	6-14 Tennis			
	6-15 Table Tennis			
	6-16 Volley Ball			
	6-17 Tracks and field			
6-18 Other types: .....				

NO.	QUESTIONS	Regularly (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
7	<p>Do you think you will practice any sport and physical recreation activities in the future?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If the answer is (yes) which type / kind of sport and physical recreation activities you will practice?..... .....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If your answer (Maybe) or (No), please specify why? ..... .....</p>			
8	<p>Have you ever taken part in competitive sport? If your answer Yes / what is the level of competition?</p> <p>8-1 Local</p>			
	8-2 Gulf area			
	8-3 Arabic country			
	8-4 International			

S No	QUESTIONS	Highly Applicable (3)	Moderately Applicable (2)	Not Applicable (1)
9	<p>What are the main barriers that prevent you from participation in sports and physical recreation activities.</p> <p>9-1 Family crisis</p> <p>9-2 Injury</p> <p>9-3 Health Problems</p> <p>9-4 Aging</p> <p>9-5 Poor facilities in your home area.</p> <p>9-6 Financial reasons</p> <p>9-7 Weather conditions</p> <p>9-8 Groups breaking up / leaving</p> <p>9-9 Family commitments</p> <p>9-10 Work duties</p> <p>9-11 Customs and traditions</p> <p>9-12 Marriage</p> <p>9-13 Others / Please specify:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			



No	QUESTIONS	Yes (3)	To some Extent (2)	No (1)
10	Are you happy with the opportunity available for girls and women in sport and physical recreation?			
11	Do you think that Kuwaiti society knows enough about the benefits of sport and physical recreation activities? If the answer is (to some extent) or (no). Specify the reasons: ..... ..... .....			
12	Do girls and women fully understand the benefits of sports and physical recreation?			
13	Do you know any programmes about girls and women in sport and recreation, please specify?..... ..... .....			
14	Does the Public Authority of Youth and Sport seek to improve sport and recreation for girls and women?			
15	Are there enough sports and recreation centres that care for girls and women in Kuwait?			
16	Are there sufficient staff in the sports and recreation centres that care for the needs of girls and women?			

No	QUESTIONS	Yes (3)	To some Extent (2)	No (1)
17	Do you believe that Islam is a religion of soul, mind and body?			
18	Does Islam oppose sports and physical recreation for women?			
19	Do Kuwaiti women play a part in sport policy and decision-making?			
20	Do Kuwaiti women play a role in sport coaching?			
21	Are Kuwaiti women involved in sport management?			
22	Are you aware of the present rules concerning sport and physical recreation for women?			
23	Do you think that the present rules and regulations encourage women's participation in sports and recreation?			
24	Do organisations encourage women to take a part in the sport competitions locally and internationally?			
25	Are there financial rewards given to women in sport competitions?			
26	<p>Are there any barriers that affect the future of women's participation in sport and recreation?            If your answer is yes mention these barriers?</p> <p>.....            .....            .....</p>			

Please make any additional comments about the position of girls and women in sport and physical recreation in Kuwait.

Thank you for cooperation.

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**RESEARCHER: GHANEEMAH M. OTHMAN AL-HAIDAR**

**QUESTIONNAIARE IN  
ARABIC**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

UNITED KINGDOM  
UNIVERSITY OF BRUNEL

دولة الكويت  
الهيئة العامة للتعليم التطبيقي والتدريب

رقم الاستبانة

## إستبانة

لاستطلاع آراء الفتيات والسيدات بدولة الكويت عن واقع الرياضة  
والتربية الترويحية

أعداد

الباحثة / غنيمه محمد العثمان الحيدر

ابريل 2002

أختي الفاضلة :

=====

هذه الاستبانة تهدف إلى استطلاع الرأي عن واقع الرياضة والتربية الترويحية للفتيات والسيدات بدولة الكويت . الرجاء القراءة بتمعن ودقة وموضوعية علما بأن إجاباتك ستكون عزيمة النفع في مساعدتي على استكمال البحث وستستخدم النتائج لمنفعتك مع خالص الشكر والتقدير لتعاونك .  
علما بأن جميع البيانات خاضعة للسرية التامة .

### بيانات عامة

ضع علامة ( ✓ ) أمام العبارة المناسبة لحالتك :

● المحافظة : (1) العاصمة (2) حولي (3) الفروانية  
(4) الأحمدية (5) الجهراء (6) مبارك الكبير

● المجيبة على الاستبانة :

(1) طالبة في المرحلة الثانوية (2) طالبة في التربية الاساسيه/تربية رياضية  
(3) عضوة في نادي حكومي ( نادي الفتاة ) (4) عضوة في نادي خاص

● العمر : (1) 17-20 سنة (2) 21-30 (3) 31-40

(4) 41-50 (5) 51 وما فوق

● الحالة الاجتماعية : (1) أنسه (2) متزوجة

(3) مطلقه (4) أرمله

● المستوى التعليمي : (1) غير متعلم (2) ابتدائي (3) متوسط

(4) ثانوي (5) دبلوم (6) بكالوريوس

(7) ماجستير (8) دكتوراه

● الوظيفة التي تشغلها : (1) طالبة (2) ربة منزل (3) قطاع حكومي

(4) قطاع خاص (5) متقاعدة (6) وظيفة أخرى: أنكريها .....

## الأسئلة

ضع علامة (✓) في الخانة المناسبة لإجابتك .  
كما يرجى الإجابة على الأسئلة المفتوحة .

م	العـبارة	يانتظام (3)	أحيانا (2)	لا أمارس (1)
1	هل لديك يوميا وقت فراغ لمزاولة الرياضة والترويح البدني؟			
2	كم عدد ساعات وقت الفراغ في الأسبوع .....			
3	أين تمارسين الرياضة إذا كان لديك وقت فراغ ؟			
	(3-1) المنزل			
	(3-2) النادي			
	(3-3) الحي			
	(3-4) البحر			
	(3-5) الشاليه			
	(3-6) المؤسسات التربوية			
	(3-7) مراكز الشباب			
	(3-8) الحدائق			
	(3-9) مراكز التسوق			
	(3-10) أماكن أخرى اذكرها : .....			
4	هل تمارسين النشاط الرياضي والترويحي بمفردك ؟			
5	هل تمارسين النشاط الرياضي والترويحي مع مجموعة ؟			

م	العـــــــــبارة	بانتظام (3)	أحيانا (2)	لا أمارس (1)
6	أذكرى نوع الرياضة التي تمارسها : (6-1) السير على الأقدام ( المشي )			
	(6-2) تمرينات سويديه			
	(6-3) تمرينات على الاجهزة الرياضية			
	(6-4) كرة سلة			
	(6-5) ركوب الدراجة			
	(6-6) جمباز			
	(6-7) كرة اليد			
	(6-8) ركوب الخيل			
	(6-9) تزلق على الجليد			
	(6-10) الجري			
	(6-11) كاراتية			
	(6-12) كرة ريشة			
	(6-13) سباحة			
	(6-14) كرة مضرب			
	(6-15) كرة طاولة			
	(6-16) كرة طائره			
	(6-17) ألعاب قوى			
	(6-18) ألعاب أخرى أنكرها .....			



م	العبارة	نعم (3)	أحيانا (2)	لا (1)
7	هل تفكرين في ممارسة الرياضة والترويح في المستقبل؟			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• إذا كانت إجابتك (نعم) أي نوع من الرياضة والترويح ستمارسين؟ .....</li> <li>• إذا إجابتك (أحيانا أو لا) أرجو ذكر الأسباب: .....</li> </ul>			
8	هل شاركت في منافسات رياضية:			
	(8-1) محليا			
	(8-2) خليجيا			
	(8-3) مشاركات عربية			
	(8-4) مشاركات عالمية			
9	درجة إنطباق الصعوبات عليك			
	لا تتطبق (1)	درجة متوسطة (2)	درجة كبيرة (3)	
	ما هي الصعوبات التي تجعلك لا تمارسين الأنشطة الرياضية و الترويح:			
	(9-1) ظروف عائلية			
	(9-2) إصابه			
	(9-3) مشاكل صحية			
	(9-4) كبر السن			
	(9-5) قلة الإمكانيات الرياضية في منطقتك			
(9-6) أسباب مالية				

درجة إنطباق الصعوبات عليك			العبارة	م
لا تنطبق (1)	بدرجة متوسطة (2)	بدرجة كبيرة (3)		
			(9-7) حاله الجو	تابع 9
			(9-8) عدم وجود زميلات	
			(9-9) التزامات عائلية	
			(9-10) الانشغال بالعمل الوظيفي	
			(9-11) العادات والتقاليد	
			(9-12) الزواج	
			(9-13) أسباب أخرى انكريها: -----	
لا (1)	بلى حد ما (2)	نعم (3)		
			هل أنت راضيه للفرص المتاحة لك في المجال الرياضي والترويحي بدولة الكويت ؟	10
			هل تعتقد أن المجتمع الكويتي يعرف الكفاية عن فوائد الأنشطة الرياضية والترويحية؟ إذا كانت إجابتك إلي حد ما أو لا فإنكري الأسباب:.....	11
			هل الفتيات والسيدات مدركات فوائد الرياضة والتروييح ؟	12
			هل لديك فكره عن البرامج الرياضية والترويحية الخاصة للفتيات والسيدات في المجتمع الكويتي ؟ الرجاء أنكريها:.....	13
			هل الهيئة العامة للشباب والرياضة تسعى لإثبات أهمية الرياضة والتروييح للفتيات والسيدات ؟	14
			هل هناك كفاية في المراكز الرياضية والترويحية للفتيات والسيدات ؟	15
			هل هناك عدد كافي من الأعضاء العاملين في المراكز الرياضية والترويحية التي تهتم بالفتيات والسيدات ؟	16
			هل تعتقد أن الإسلام دين روح وعقل وجسد؟	17
			هل يعارض الإسلام ممارسة الرياضة والتروييح ؟	18

م	العبارة	نعم (3)	إلى حد ما (2)	لا (1)
19	هل للمرأة دور في اتخاذ القرار في الرياضة والترويج حاليا في دولة الكويت ؟			
20	هل للمرأة الكويتية دور فعال في التدريب الرياضي ؟			
21	هل المرأة الكويتية لها دور في الإدارة الرياضية؟			
22	هل أنت مدركة للقوانين الحالية لممارسة الرياضة والترويج ؟			
23	هل القوانين الحالية للأنظمة الرياضية تشجع المرأة في مزاولة الرياضة والترويج ؟			
24	هل تشجع المؤسسات الحكومية المرأة على المشاركة في الرياضة محليا وعالميا؟			
25	هل هناك حافز مادي يعطي للمرأة في المشاركة الرياضية والترويجية في دولة الكويت ؟			
26	هل توجد عقبات تؤثر على المرأة في المشاركة في الرياضة والترويج مستقبلا ؟ إذا كانت إجابتك بنعم ، الرجاء ذكر العقبات :			

أختي الفاضلة إذا كان لديك إضافة عن أي شيء يتعلق بالرياضة و الترويج الرجاء ذكره مع خالص تحياتي لكم.

وشكرا جزيلاً لتعاونكم.

الباحثة  
غنيمة محمد العثمان الحيدر

## **APPENDIX (2)**

### **(A) List of Experts**

### **(B) List of Other Interview Participants (Face To Face And Telephone Conversation)**

## **(A) List of Experts:**

1. Mr. Abdul Hameed A. Hajjy  
Major General retired, Kuwait National Assembly, Kuwait
2. Mr. Abdul Wahed K. Al-Dawood  
Director of Abdullah Al-Salem Center for Leadership Training  
Public Authority for Youth and Sports
3. Mr. Adel Ben Nekhy  
Director of the Kuwait Olympic Committee
4. Mr. Adil Al-Failakawi  
Sport Honourable Law College  
University of Kuwait
5. Dr. Ahmad Abu Al-Layl  
Head of Department of Physical Education, College of Basic Education, The  
Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait
6. Mr. Ahmad Ayesh Al-Salmin  
Manager sport Association Department,  
Public Authority for Youth and Sports
7. Mr. Ali Shuaib  
Director of Sporting Activities Department  
University of Kuwait
8. Mr. Ayad Salem  
Senior Supervisor for Physical Education,  
Ministry of Education, Kuwait
9. Dr. Bedour A Al-Mutawa  
Associate Professor, Physical Education Department at the College of Basic  
Education, The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait
10. Dr. Dawood M. Al-Saleh  
Governor of Capital, Member of Kuwait National Assembly, Kuwait
11. Dr. Ebraheem D. Al-Sabah  
Governor of Al-Farwaniyah, Member of Kuwait National Assembly, Kuwait

12. Mr. Fahed Abdallah Al-Kanan  
Director of Co-Workers Club, The Public Authority for Applied  
Education and Training, Kuwait
13. Dr. Fauad Al Falah  
Member of Administrative Board  
Kuwait Olympic Committee
14. Mr. Fetouh Bouftain  
Chief of Protocol  
Public Authority for Youth and Sports
15. Dr. Jaseem Al Jemaz  
Consultant in the UNISCO, Ministry of Education, Kuwait
16. Dr. Jawad S. Khalaf  
Head of Womens Committee  
Kuwait Olympic Committee
17. Dr. Khalifa Taleb Bahbehani  
Department of Physical Education, College of Basic Education, Kuwait
18. Mr. Meshal Al-Hadpah  
Manager, Sport for Al-Salem Centre for Leadership Training, Public  
Authority for Youth and Sports
19. Ms. Mona Al-Hashash  
General Supervisor for Physical Education, Ministry of Education, Kuwait
20. Mr. Naser A Al-Ayyar  
Member in the Administrative Board, Kuwait
21. Mr. Naser Al-Dubebi  
Sport Honorable University of Kuwait
22. Dr. Naser J. Al-Sane  
Chairman Scout, Union for Arab Parliamentarians, Member of Kuwait  
National Assembly, Kuwait

23. Ms. Nawal D. Al-Badr  
Sport Supervisor Activities Public Authority for Youth and Sports  
Al-Fatah Club
24. Dr. Rabah M Al Najadah  
Associated Professor of the College of Basic Education, PAAET, Kuwait
25. Saleh Ahmad A Shour  
Member of the National Assembly, Kuwait National Assembly, Kuwait
26. Talal Fahad Al Ahmad Al Sabah  
Deputy Chairman / Deputy Director General,  
Public Authority for Youth and Sports
27. Yacoub Al-Najam  
Secretary of Technical Commission  
Kuwait Basketball Association  
Kuwait Olympic Committee
28. Yaqoub Ramadhan  
Member in the Administrative Board,  
Kuwait Olympic Committee
29. Yasmeeen Al-Ahmad  
Head Section of Girls Sports  
University of Kuwait
30. Yousef Al-Qadher  
Supervisor for Physical Education, Ministry of Education, Kuwait

## **List of Other Interview Participants**

**Dr. Adel M. Elnashar, professor of Sport Management. Department of physical Education collage of Education, University of Bahrain.**

**Dr. Anisa al-Hitmi, Chairman of the Qatari Women's Sports Committee**

**Dr. Anita White, Head of Development English Sports Council; Member of International Working Group**

**Dr. Asma Al Ateyah Qatar University, Department of Education**

**Dr. Basima Al-Hajj Consultant for Research and Computer Training, Ministry**

**Ms. Faeza Rafsanjani The President of The Islamic Olympic Committee, President of the Islamic Women Sport Federation. Tehran**

**Ms. Fatima Salem Bugaith, Supervisor of Sport Activities in Ministry of Education Kuwait.**

**Ms. Ibtisam Al-Noami, Sport Teacher in High School in Qatar**

**Dr. Khaled Al Mathkor, Head of Supreme Consultative for Completion of The Implementation of the Islamic Sharia Rules**

**Dr. Margaret Talbot, Director of CCPR; President IAPESGW**

**Dr. Mohammed Altabtabai, Dean of the Faculty of Sharia, Kuwait University.**

**Dr. Nabila A. Abdel Rahman professor in Sport and Physical Education, Egypt.**

**Ms. Noreah Al Saleah Assistant Dean in basic Education College.PAAET, Kuwait.**

**Dr. Sanaa Al-Mandeeel, Director of the English Centre, Faisal University Dammam Branch, Saudi Arabia**

**Ms. Shareefa Al-Omar – the first Kuwaiti woman study in Egypt for a Bachelor's Degree in PE (See Chapter 4).**



**APPENDIX (3)**  
**INTERVIEW CARD**

**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**Brunel University**  
**Department of Sport Sciences**

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
**The Public Authority For Applied**  
**Education and Training**  
**College of Basic Education**  
**Department of Physical**  
**Education and Sports**

**“INTERVIEW CARD”**  
**THE ROLE OF KUWAITI FEMALES**  
**IN SPORTS AND PHYSICAL RECREATION**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**DISTRICT :**

- (1) Capital      (2) Hawalli      (3) Farwaniya  
(4) Al-Ahmadi    (3) Al-Jahra      (6) Mubarak Al Kabeer

**PERSON ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS:**

- (1) Member from the National Assembly  
(2) Public Authority for Youth and Sport  
(3) The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training  
(4) Ministry of Education – Director “Physical Education Department”  
(5) Kuwait Olympic Committee

**SEX :**

- (1) Male                                  (2) Female

**OCCUPATION:** .....

**EDUCATION:**

- (1) Less Than Bachelor Degree  
(2) Bachelor Degree  
(3) Masters Degree  
(4) PhD

## QUESTIONS

1. Do think that Kuwaiti girls and women have free time for practicing sport and physical recreation ?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Do Kuwaiti females face barriers that prevent them from practicing sport and physical recreation activities ?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Do you encourage females to participate in policy and decision making related to sport and physical recreation in Kuwait?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Do Kuwaiti females understand the benefits of sport and physical Recreation activities?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Does the Public Authority for Youth and Sport Seek to improve sport and physical recreation for females?

.....  
.....  
.....

6. Are there sufficient staff in the sport and recreation centres that care for the needs of girls and women?

.....  
.....  
.....

7. What is the vision of Islam concerning sport and physical recreation related to females?

.....  
.....  
.....

8. Does the Public Authority for Youth and sport give similar chances to males and females?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. Do the official organization encourage the Kuwaiti females to participate in sport and physical recreation programmes?

.....  
.....  
.....

10. Do the present rules encourage Kuwaiti females to practise sport and physical recreation?

.....  
.....  
.....

11. What is your future vision about the development of sport and physical recreation to females in Kuwait?

.....  
.....  
.....

12. Do you have any addition comment about the sport and recreation activities to females in Kuwait?

.....  
.....  
.....

**RESEARCHER: GHANEEMAH M. OTHMAN AL-HAIDAR**

**APPENDIX (4)**  
**ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED**  
**FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

## **ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Section One: Involvement Of Kuwaiti Females In Sport And Recreation Activities.**

**Table One : Summary**

**Section Two: Main Barriers That Prevent Kuwaiti Females From Participation In Sport And Recreation Activities**

**Table Two : Summary**

**Section Three: Opportunities Given To Females By The Government And Public Organisations Regarding Their Role In Sport And Recreation Activities.**

**Table Three: Summary**

**ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
SECTION ONE**

**INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN SPORT AND RECREATION  
ACTIVITIES**

**QUESTION NO. 1: DO YOU HAVE DAILY FREE TIME FOR SPORT AND  
PHYSICAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES?**

Results showed that:

- **Most of the participants (67 %) have some daily free time for sport and physical recreation.**

The following table shows the numbers and percentages of participants.

Table (6. 12)

		Number	Percent
	Never	17	3.8
	Sometimes	297	67.1
	Regularly	129	29.1
Total		443	100.0

- **There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :**  
Age, marital status and education.
- **There are some differences between the participation regarding this matter in relation to:**
  - District:
    - Highest participation was from Hawalli
    - Lowest participation from Al Al Ahmadi
  - Persons answering the questionnaire:
    - Highest participation from government club users
    - Lowest participation from PAAET students
  - Present occupation:
    - Highest participation from private club members
    - Lowest participation from students

**QUESTION 2: NUMBER OF HOURS “FREE TIME” PER WEEK**

Results showed that:

- The participants have on average (17) hours free time per week.

The following table shows the numbers of hours vis-à-vis the number of participants.

Table ( 6. 12)

Hour	Number	Percent
1	6	1.4
2	8	1.8
3	7	1.6
4	5	1.1
5	6	1.4
6	6	1.4
7	23	5.2
8	6	1.4
9	2	0.5
10	15	3.4
11	2	0.5
12	11	2.5
13	1	0.2
14	67	15.1
15	16	3.6
16	19	4.3
17	15	3.4
18	18	4.1
19	2	0.5
20	30	6.8
21	42	9.5
22	1	0.2
23	1	0.2
24	15	3.4
25	14	3.2
26	5	1.1
27	3	0.7
28	34	7.7
30	14	3.2
32	1	0.2
34	1	0.2
35	13	2.9
37	1	0.2
40	6	1.4
42	7	1.6
45	1	0.2
49	2	0.5
72	1	0.2
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>427</b>	<b>96.4</b>
<b>Missing</b>	<b>System Missing</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>1</sup> Total Hours = 820 → (820/2 = 410) – 427 = 17 Hours Per Week.



- **There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:**  
Age, marital status, education and occupation.
- **There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-**
  - District:
    - Highest participation from Hawalli
    - Lowest participation from Al Ahmadi
  - Persons answering the questionnaire:
    - Highest participation from government club users
    - Lowest participation from PAAET students.

**QUESTION NO.3: WHERE DO YOU PRACTISE IF YOU HAVE FREE TIME FOR SPORTS?**

The following table shows the numbers and percentages related to the places where participants practise sports when they have free time.

Table (6.13)

	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		Total	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Q3_1: at home	76	17.4%	277	63.4%	84	19.2%	437	100.0%
Q3_2: club	110	25.3%	77	17.7%	247	56.9%	434	100.0%
Q3_3: in the neighbourhood	24	5.5%	149	34.3%	262	60.2%	435	100.0%
Q3_4: at the beach	21	4.8%	239	54.8%	176	40.4%	436	100.0%
Q3_5: resort	19	4.4%	172	39.4%	245	56.2%	436	100.0%
Q3_6: in educational centers	24	5.5%	64	14.7%	347	79.8%	435	100.0%
Q3_7: in the youth clubs	4	0.9%	36	8.9%	386	90.2%	428	100.0%
Q3_8: in the park	15	3.5%	189	43.6%	229	52.9%	433	100.0%
Q3_9: in the shopping mall	60	13.7%	237	54.2%	140	32.0%	437	100.0%

Note : Missing answers are excluded.

Table (13) shows that :

- **Most of the participants (63.4 %) practise sports sometimes at home.**  
There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:  
Districts, marital status and education.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students
  - Lowest participation from government club users
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 21 to 30 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged between 31 to 40 years
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from students
  - Lowest participation from retired women

■ **Most of the participants (56.9 %) do not practise sports at clubs.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to: -

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation From Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from government club users
  - Lowest participation from school students
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 31 to 40 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged between 17 to 20 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from married women
  - Lowest participation from single females
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with diplomas
  - Lowest participation from those with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from retired women
  - Lowest participation from students

■ **Most of the participants (60.2 %) do not practise sports in the neighbourhood.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to marital status.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from government club users
  - Lowest participation from school students

- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 41 to 50 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged between 17 to 25 years
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with master degrees
  - Lowest participation from females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from retired women
  - Lowest participation from students

■ **A small majority of the participants (54.8 %) practise sports sometimes at the beach.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:

Respondent group, age, marital status and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with Bachelor degrees
  - Lowest participation from females with no education

■ **Most of the participants (56.2 %) do not practise sports at resorts .**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :

Respondent group, age, marital status, education and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to district:

- Highest participation from Capital
- Lowest participation from Al Jahra

■ **Most of the participants (79.8 %) do not practise sports in educational centres.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to marital status.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to: -

- District:
  - Highest participation from Al Ahmadi
  - Lowest participation from Capital

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students
  - Lowest participation from private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 21 to 30 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants of 31 years and above
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with Bachelor degrees
  - Lowest participation from females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from students
  - Lowest participation from private sector employees and housewives

■ **Most of the participants (90.2 %) do not practise sports in youth clubs.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to age and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from government club users
  - Lowest participation from private club members
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from single females
  - Lowest participation from divorce women and widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with diplomas
  - Lowest participation from females with no education

■ **A small majority of the participants (52.9 %) do not practise sports in the park.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to education.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students
  - Lowest participation from private club members

- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged between 51 and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from single females
  - Lowest participation from widows
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from students
  - Lowest participation from private sector employees.

■ **More than half of the participants (54.2 %) practise sports sometimes in the shopping mall.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :

Respondent group, age, marital status, education and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to District:

- Highest participation from capital
- Lowest participation from Al Jahra.

To sum up these results show that most of the participants practise sports and recreation activities “sometimes” at home, on the beach and at the shopping mall. On the other hand most of them do not practise sports and recreation activities in the club, in the neighbourhood, in resorts, educational centres, youth clubs or parks.

**QUESTION NO. 4: DO YOU PRACTISE SPORTS AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES ALONE?**

Results showed that:

- **Most of the participants (59.6 %) answered that they sometimes practise sports and physical recreation activities alone.**

The following table shows the number and percentages.

Table (6.14)

		Number	Percent
Valid	Never	111	25.1
	Sometimes	264	59.5
	Regularly	62	14.0
Missing	System Missing	6	1.4
Total		443	100.0

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :

Age, education and occupation.

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- **District:**
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer
- **Persons answering the questionnaire:**
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among high school students
- **Marital Status:**
  - Highest participation was among divorced women
  - Lowest participation was among widowss

**QUESTION NO. 5: DO YOU TAKE PART IN TEAM OR GROUP ACTIVITIES?**

Results showed that:

- **The largest group of the participants (49.2 %) answered sometimes.**  
The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.15)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	Never	70	15.8
	Sometimes	218	49.2
	Regularly	148	33.4
Missing	System Missing	7	1.6
Total		443	100.0

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:  
Age, marital status and education.

However there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- **District:**
  - highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- **Persons answering the questionnaire:**
  - Highest participation was among government club members
  - Lowest participation was among PAAET students
- **Present occupation:**
  - Highest participation was among retired women
  - Lowest participation was among students

**QUESTION NO.6: WHICH SPORTS/ACTIVITIES DO YOU PRACTISE REGULARLY?**

The following table shows the number and percentage of the results related to the type of sports that the participation practise

Table (6. 16)

	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Q6_1: walking	195	44.6%	226	51.7%	16	3.7%	437	100.0%
Q6_2: aerobics	79	18.4%	186	43.4%	164	38.2%	429	100.0%
Q6_3: exercise by equipment	74	17.0%	210	48.2%	152	34.9%	436	100.0%
Q6_4: basketball	32	7.3%	144	32.9%	262	59.8%	438	100.0%
Q6_5: cycling	19	4.3%	170	38.9%	248	56.8%	437	100.0%
Q6_6: gymnastics	6	1.4%	69	15.8%	363	82.9%	438	100.0%
Q6_7: handball	16	3.6%	96	21.9%	327	74.5%	439	100.0%
Q6_8: horse riding	1	0.2%	26	6.0%	407	93.8%	434	100.0%
Q6_9: skating	8	1.8%	59	13.5%	370	84.7%	437	100.0%
Q6_10: jogging	59	13.4%	209	47.6%	171	39.0%	439	100.0%
Q6_11: karate	5	1.1%	37	8.5%	394	90.4%	436	100.0%
Q6_12: squash	16	3.7%	131	30.2%	287	66.1%	434	100.0%
Q6_13: swimming	89	20.2%	213	48.4%	188	31.4%	440	100.0%
Q6_14: tennis	24	5.6%	101	23.4%	307	71.1%	432	100.0%
Q6_15: table tennis	12	2.8%	101	23.2%	323	74.1%	436	100.0%
Q6_16: volley ball	32	7.3%	129	29.5%	277	63.2%	438	100.0%
Q6_17: track and field	26	6.0%	86	19.8%	322	74.2%	434	100.0%

Note : Missing answers are excluded

Table (17) shows that:

■ More of the participants (51.7 %) practise walking than any other activity, most of these participants however, only walked sometimes.

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among high school students
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 31 to 40 years
  - Lowest participation was among 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among divorced women
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with PhD
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education



- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among private sector employees
  - Lowest participation was among students

■ **Slightly fewer than half number of the participants (43.4 %) practise aerobics sometimes.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Capital
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among government club members
  - Lowest participation was among high school students
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 31 to 40 years
  - Lowest participation was among 17 to 20 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among divorced women
  - Lowest participation was among single
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with intermediate level education
  - Lowest participation was among those with females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among retired women
  - Lowest participation was among students

■ **Slightly fewer than half number of the participants (48.2 %) practise exercise by equipment sometimes.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Ahmadi
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among government club members
  - Lowest participation was among high school students
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 31 to 40 years
  - Lowest participation was among 17 to 20 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among divorced women
  - Lowest participation was among single females
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with intermediate level education
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education

- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among retired women
  - Lowest participation was among private club members

■ **Most of the participants ( 59.8 %) do not practise basketball .**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Farwaniyah
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 21 to 30 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single women
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among females with no education
  - Lowest participation was among those with intermediate education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants ( 56.8 %) do not practise cycling.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer
  - Lowest participation from Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among private club members
  - Lowest participation was among government club
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants of 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among divorced women
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education

■ **Most of the participations ( 82.9 %) do not practise gymnastics .**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET student
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 21 to 30 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants of 51 years and above
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with bachelor degrees
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among private sector employees

■ **Most of the participants ( 74.5 %) do not practise handball.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to Districts.

However there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET Students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants of 31 to 40 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants (93.8 %) do not practise horse riding.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:

District, age and education.

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among high school and PAAET student
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single women
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among private sector employees
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants (84.7 %) do not practise skating.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Capital
  - Lowest participation from Al Ahmadi
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged 41 to 50 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single females
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among high school student
  - Lowest participation was among those with PhDs, masters degrees, intermediate education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among private sector employees

■ **61% of the participants jogging –13.4regularly (47.6 %) practise jogging sometimes.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Al Ahmadi
  - Lowest participation from Farwaniah
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years

-Lowest participation was among women aged 51 years and above

- Marital Status:

- Highest participation was among single women
- Lowest participation was among widows

- Education:

- Highest participation was among females with no education
- Lowest participation was among those with masters degrees

- Present occupation:

- Highest participation was among student
- Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants (90.4 %) do not practise Karate.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:

- Highest participation from Jahra
- Lowest participation from Muabarak Al Kabeer

- Persons answering the questionnaire:

- Highest participation was among high school students
- Lowest participation was among PAAET and private club members

- Age:

- Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
- Lowest participation was among women from 41 to 50 years

- Marital Status:

- Highest participation was among single women
- Lowest participation was among married and divorcees women

- Education:

- Highest participation was among those with intermediate education
- Lowest participation was among those with masters degrees, PhD and females with no education

- Present occupation:

- Highest participation was among students
- Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants (66.1 %) do not practise squash.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to education.

However there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to: -

- District:

- Highest participation from Capital
- Lowest participation from Al Ahmadi

- Persons answering the questionnaire:

- Highest participation was among PAAET students
- Lowest participation was among private club members

- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among women of 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single women
  - Lowest participation was among married women
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **68.6% of the participants go practise swimming; 20.2% regularly; (48.4%) sometimes.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:

Age, marital status, education and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Al Ahmadi
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among government club members
  - Lowest participation was among high school students

■ **Most of the participants (71.1 %) do not practise Tennis.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among women of 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single females
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among those with master degrees and PhD
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants ( 74.1 %) do not practise table tennis.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Farwaniah
  - Lowest participation from Al Jahra
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET student
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years
  - Lowest participation was among women from 41 to 50 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single females
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with PhD
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among high school students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

■ **Most of the participants (63.2 %) do not practise volley ball.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli
  - Lowest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation was among PAAET students
  - Lowest participation was among private club members
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 21 to 30 years
  - Lowest participant was among women of 51 years and above
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation was among single females
  - Lowest participation was among widows
- Education:
  - Highest participation was among those with bachelor degrees
  - Lowest participation was among females with no education
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation was among students
  - Lowest participation was among retired women

- Most of the participants (74.2 %) do not practise track and field.  
There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-
  - District:
    - Highest participation from Hawalli
    - Lowest participation from Mubrak Al Kabeer
  - Persons answering the questionnaire:
    - Highest participation was among PAAET students
    - Lowest participation was among private club members
  - Age:
    - Highest participation was among women between 21 to 30 years
    - Lowest participation was among women of 51 years and above
  - Marital Status:
    - Highest participation was among single females
    - Lowest participation was among widows
  - Education:
    - Highest participation was among those with masters degrees
    - Lowest participation was among females with no education
  - Present occupation:
    - Highest participation was among students
    - Lowest participation was among housewives

To sum up, these results show that most of the participants “sometimes” practise walking, aerobics, exercise by equipment, jogging, and swimming. On the other hand most of them do not practise basketball, cycling, gymnastics, horse riding, skating, karate, squash, tennis, table tennis, volleyball, track and field.



**QUESTION NO. 7: DO YOU THINK YOU WILL PRACTISE ANY SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FUTURE?**

■ Most of the participants (87.4 %) would like to practise sport and physical recreation activities in the future.

The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.17)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	NO	9	2.0
	MAYBE	43	9.7
	YES	387	87.4
Missing	System Missing	4	.9
Total		443	100.0

The following results were obtained:

- Most females in all districts like to practise sport and physical recreation activities in the future.
- A high response was obtained among females from high school and private clubs.
- A high response was obtained among females between 17 to 20 years and age 21 to 30 years.
- A high response was obtained among single females.
- A high response was obtained among High School students.

**QUESTION NO. 8: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN COMPETITIVE SPORT?**

■ Most of the participants (50.6 %) do not like to take part in competitive sport. The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.18)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	Never	224	50.6
	Sometimes	14	3.2
	Regularly	103	23.3
Missing	System Missing	102	23.0
Total		443	100

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The following results were obtained:

- Most females do not like to take part in competitive sport however the females in Hawally, Capital and Farwaniah districts showed more interest than others in taking part in competitive sport.
- Most high school students and females at private clubs answered “no”.
- Most married females answered “no”, while most single females answered “yes”.
- Most females in high school answered “no”.

***QUESTION NO. 8-1: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN “LOCAL” COMPETITIVE SPORT?***

■ **Most of the participants (63 %) did not participate in local competitive sport.** The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.19)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	NO	279	63.0
	MAYBE	18	4.1
	YES	127	28.7
Missing	System Missing	19	4.3
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The following results were obtained:

- Most females answered no, however the females in Capital, Hawally and Farwaniah, showed more interest than others in taking part in Local competitive sports.
- Most school students and females at private clubs answered “no”.
- Few single females answered yes.
- Most females with high school education and bachelor degrees answered “no”.
- Most students and females Government employment answered “no”.

**QUESTION NO. 8-2: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN COMPETITIVE SPORT IN THE “GULF AREA”?**

- **Almost all the participants (91 %) did not participate in competitive sport in the Gulf Area.**

The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.20)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	NO	403	91.
	MAYBE	1	.2
	YES	11	2.
Missing	System	28	6.
	Missing		
Total		44	100.

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The results showed that most females did not participate in competitive sport in the Gulf Area.

**QUESTION NO. 8-3: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN COMPETITIVE SPORT “IN ARAB COUNTRIES”?**

- **Almost all the participants (92.6 %) did not participate in competitive sport in Arab Countries.**

The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6.21)**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	NO	410	92.6
	MAYBE	1	.2
	YES	4	.9
Missing	System	28	6.3
	Missing		
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The results showed that most females did not participate in competitive sport in the Arab countries.

**QUESTION NO. 8-4: HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN PART IN “INTERNATIONAL” COMPETITIVE SPORT?**

- **Almost all the participants (92.3 %) did not participate in Competitive sport Internationally.**

The following table shows the number and percentage for the results.

**Table (6. 22)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	NO	409	92.3
	MAYBE	1	.2
Missing	System Missing	33	7.4
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The results showed that almost all females did not participate in competitive sport Internationally.

The results related to the involvement of participants in sport and physical recreation activities are summarized in table one in Appendix (3).

## TABLE ONE

### SUMMARY REGARDING THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION

QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:								
		PARTICIPANT			DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		REGULARLY	SOMETIMES	NEVER						
Q 1	Daily free time for sport and physical recreation activities	- Most answered sometimes (67%).	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation among Government Clubs members - Lowest participation among PAAET Students	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among private club members - Lowest participation among students	
Q 2	Free time: Hours per week	- Most females have 17 hours free time per week	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation Government Club member - Lowest participation PAAET Student	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No difference	

QUESTIONS	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT	DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:					
			DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
	The places where participants practice sports when they have free time: 3-1 At home	REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER  - Most females answered sometimes (63.4%)	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET Students - Lowest participation among Government Club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21-30 - Lowest participation among 31-40	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among students - Lowest participation among retired - p= 0.04
	3-2 Club	- Most females answered never (56.9%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation among Government Club member - Lowest participation among school students	- There are differences - Highest participation 31-40 - Lowest participation 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among married - Lowest participation among Single	- There are differences - Highest participation among Diploma - Lowest participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest responses among retired - Lowest participation among students
	3-3 In the neighbourhood	- Most females answered never (60.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are difference - Highest Participation among Government Club members - Lowest participation among School Students	- There are differences - Highest participation among 41 - 50 - Lowest participations among 17 - 25	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Master - Lowest participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among retired women - Lowest participation among students
	3-4 At the beach	- Most females answered sometimes (54.8%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Bachelor - Lowest participation among no education	- No difference

QUESTI ON NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATION S	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
			DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	
	3-5 Resort	- Most females answered never (56.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participations among Capital - Lowest participations among Jahra	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences
	3-6 In educational centers	- Most females answered never (79.8%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Ahmadi - Lowest participations among Capital	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET Student - Lowest participation among private club	- There are differences - Highest participation 20-30 - Lowest participation among 31-51 years and above	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participations among Bachelor - Lowest participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Lowest participation among private Employment and housewives	
	3-7 In youth clubs	- Most females answered never (90.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation in government Clubs Members - Lowest participation among Private club members	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among divorced & widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among diploma - Lowest participation among no education	- No differences	
	3-8 In the Park	- Most females answered never (52.9%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Mubarak Al Kabeer - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among Private club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among the 17-20 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among widows	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Students - Lowest participation among Private Employment members	

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:								
QUESTI ON NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Continue Q 3	3-9 In the shopping mall:	- Most females answered sometimes (54.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Capital - Lowest participation among Jatra	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences
	3-10 Other types:	- School "number = 19" - Passage "number = 9" - College "number = 4" - Garden "number = 1" - Picnic in spring "number = 1" - Entertainment places "number = 1"						



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:								
QUESTION NO	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Q 4	Practising sports and physical recreation alone.	- Most females answered sometimes (59.6%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Mubarak Al Kaber	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET - Lowest participation among school students	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among divorcees - Lowest participations among widows	- No differences	- No differences
Q 5	Take part in team or group activities related to sports recreation.	- Most females answered sometimes (49.2.%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation among government club members - Lowest participation among PAAET student	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Retired - Lowest participations among students

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING								
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER						
	Type of sports that Q 6-1 Walking	- Most females answered sometimes (51.7%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among school students	- There are differences - Highest participation among 31-40 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among Divorcees - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences among Ph.D - Lowest participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among Private Employment - Lowest participation among students
	Q 6-2 Aerobics	- Most females answered sometimes (43.4 %)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Capital	- There are differences - Highest participation among Government club members - Lowest participation among school students	- There are differences - Highest participation among 31-40 - Lowest participation among 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among Divorce - Lowest participation among Single	- There is difference - Highest participation among Intermediate - Lowest participation among no education	- There is difference - Highest participation among retired - Lowest participation among students
	Q 6-3 Exercise by Equipment	- Most females answered sometime (48.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation among Government club members - Lowest participation among school student	- There are differences - Highest participation among 31-40 - Lowest participation among 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among divorcees - Lowest participation among single women	- There are differences among Intermediate - Lowest participation women with no education	- There are differences - Highest participations among retired women - Lowest participation among private club members
	Q 6-4 basketball	- Most females answered never (59.8%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Farwaniya - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest PAAET students - Lowest participation among private club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21-30 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among Single - Lowest participation among Widow	- There are differences among no education - Lowest participation among Intermediate	- There are differences - Highest participation among students - Lowest participation among retired women

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:								
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
	Q 6-5 Cycling	- Most females answered never (56.8%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Mubarak Al Kaber - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are differences - Highest participation among private club - Lowest participation among Government Club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among divorcees - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among High school - Lowest participation among no education	- No differences
	Q 6-6 Gymnastics	- Most females answered never (82.9 %)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawlli - Lowest participation among Mubarak Al Kaber	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among private clubs members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21-30 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Bachelor - Lowest participation women with no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among students - Lowest participation among private employment
	Q 6-7 Handball	- Most females answered never (74.5 %)	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation in PAAET students - Lowest participation among private club	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 31-40	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among High school - Lowest participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Lowest participation among retired women
	Q 6-8 Horse riding	- Most females answered never (93.8 %)	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Highschool and PAAET students - Lowest participation in private clubs members	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Single - Lowest participation among widows	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Private - Lowest participation among retired women

Continue Q 6

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:									
QUESTION NO	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATIONS	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	
	Q 6-9 Skating	- Most females answered never (84.7%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Capital - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation among School student - Lowest participation in Private club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participations among 41-50	- There are differences - Highest participation among Single - Lowest participation among Widows	- There are differences - Highest participations among High school - Lowest participation among PhD and Master and Intermediate	- There are differences - Highest participations among Student - Lowest participation among Private Employment and retired members	
	Q 6-10 Jogging	- Most females answered sometimes (47.6%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Ahmadi - Lowest participation among Farwaniah	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among private clubs members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among Widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among no education - Lowest participation among Master	- There are differences - Highest participation among Student - Lowest participation among retired women	
	Q 6-11 Karate	- Most females answered never (90.4%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Jahra - Lowest participation among Mubarak Al Kabeer	- There are differences - Highest participation among school students - Lowest participation among PAAET students and private clubs member	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 41-50	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among married and divorcees	- There are differences - Highest participation among Intermediate - Lowest participation among no education, Master and Ph.D	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Lowest participation among retired women	
	Q 6-12 Squash	- Most females answered never (66.1%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Capital - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET - Lowest participation among private clubs	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single women - Lowest participation among married	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Lowest participation among retired women	

Continue Q 6

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:									
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	
	Q 6-13 Swimming	- Most females answered sometimes (48.4%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Ahmadi	- There are differences - Highest participation among Government club members - Lowest participation among School student	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences
	Q 6-14 Tennis	- Most females answered never (71.1%)	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation in Private club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among widows	- There is difference - Highest participation among High school - Lowest participation among no education, Master, Ph.D	- There is difference - Highest participation among Student - Lowest participation among retired	
	Q 6-15 Table tennis	- Most females answered never (74.1%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Farwaniah - Lowest participation among Jahra	- There are difference - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among private clubs members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 17-20 - Lowest participation among 41-50	- There are differences - Highest participation among Single - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among Ph.D - Lowest participation among no education,	- There are differences - Highest participation among Student - Lowest participations among retired women	
	Q 6-16 Volley Ball	- Most females answered never (63.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Mubarak Al Kabeer	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET studentz - Lowest participation among private clubs members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21-30 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences - Highest participations among Bachelor - Lowest participations among no education,	- There are differences - Highest participation among Student - Lowest participations among retired and Housewives	

Continue Q 6

		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Continue Q6	Q 6-17 Tracks and field	REGULARLY SOMETIMES NEVER  - Most females answered never (74.2%)	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Lowest participation among Mubarak Al Kabeer	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Lowest participation among private clubs members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21-30 - Lowest participation among 51 and above	- There are differences - Highest participation among single - Lowest participation among widows	- There are differences - Highest participation among Master - Lowest participation among women with no education,	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Lowest participation among Housewives
	Q 6-18 Other types:	- - - - - -	- Foot ball "number = 5" - Yoga "number = 3" - Dancing "number = 2" - Steps "number = 1" - Bowling "number = 1" - Ballet "number = 1"					

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:								
QUESTION	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS	PARTICIPANT YES MAY BE NO	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
	Practicing sport and physical recreation activities in future:	- Most of the participations answered yes (87.4%)	Most females in all districts answered yes.	Highest participation among females at highest school and private clubs	Highest participation among females between age 17-30 years.	Highest participation among single females.	Highest participation among females at high school	Highest participation among students.
27	Yes: Type of sports and recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking "number = 115"</li> <li>- Swimming "number = 104"</li> <li>- Aerobics "number = 63"</li> <li>- Jogging "number = 28"</li> <li>- Basketball "number = 28"</li> <li>- Horse riding "number = 16"</li> <li>- Volley ball "number = 14"</li> <li>- Skating "number = 5"</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercise by equipment "number = 5"</li> <li>- Hand ball "number = 4"</li> <li>- Karate "number = 4"</li> <li>- Tracks and field "number = 3"</li> <li>- Taekwondo "number = 3"</li> <li>- Ballet "number = 2"</li> <li>- Cycling "number = 2"</li> <li>- Dancing "number = 1"</li> </ul>		
	No: Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No free time "number = 19"</li> <li>- No encouragement "number = 7"</li> <li>- Lazy "number = 7"</li> <li>- Family commitments "number = 3"</li> <li>- Lack of special places for females "number = 2"</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customs and tradition "number = 2"</li> <li>- Religion "number = 1"</li> <li>- Weather "number = 1"</li> <li>- Health reason "number = 1"</li> </ul>		

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:									
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATION	PARTICIPANT		DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		YES	MAY BE NO						
80	Taking part in competitive sport	- Most of the Participation answered no (50.6 %)		Most females answered no, however the females in Hawalli, Capital and Farwariah districts showed more interest than others in taking part in competitive sport.	Most highest school students and females at private club answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females answered no, while few single females answered yes.	Most females with high school education answered no.	Most students answered no, while few females answered yes.
	Q 8-1: Local	- Most of the Participation answered no (63 %)		Most females answered no, however the females in Capital, Hawalli and Farwariah, showed more interest than others in taking part in local competitive sports.	Most school students and females at private clubs answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females at various ages answered no. Few single females answered yes.	Most females with high school education and bachelor degrees answered no.	Most students and females in government employments answered no.



PARTICIPANT		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
QUESTION NO.	INVOLVEMENT OF PARTICIPATION	YES MAY BE NO	DISTRICT	RESPONDENT GROUP	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Continue Q 8	Q 8-2 : Gulf Area	- Most of the Participation answered no (91 %)	Most females at various districts answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females at various ages answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females with various educational center answered no.	Most females with various occupation answered no.
	Q 8-3 Arabic Country	- Most of the Participation answered no (92.6 %)	Most females at various districts answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females at various ages answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females with various educational center answered no.	Most females with various occupation answered no.
	Q 8-4 International	- Most of the Participation answered no (92.3 %)	Most females at various districts answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females at various ages answered no.	Most females answered no.	Most females with various educational center answered no.	Most females with various occupation answered no.

## SECTION TWO

### QUESTION NO 9: MAIN BARRIERS THAT PREVENT KUWAITI FEMALES FROM PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION

The following table shows the number and percentage of the results related to the main barriers that prevent Kuwaiti females from participation in sports and physical recreation activities.

Table (6.23)

	Highly applied		Moderately applied		Not applied		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Q9_1: family crisis	39	8.9%	174	39.9%	223	51.1%	436	100.0%
Q9_2: injury	14	3.2%	42	9.7%	378	87.1%	434	100.0%
Q9_3: health problems	14	3.2%	75	17.3%	345	79.5%	434	100.0%
Q9_4: aging	2	0.5%	6	1.4%	427	98.2%	435	100.0%
Q9_5: poor facilities in home area	52	11.9%	157	35.8%	229	52.3%	438	100.0%
Q9_6: financial reason	23	5.3%	112	25.7%	301	69.0%	436	100.0%
Q9_7: weather conditons	236	53.6%	172	39.1%	32	7.3%	440	100.0%
Q9_8: groups breaking / leaving	46	10.6%	224	51.9%	162	37.5%	432	100.0%
Q9_9: family commitments	76	17.4%	223	51.0%	138	31.6%	437	100.0%
Q9_10: work duties	57	13.0%	94	21.5%	286	65.4%	437	100.0%
Q9_11: customs and traditions	34	7.7%	119	27.1%	286	65.1%	439	100.0%
Q9_12: marriage	13	3.0%	53	12.3%	366	84.7%	432	100.0%

Note: Missing answers are excluded.

**Table (23) shows that:**

- **Almost all the participants (51.1 %) refused to consider family crisis as one of the main barriers that prevent them from participation in sport and physical recreation activities.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to district and education.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to: -

- **Persons answering the questionnaire:**
  - Highest participation from private club members.
  - Lowest participation from PAAET Students.
- **Age:**
  - Highest participation was among participants aged between 51 years and above.
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged between 17 to 20 years.

- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from married women.
  - Lowest participation from single females.
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from retired women.
  - Lowest participation from students.

■ **Most of the participants ( 87.1 %) did not consider injury to be one the main barriers.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to district, respondent group, education and occupation.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 51 years and above
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged 40 to 50 years
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from widows
  - Lowest participation from divorcees

■ **Most of the participants (79.5 %) did not consider that health problems were one of the main barriers.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to: -

- District:
  - Highest participation from Jahra.
  - Lowest participation from Hawalli.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from private club members.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Age:
  - Highest participation from participants aged 51 years and above.
  - Lowest participation from participants of 17 to 20 years.
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from widows.
  - Lowest participation from married women.
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with Intermediate education.
  - Lowest participation from Masters and PhD graduates.
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from Housewives
  - Lowest participation from private sector employees

■ **Most of the participants ( 98.2 %) did not consider age to be one of main barriers.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to :

District, respondent person, marital status and occupation.

there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged from 51 years and above.
  - Lowest participation from 17 to 20 years.
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with intermediate education.
  - Lowest participation from those with diplomas.

■ **52.3 % of participants did not consider poor facilities in their home area as one of the main barriers.**

There is no significant difference between the participations regarding this matter in relation to age, marital status and education.

There is significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Jahra
  - Lowest participation from Hawalli
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from students.
  - Lowest participation from retired women.

■ **Most of the participants ( 69 %) did not consider financial reasons to be one of the main barriers.**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Jahra.
  - Lowest participation from capital.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from private club members.
  - Lowest participation from School students
- Age:
  - Highest participation from participants aged 51 years and above
  - Lowest participation from participants of 17 to 20 years.

- Marital Status:
    - Highest participation from widows
    - Lowest participation from single females
  - Education:
    - Highest participation from those with Master degrees and those with Intermediate education
    - Lowest participation from females with no education
  - Present occupation:
    - Highest participation from housewives
    - Lowest participation from retired women
- **Most of the participants ( 53.6 %) answered that the weather conditions were one of the main barriers.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to marital status and education.

However, there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
    - Highest participation from Mubarak Al Kabeer.
    - Lowest participation from Farwannah.
  - Persons answering the questionnaire:
    - Highest participation from high school students
    - Lowest participation from government club users.
  - Age:
    - Highest participation was among participants aged 31 to 40 years.
    - Lowest participation was among participants aged 51 years and above
  - Present occupation:
    - Highest participation from retired women.
    - Lowest participation from private sector employees
- **( 51.9 %) of participants answered that “groups’ Breaking/Leaving” applied moderately to their situation.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to education and occupation

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Hawalli.
  - Lowest participation from Capital.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students.
  - Lowest participation from high school students
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged from 31 to 40 years
  - Lowest participation from participants aged 51 years and above

- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from divorced women
  - Lowest participation from widows

■ **( 51 %) of participants answered that “family commitments” applied to their situation.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to district and occupation  
there are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 41 to 50 years.
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged 17 to 20 years.
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from divorcees.
  - Lowest participation from single females.
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with bachelor degrees.
  - Lowest participation from females with no education.

■ **Most of the participants ( 65.4 %) did not consider work duties to be the main barrier.**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to district and marital status.

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Age:
  - Highest participation was among participants aged 21 to 30 years.
  - Lowest participation was among participants aged 51 years and above.
- Education:
  - Highest participation from those with masters degrees.
  - Lowest participation from those with no education.
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from private sector employees.
  - Lowest participation from housewives.

■ **(65.1 %) of participants did not consider customs and traditions as one the main barriers .**

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Jahra.
  - Lowest participation from Hawalli.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from high school students.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Age:
  - Highest participation from participants aged 51 years and above.
  - Lowest participation from participants aged 31 to 40 years.
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from widows.
  - Lowest participation from divorces
- Education:
  - Highest participation from females with no education.
  - Lowest participation from PhD graduates.
- Present occupation:
  - Highest participation from students.
  - Lowest participation from retired women.

■ **Most of the participations (84.7 %) did not consider marriage to be one of the main barriers .**

There is no significant difference between the participants regarding this matter in relation to occupation.

There are some differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to:-

- District:
  - Highest participation from Ahmadi.
  - Lowest participation from capital.
- Persons answering the questionnaire:
  - Highest participation from PAAET students.
  - Lowest participation from government club users.
- Age:
  - Highest participation from participants aged 21 to 30 years.
  - Lowest participation from participants aged 17 to 20 years.
- Marital Status:
  - Highest participation from married women
  - Lowest participation from divorcees
- Education:
  - Highest participation from masters graduates.
  - Lowest participation from females with no education.

To sum up, these results show that most of the participants considered the weather conditions in Kuwait to be the main barrier that prevents them from participating in sport and physical recreation. On the other hand, they considered the other barriers such as family commitments and groups breaking/leaving applied moderately to their situations. However most participants refused to consider the following as barriers that prevent them from participating in sport and physical recreation activities:

Family crisis, injury, health problems, aging, poor facilities in the home area, financial reason, work duties, customs and tradition and marriage.

The results related to the main barriers that prevent participants from participating in sports and physical recreation activities are summarized in table two Appendix (4)



**TABLE TWO**

**SUMMARY REGARDING THE MAIN BARRIERS THAT PREVENT PARTICIPANTS FROM PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS AND PHYSICAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES**

QUESTION NO.	MAIN BARRIERS	DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
		PARTICIPANT	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANT	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Q 9	Highly applicable Moderately applicable Not applicable							
	- Most females answered not applicable	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Private club members - Low participation among PAAET	- There are differences - Highest participation among 51 and above - Low participation among 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among married - Low participation among single	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among retired - Low participation among student	
	- Most females answered not applicable	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among 51 and above - Low participation among 41-50	- There are differences - Highest participation among widow - Low participation among divorcees	- No differences	- No differences	
Q 9-3 Health Problems	- Most females answer not applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Jahra - Low participation among Hawalli	- There are differences - Highest participation among Private club - Low participation among government club	- There are differences - Highest participation among 51 and above - Low participation among 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among widow - Low participation among married	- There are differences - Highest participation among Intermediate - Low participation among Master and Ph.D	- There are differences - Highest participation among housewives - Low participation among private club members	

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:**

QUESTION NO.	MAIN BARRIERS	PARTICIPANT							
		HIGH APPLICABLE MODERATELY APPLICABLE NO APPLICABLE	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANT	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	
Continue Q 9	Q 9-4 Aging	- Most females answered not applicable	- No differences	- No differences	- there are differences Highest participation among 51 and above - Low participation among 17-20	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among Intermediate - Low participation among Diploma	- No differences
	Q 9-5 Poor facilities In home area	- Most males answered not applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Jalra- Low participation among Hawalli	- There are differences - Highest participation PAAET - Low participation among government club	- No differences	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Low participation among retired	
	Q 9-6 Financial Reason	- Most females answered not applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Jalra - Low participation among Capital	- There are differences - Highest participation Private club - Low participation among school student	- There are differences - Highest participation among 51 and above - Low participation among 17-20	- There are differences - Highest participation among widow - Low participation among single	- There are differences - Highest participation among Master and Intermediate - Low participation among no education	- There are differences - Highest participation among Housewives - Low participation among retired	
	Q 9-7 Weather Conditions	- Most females answered the weather Conditions is highly applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Mubarak Al Kabeer - Low participation among Farwania	- There are differences - Highest participation among high school students - Low participation among the government club	- There are differences - Highest participation among 31 to 40 years - Low participation among 51 years and above	- No differences	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among student - Low participation among private members	

PARTICIPANT		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
QUESTION NO.	MAIN BARRIERS	HIGH APPLICABLE MODERATELY APPLICABLE NO APPLICABLE	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANT	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Continue Q 9	Q 9-8 Groups Breaking/Leaving	- Most females answered moderately applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Hawalli - Low participation among Capital	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET students - Low participation among high school student	- There is difference - Highest participation among 31 to 40 years - Low participation among 51 years and above	- There is difference - Highest participation among divorcees - Low participation among widows	- No differences	- No differences
	Q 9-9 Family Commitments	- Most females answered moderately applicable	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET student - Low participation among Government club	- There are differences - Highest participation among 41 to 50 years - Low participation among 17 to 20 years	- There are differences - Highest participation among divorce - Low participation among single females	- There are differences among Bachelor degree - Low participation among females with no education	- No differences
	Q 9-10 Work Duties	- Most females answered not applicable	- No differences	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET student - Low participation among Government club	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21 to 30 years - Low participation among 51 years and above	- No differences	- There are differences among Master - No participation among females with no education	- There are differences among Private sector - Low participation among Housewives
	Q 9-10 Customs and tradition	- Most females answered not applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Jalra - Low participation among Hawalli	- There are differences - Highest participation among High school student - Low participation among Government club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 51 years and above - Low participation among 31 to 40 years	- There are differences - Highest participation among widows - Low participation among divorcees	- There are differences among females with no education - Low participation among Ph.D	- There are differences among student - Low participation among retired women

QUESTION NO.		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
MAIN BARRIERS		PARTICIPANT	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANT	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Continue Q 9	Q 9-10 Marriage	HIGH APPLICABLE MODERATELY APPLICABLE NO APPLICABLE - Most females answered not applicable	- There are differences - Highest participation among Ahmadi - Low participation among Capital	- There are differences - Highest participation among PAAET student - Low participation among Government club members	- There are differences - Highest participation among 21 to 30 years - Low participation among 17 to 20 years	- There difference Highest participation among married Low participation among divorcees	- There are differences - Highest participation among Master - Low participation among females with no education	- No differences
	Q 9-10 Other Barriers:	- No free time " number = 30" - Lazy " number = 21" - Busy in study " number = 10" - Lack of Government places for females to practice sport and physical recreation " number = 8" - Lack of advertisements for sport places " number = 3"	- No awareness of the benefits of sport " number = 5" - People are interested in entertainment place more than sport " number = 1" - Pregnancy " number = 1" - Difficulty in losing weight quickly " number = 1" - Depression " number = 1"					

### SECTION THREE

#### OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO FEMALES BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS REGARDING THEIR ROLE IN SPORT AND RECREATION

#### QUESTION NO 10: ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION?

- **Most of the participants (48.1 %) answered to some extent.**

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.24)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	172	38.8
	to some extent	213	48.1
	yes	53	12.0
Missing	System Missing	5	1.1
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed . The following results were obtained.

- Most of the females in Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah and Mubarak Al-Kabeer districts answered to some extent, while most of females in Ahmadi and Jahra answered no.
- Most females in government clubs, as well as in private clubs answered to some extent while most high school and PAAET students answered no.
- The higher the age (50+ years) the lower the happiness with the available opportunities for females.
- Half of the females in high school education are not happy with the opportunities while the other half are happy to some extent. Most females with diploma degrees and bachelor degrees are happy to some extent with the opportunities.
- Half of the high school and PAAET students are not happy with the opportunities, while the females who work at the government employment are happier with the opportunities.

**QUESTION NO 11: DO YOU THINK THAT KUWAITI SOCIETY KNOWLEDGES THE BENEFITS OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION ACTIVITIES?**

- The participants with (48.1 %) answered to some extent. The following table and figure show the number and percentage results.

Table (6.25)

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	95	21.4
	to some extent	213	48.1
	yes	126	28.4
Missing	System Missing	9	2.1
Total		443	100.

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained.

- Most females in Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah, Ahmadi and Jahra answered to some extent, while most females in Mobarak AlKabeer district answered yes.
- Most females answered to some extent, while some of the females at high school and the Private club answered yes.
- Most females answered to some extent, while some females of the age between 17 to 30 years answered yes.
- Most single and married females answered to some extent.
- Most females with the high school education, diploma degrees and bachelor degrees answered to some extent.
- Most of the students and females in government employment answered to some extent.

**QUESTION NO 12: DO GIRLS AND WOMEN FULLY UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF SPORT AND RECREATION**

- **Most of the participants (55.1 %) answered to some extent.**  
The following table and figure show the number and percentage results.

Table (6.26)

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	51	11.5
	to some extent	244	55.1
	yes	141	31.8
Missing	System Missing	7	1.6
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The following results were obtained.

- Most females in all districts answered to some extent, while a large number of females at the Capital district answered yes.
- Most of the females answered to some extent. Some of the high school students and females at the Private club and Government club answered yes.
- Most of the females at various ages answered to some extent.
- Most of single and married females answered to some extent.
- Most of the females with high school, diploma degrees education and bachelor degree answered to some extent.
- Most of the students and females at the Government employment answered to some extent.

**QUESTION NO 13: DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW ANY PROGRAMMES ABOUT GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORT AND RECREATION?**

- **Most of the participants (56.9 %) answered no .**  
The following table and figure show the number and percentage results.

Table (6. 27)

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	252	56.9
	to some extent	123	27.8
	yes	57	12.9
Missing	System Missing	11	2.5
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most of the females in all district answered no.
- Most of the females between age 17 to 40 answered no.
- Most of the single and married females answered no.
- Most of the females with high school education and bachelor degrees answered no.
- Most students answered no, while some females at the Government club answered to some extent.

**QUESTION NO 14: DOES THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY FOR YOUTH AND SPORT SEEK TO IMPROVE SPORT AND RECREATION FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN?**

- **Most of the participants (42.2 %) answered to some extent.**

The following table and figure show the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.28)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	182	41.1
	to some extent	187	42.2
	yes	68	15.3
Missing	System Missing	6	1.4
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed. The following results were obtained

- Most females at Capital, Hawalli, Jahra, and Mobarak Al Kabeer answered to some extent, while most females at Farwaniah, Ahmadi answered no.
- Most of the high school students answered no, while most of the females in government club, and private clubs answered to some extent.
- Most of the females between age 17 to 20 years answered no, while most of the females between age 21 to 30 answered to some extent.
- Most of the single and married females answered to some extent, while some of them answered no.
- Most of the females with secondary education answered no, while most of the females with diploma degrees and bachelor degrees answered to some extent.
- Some of the students answered no, while most females who work in government employment answered to some extent.



**QUESTION NO 15: ARE THERE ENOUGH SPORTS AND RECREATION CENTRES THAT CARE FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN IN KUWAIT?**

■ **Most of the Kuwaiti females (57.3 %) answered no**

The following table and figure show the number and percentage results.

**Table (6. 29)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	254	57.3
	to some extent	139	31.4
	yes	40	9.0
Missing	System Missing	10	2.3
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analyzed by using "Chi-Square Test for Independence".

- Most females in all districts answered no.
- Most of the females answered no.
- Most of the females in all age groups answered no.
- Most of the single and married females answered no.
- Most of the females with secondary education, diploma and bachelor degree answered no.

**QUESTION NO 16: ARE THERE SUFFICIENT STAFF IN THE SPORT AND RECREATION CENTRES THAT CARE FOR THE NEEDS OF GIRLS AND WOMEN?**

■ **Most of the Kuwaiti females (54 %) answered no**

The following table and number show the number and percentage results.

**Table (6. 30)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	239	54.0
	to some extent	162	36.6
	yes	34	7.7
Missing	System Missing	8	1.8
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the participants regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most of the females answered No. Some females at Capital and Mubarak districts answered to some extent.
- Most of the students and females at private clubs answered no.
- Most females at various ages answered no.
- Most single and married females answered no.
- Most females with high school education, diploma degrees and bachelor degrees answered no.
- Most students house wife, and females who work in government employment answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 17: DO YOU THE BELIEVE THAT ISLAM IS A RELIGION OF SOUL, MIND AND BODY?**

■ **Most of the participants (96 %) answered yes**

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table ( 6.31 )**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	8	1.8
	to some extent	5	1.1
	yes	427	96.4
Missing	System Missing	3	.7
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Majority of the females at all districts answered yes.
- Majority of females at various ages answered yes
- Majority of females with various educational levels answered yes.
- Majority of females at various occupations answered yes.

**QUESTION NO. 18: DOES ISLAM OPPOSE SPORTS AND PHYSICAL RECREATION FOR WOMEN?**

- Most of the participants (92.1 %) answered no  
The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.32)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	408	92.1
	to some extent	18	4.1
	yes	14	3.2
Missing	System Missing	3	.6
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the district, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Majority of the females at various districts answered no.
- Majority of females at various ages answered no.
- Majority of females at various educational levels answered no.
- Majority of females at various occupations answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 19: DO KUWAITI WOMEN PLAY A PART IN SPORT POLICY AND DECISION MAKING?**

- Most of the participants (50.8 %) answered no.  
The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6. 33)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	225	50.8
	to some extent	127	28.7
	yes	85	19.2
Missing	System Missing	6	1.3
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained.

- Most females at Capital district answered yes, while most females at Hawalli, answered to some extent. However most females at all the other district answered no.
- Most students and females at private clubs answered no.
- Most females of various ages answered no.
- Most females with secondary education answered no.
- Most students answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 20: DO KUWAITI WOMEN PLAY A ROLE IN SPORT COACHING?**

■ Most of the participants ( 51.7 %) answered no.

The following table shows the number and percentage result.

**Table (6. 34)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	229	51.7
	to some extent	134	30.2
	yes	73	16.5
Missing	System Missing	7	1.6
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most of the females at Capital district answered to some extent, while most of the females at the other area answered no.
- Most of the high school students and females at private clubs answered no.
- Most of the females between the age 17 to 20 years and 31 to 40 years answered no.
- Most of the females answered no.
- Most females at various educational levels answered no.
- Most of the students, housewives and females in government clubs answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 21: ARE KUWAITI WOMEN INVOLVED IN SPORT MANAGEMENT?**

■ Most of the participants (53.7 %) answered no.

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.35)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	238	53.7
	to some extent	132	29.8
	yes	68	15.3
Missing	System Missing	5	1.1
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most of the females at various districts answered no, except Hawalli district where most females answered to some extent.
- Most of the high school students answered no.
- Most of the females between the age of 17 and 20 years answered no.
- Most of females with secondary education answered no.
- Most of the students answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 22: ARE YOU AWARE OF THE PRESENT RULES CONCERNING SPORT AND RECREATION FOR WOMEN?**

■ Most of the participants (48.1 %) answered to some extent.

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.36)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	154	34.8
	to some extent	213	48.1
	yes	71	16.0
Missing	System Missing	5	1.1
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were be obtained

- Most of the females at various districts answered to some extent.
- Most of students and females at the Al Fatat club answered to some extent, while most females at private club answered no.
- Most of the females at the age between 17 to 30 years answered to some extent.
- Most of single females answered to some extent.

- Most of females with secondary education, diploma degrees and bachelor degrees answered to some extent.
- Most of the students answered to some extent.

**QUESTION NO. 23: DO YOU THINK THAT PRESENT RULES AND REGULATIONS ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS AND PHYSICAL RECREATION?**

- **Most of the participants (43.1 %) answered to some extent.**  
The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.37)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	188	42.4
	to some extent	191	43.1
	yes	54	12.2
Missing	System Missing	10	2.3
Total		443	100.0

The difference between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most of the females at capital and Hawalli districts answered to some extent, while most females at Ahmadi district answered no.
- Most of the students answered no, while most of the females at the Al Fatat club and PAAET students answered to some extent.
- Most females with high school education answered no, while most of the females with bachelor degrees and diploma degrees answered to some extent.
- Most females in government employment answered to some extent, however most students answered no while other students answered to some extent.

**QUESTION NO. 24: DO ORGANISATIONS ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO TAKE PART IN THE SPORT COMPETITIONS LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY?**

■ Most of the participants (53.3 %) answered no.

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.38)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	236	53.3
	to some extent	150	33.9
	yes	52	11.7
Missing	System Missing	5	1.1
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained.

- Some females in the Capital district answered to some extent, while some females answered no. On the other hand most females in all the other districts answered no.
- Most of the females answered no.
- Most of the females between the ages of 17 to 40 answered no.
- Most of the single and married females answered no.
- Most of the females with high school education and bachelor degrees answered no.
- Most of the students and housewives and females government employment answered no.

**QUESTION NO. 25: ARE THERE FINANCIAL REWARDS GIVEN TO WOMEN IN SPORT COMPETITIONS?**

■ Most of the participants (62.3 %) answered no.

The following table shows the number and percentage results.

**Table (6.39)**

		Number	Percent
Valid	no	276	62.3
	to some extent	125	28.2
	yes	32	7.2
Missing	System Missing	10	2.3
Total		443	100.0

The differences between the responses regarding this matter in relation to the districts, persons answering the questionnaire, age, marital status, education and occupation, was analysed. The following results were obtained

- Most females at various districts answered no.
- Most females answered no.
- Most females at various ages answered no.
- Most single and married females answered no.
- Most females at various educational levels answered no.
- Most females various occupations answered no.

**QUESTION NO 26: ARE THERE ANY BARRIERS THAT AFFECT THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND RECREATION?**

The participants answered the open question No. (26) in the questionnaire as follows:

- Customs and Tradition "number = 98"
- Marriage "number = 60"
- Weather "number = 17"
- Family Crisis "number = 14"
- No encouragement for women specially from men "number = 13"
- Lazy Feelings 10"
- Lack of free time for females "number = 10"
- Islam point of view regarding sport and recreation for women "number = 9:
- Financial Reason "number = 9"
- Mother hood "number = 6
- No rewards "number = 5"
- Islamic religion "number = 5"
- Obesity "number = 4"
- Decision Maker "number = 3"
- Lack of sport centre "number = 2"
- Lack of modern equipment in sport clubs



- “Number = 2”
- Lack of plan to increase awareness regarding sport for females “number = 2
- Health problems “number = 2”
- Misunderstanding Islam “number = 2”

**■ THE PARTICIPANTS RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE SPORT AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR FEMALES IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT**

- Establish sport centres and clubs for females in all districts in Kuwait “Number = 123”
- Develop laws regarding the participation of females in sport and physical recreation “number = 75”
- Increase the number of female trainers in women’s clubs “number = 60”
- Encourage the media to help in increasing awareness towards the
- Increase the importance of sport and physical recreation for females “Number=43”

The results related to the opportunities given to the participants by the government and private organisation regarding their role in sport and physical recreation activities is summarized in table three appendix (5)

**TABLE (THREE)**

**SUMMARY CONCERNING THE OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO PARTICIPANTS BY THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS REGARDING THEIR ROLE IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION**

QUESTION NO	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:					
		YES	TO SOME EXTENT NO	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Q 10	Happy with the opportunity available for girls	- Most of the participants (48.1 %) answered to some extent		- Most of the females in Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah and Mubarak Al-Kabeer districts answered to some extent, while most of females in Ahmadi and Jahra answered no.	- Most females in government club as well as in Private club answered to some extent while most of High school and PAAET student answered no.	- The higher the age the lower the happiness with opportunities available for females.	- Most single and married females are happy to some extent with this matter.	- Half of the females with high school education are not happy with the opportunities while the other half are happy to some extent. Most females with diploma and bachelor degree are happy to some extent with the opportunities.	- Half of the high school and PAAET Students are not happy with the opportunities, while the females who work in government employment are happier with the opportunities.
Q 11	Kuwaiti society knows the benefits of sports and physical recreation	- Most of the participants (48.1 %) answered to some extent		- Most females in Capital, Hawalli, Farwaniyah, Ahmadi and Jahra answered to some extent, while most females in Mubarak Al-Kabeer district answered yes.	- Most females answered to some extent, while some of the females at high school and in private club answered yes.	- Most females answered to some extent, while some females age between 17 to 30 years answered yes.	- Most single and married females answered to some extent while some single and married females answered yes.	Most females with the high school education, diploma and bachelor degree answered to some extent, while some of the females with high school education and bachelor degree answered yes.	Most of the students and females in government employment answered to some extent.
<b>Reasons:</b>		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		- lack of efforts to encourage awareness regarding the benefits of sports and recreation "number = 25"	- No interest "number = 15"						
		- Not enough media regarding sport and physical recreation "number = 13"	- Customs and Traditions "number = 10"						
		- Lack of sport facilities for females "number = 5"	- Females are interested in entertainment places more than sport "number = 2"						

		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		YES TO SOME EXTENT	NO					
Q 12	Girls and women understand the benefits of sport and recreation	- Most of the participants (55.1 %) answered to some extent	- Most of the females in all districts answered to some extent, while a large number of females at the Capital district answered yes.	- Most of the females answered to some extent. Some of the school students and females at the private clubs and the government club answered yes.	- Most of the females at various ages answered to some extent.	- Most of single and married females answered to some extent, while some of them answered yes.	- Most of the females with high school, diploma education and bachelor degree answered to some extent.	- Most of the students and females in government employment answered to some extent.
Q 13	Programmes about girls and women in sport and recreation  <b>Mention:</b>	- Most of the participant (56.9 %) answered no  - Female clubs "number = 16" - Health clubs "number = 14" - Youth clubs "number = 12" - Youth Centres "number = 12; - Tourist Projects "number = 10" - Sport clubs "number = 9"	- Most of the females in all districts answered no	- Most of the females answered no	- Most of the females between age 17 to 40 answered no.	- Most of the single and married females answered no	- Most of the females with high school education and bachelor degree answered no.	- Most students answered no, while some females at the Government club answered to some extent.

QUESTION		PARTICIPANTS		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:						
		OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	YES TO SOME EXTENT NO	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	
Q 14	Does PAYS seek to improve sport and physical recreation for girls and women	- Most of the Participants (42.2 %) answered to some extent	- Most females at Capital, Hawalli, Jaira, and Mobarak Al Kabeer answered to some extent, while most females at Farwaniah, Ahmadi answered no.	- Most of the high school students answered no, while most of the females at the Private club answered to some extent.	- Most of the females between age 17 to 20 years answered no, while most of the females between age 21 to 30 answered to some extent.	- Most of the single and married females answered to some extent, while some of them answered no.	- Most of the females with high school education answered no, while most of the females with diploma and bachelor degree answered to some extent.	- Some of the students answered no, while most females who work in government employment answered to some extent.		
Q 15	sports and recreation centres that care for girls and women in Kuwait	- Most of the Participants (57.3 %) answered no	- Most females in all districts answered no	- Most of the females answered no.	- Most of the females in all age groups answered no	- Most of the single and married females answered no.	- Most of the females with high school education, diploma and bachelor degree answered no.	- Most of the females answered no.		

		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:							
QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		YES TO SOME EXTENT	NO						
Q 16	Sufficient staff in the sport and recreation centres that care for the needs of girls and women	- Most of the Participants (54 %) answered no		- Most of the females answered No. Some females at Capital and Mubarak districts answered to some extent.	- Most of the students and females at Private club answered no.	- Most females at various ages answered no.	- Most single and married females answered no.	- Most females with high school education, diploma and bachelor degree answered no.	- Most students and housewives and females who work at government employment answered no.
Q 17	The belief about Islam as religion of soul, mind and body	- Most of the Participants (96 %) answered yes		- Majority of the females answered yes.	- Majority of the females answered yes.	- Majority of females at various ages answered yes	- Majority of females answered yes.	- Majority of females answered yes.	- Majority of females in various occupations answered yes

QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:					
		YES TO SOME EXTENT	NO	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Q 18	Islam opposition regarding sport recreation	- Most of the Participants (92.1 %) answered no		- Majority of the females at various districts answered no.	- Majority of females answered no.	- Majority of females at various ages answered no.	- Majority of females answered no.	- Majority of females at various educational levels answered no.	- Majority of females at various occupations answered no.
Q 19	Females participation sport policy and decision making	- Most of the Participants (50.8 %) answered No		- Most females at capital district answered yes, while most females at Hawalli district to some extent. However most females at all the other district answered no.	- Most students and females at private club answered no.	- Most females at various ages answered no.	- Most females answered no.	- Most females with high school education answered no	- Most students answered no

QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:					
		YES TO SOME EXTENT		DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		NO							
Q20	Role of Kuwaiti women in sport coaching	- Most of the participants (51.7%) answered no		- Most of the females at Capital district answered to some extent, while most of the females in the other area answered no.	- Most of the high school students and females at private club answered no.	- Most of the females between the age 17 to 20 years and 31 to 40 years answered no.	- Most of the females answered no.	- Most females at various educational levels answered no.	- Most of the students, housewives and females at Al fatat club answered no.
Q21	Participants involvement in sport management	- Most of the participants (53.7%) females answered no		- Most of the females in various districts answered no, except Hawalli district where most females answered to some extent.	- Most of the high school students answered no.	- Most of the females between the age 17 and 20 years answered no.	- Most of the single females answered no.	- Most of females with high school education answered no.	- Most students answered no.

		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:							
QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
		YES TO SOME EXTENT	NO						
Q 22	Awareness of the present rules concerning sport and recreation for women	- Most of the Participants (48.1 %) answered to some extent	- Most of the females at various districts answered to some extent.	- Most of students and females at Al Fatah club answered to some extent, while most females at private clubs answered no.	- Most of the females at the age between 17 to 30 years answered to some extent.	- Most of single females answered to some extent.	- Most of females with high school education, diploma and bachelor degree answered to some extent.	- Most of the students answered to some extent.	
Q 23	The role of the present sport rules in encouraging women to participate in sports and recreation	- Most of the Participants (43.1 %) answered to some extent	- Most of the females in Capital and Hawalli districts answered to some extent, while most females at Ahmadi district answered no.	- Most of the students answered no, while most of the females at the Al Fatah club and PAAET students answered to some extent.	- Some of the females answered to some extent, while some other females answered no.	- Some females answered to some extent, while others answered no.	- Most females with high school education answered no, while most of the females with bachelor degree and diploma answered to some extent.	- Most females in government employment answered to some extent, however most students answered no while other students answered to some extent.	



QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITY GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS		DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO:					
		YES TO SOME EXTENT	NO	DISTRICT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
Q 24	Organisations encourage ment for women to take part in the sport competitions locally and nationally	- Most of the Participants (53.3%) answered no		- Some females in the Capital district answered to some extent, while some females answered no. On the other hand most females in all the other districts answered no.	- Most of the females answered no.	- Most of the females between the age 17 to 40 answered no.	- Most of the single and married females answered no.	- Most of the females with high school education and bachelor degrees answered no.	- Most of the students and housewives and females government employment answered no.
Q 25	Financial rewards given to women in sport competition	- Most of the participants (63%) answered no		- Most females at various districts answered no.	- Most females answered no.	- Most females at various ages answered no.	- Most single and married females answered no.	- Most females at various educational levels answered no.	- Most females in various occupations answered no.

QUESTION NO.	OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN TO FEMALES	PARTICIPANTS
<p><b>Q 26</b>  <b>“OPEN QUESTION”</b></p>	<p>Barriers that affect the future of women's participation in sport and recreation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customs and Tradition “number = 98”</li> <li>- Marriage “number = 60”</li> <li>- Weather “number = 17”</li> <li>- Family Crisis “number = 14”</li> <li>- No encouragement for women specially from men “number = 13”</li> <li>- Lazy Feelings 10”</li> <li>- Lack of free time for females “number = 10”</li> <li>- Islam point of view regarding sport and recreation for women “number = 9:</li> <li>- Financial Reason “number = 9”</li> <li>- Mother hood “number = 6</li> <li>- No rewards “number = 5”</li> <li>- Islamic religion “number = 5”</li> <li>- Obesity “number = 4”</li> <li>- Decision Maker “number = 3”</li> <li>- Lack of sport centres “number = 2”</li> <li>- Lack of modern equipments in sport clubs “number = 2”</li> <li>- Lack of plan to increase awareness regarding sport for females “number = 2</li> <li>- Health problems “number = 2”</li> <li>- Misunderstanding Islam “number = 2”</li> </ul>

QUESTION NO.	PARTICIPANTS' SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION FOR FEMALES IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT	
<p><b>“OPEN QUESTION”</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish sport centres and clubs for females in all districts in Kuwait “number = 123”</li> <li>- Develop laws regarding the participation of females in sport and physical recreation “number = 75”</li> <li>- Their are more females trainers in women's clubs “number = 60”</li> <li>- Encourage the media to help in increasing awarness about the importance of sport and physical recreation for females “number = 43”</li> </ul>	

## **APPENDIX (5)**

# **ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE INTERVIEW CARD**

## **RESULTS OF THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE INTERVIEW CARD**

The interviews were performed in May and June 2002. Thirty females and males from the Government legislation structure were interviewed. (Experts)

Appendix (2) shows a list of their names and occupations. The following results were obtained from these interviews:

- Most of the participants (88 %) answered that Kuwaiti females do have sufficient free time to practise sport and physical recreation activities .
- Most of the participants (72 %) answered that there are certain barriers that prevent females for practising sport and physical recreation activities .  
These barriers are :
  - Customs and Traditions (number=6)
  - Weather Condition (6)
  - Family Crises (5)
  - Lack of Facilities (5)
  - Financial Reasons (3)
  - Marriage (1)
- All the participants (100 %) answered that they encourage Kuwaiti females to participate in policy and decision making .
- Most of the participants (96 %) answered that the Kuwaiti females understand the benefits of sport and physical .  
Only (4%) of the participants answered No, to this question Because they considered the reason to be of the lack of awareness among Kuwaiti females regarding this matter (number=6).
- Results showed that (64 %) of the participants answered that the Public Authority for Youth and Sport seek to Improve sport and physical recreation for females.  
Only (36%) of the participants answered no, Because:
  - There are no qualified women in the Public Authority for Youth and Sport
  - Low Budget
  - Women are inferior to men
  - The Policy of the Public Authority for Youth And Sport is connected with the National Assembly who always object to any decision penefitting women
- All participants (100 %) answered that there are not sufficient staff in the sport and recreation centres tht care for the needs of girls and women .  
The participants gave the following reasoning for their responses towards this question:
  - The women do not ask for rights regarding this matter
  - No budget
  - Lack of experts to study female affairs
  - Decisionmakers do not have any agenda items related to women
  - Customs and Traditions
  - No plan or clear polices regarding women
  - No motivation from the women themselves
  - There is discrimination between men and women rights regarding sport and recreation.

- All participants (100 %) answered that Islam supports the participation of females in sport and physical recreation
- Only (12 %) of the participants answered that the Public Authority for Youth and Sport gives similar chances related to sport and physical recreation for males and females. Most of the participants (88%) answered No, Because:
  - Decision makers are men and accordingly they do not care for females.
  - Women did not ask for the chances.
  - No budget.
  - No clear policy for women.
  - Lack of awareness regarding the importance of sports and physical recreation .
  - The Public Authority is new and women did not ask for their rights .
- (44 %) of the participants answered that different organization do encourage Kuwaiti females to participate in sport and physical recreation programmes. However 40% of the participants answered No, Because:
  - Females do not ask for encouragement
  - No budget for this project
- Only (60 %) of the participants answered that the present rules encourage Kuwaiti females to practise sport and physical recreation However (40%) of the participants answered no, Because:
  - Present rules do not encourage females
  - Men do not believe in sport and physical recreation for females
  - Females did not prove themselves in this domain
  - Misunderstanding of Islam

The experts suggested the following recommendations when they were asked to mention their future vision for developing females sport and physical recreation in Kuwait:

- The Government should establish more centres for sport and physical recreation activities for females in all districts in Kuwait.(17)
- There is a necessity to involve Kuwaiti women in planning and implementing special programmes for females in the field of sport and physical recreation.(15)
- Kuwaiti women are recommended to cooperate and keep giving the decision-makers in the state of Kuwait continuous suggestions regarding sport and physical recreation so as to convert them into policies. (12)
- The budget related to sport and physical recreation activities for women should be increased. (12)
- There is a great need for cooperation between various Ministries and establishments such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, PAAET, and Public Authority for Youth and Sport regarding the creation of new laws and plans in order to give chances for Kuwaiti females to be involved locally and internationally in sport and physical recreation . (9)

- A seminar needs to be held between members from the Government legislative structure and private sector specialists to discuss and reach a certain plan for the future situation regarding sport and physical recreation activities. (9)
- Women should have similar rights like men regarding sport and physical recreation (8)
- The Government agencies and the private agencies should provide financial support in order to improve the present situation of females regarding sport and physical recreation . (7)