

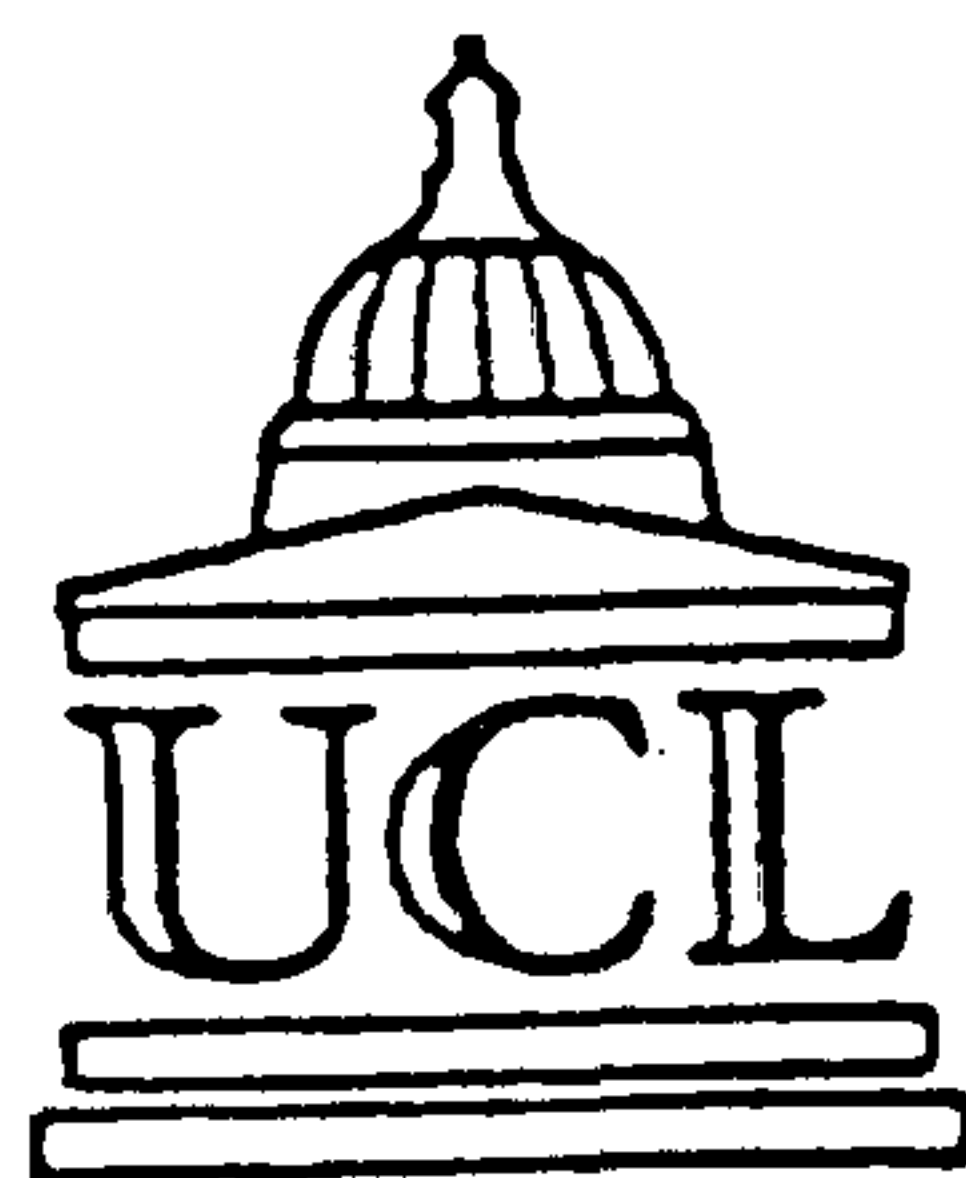
**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON  
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING UNIT**

**DECENTRALISATION IN SAUDI ARABIA:  
THE ROLE OF THE NEW SYSTEM OF  
PROVINCIAL COUNCILS WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO RIYADH PROVINCE**

**BY:**

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*Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy*



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## **DEDICATION**

*In memory of my beloved mother Norah and nephew Saad Al-Othman, who gave me everything and asked nothing in return.*

*May Almighty Allah bless and rest her soul in paradise.*

## ABSTRACT

The recent rapid socio-economic development in Saudi Arabia has significantly affected the administrative systems at local, regional and national levels. The administrative system in Saudi Arabia went through several stages starting with the administrative system before the unification of the Kingdom, Omara system, Regional system and the new Provincial System.

The issue of decentralisation and its role in enhancing developmental efforts through the processes of delegated authorities is very crucial nowadays. The present thesis examines the policies of decentralisation, the decision-making process and developmental issues in the context of the various administrative systems in Saudi Arabia. After a historical investigation for the various administrative systems in Saudi Arabia, the thesis concentrates on the new Provincial System, and its role in raising the level of the administrative functions and socio-economic development particularly in the Riyadh province.

The formation of the provincial councils, as a cornerstone of the new Provincial System, can be considered as a tool for the application of decentralised policies, and a step forward towards citizen's participation in the socio-economic development of their provinces, governorates, districts and localities. The present study discusses the various aspects pertaining to Riyadh Provincial Council, its composition, members, duties and responsibilities. The study also discusses the functions of the specialised committees, and their role in speeding-up the decision-making process of the Provincial Councils.

This research, which is based on a sample survey, concludes that the new administrative system of Provincial Councils played an important role in improving and promoting the quality of performance in government organs, specially when compared with the earlier administrative systems such as the "Omara System" and the "Regional System". The empirical study shows that most of the respondents believe that the new Provincial System may broaden the base of public participation, specially in regards to the issues of local development. The present study shows that the formation of the Provincial Councils is a step forward towards decentralisation in Saudi Arabia, and the inclusion of various professionals namely, scientists, engineers, physicians, administrators, businessmen and academicians into the Provincial Councils has broadened the structure of the council. However, the present study shows that the role of the Provincial Council is a consultative one, and there is no intention to expand its role to legislative issues, at least for the time being.

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# **PART I**

- **Research Problem and Objectives.**
- **Methodology.**
- **Literature Review.**

# CHAPTER I

## RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem:

"Decentralisation trends in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have shown that during the past 50 years, the administrative system in Saudi Arabia was based mainly on centralised policies. These policies became obstacles for the continuous efforts of Saudi government in promoting socio-economic development since the discovery of oil in the 1930's" (Khashogji: 1989: 80).

Until the late eighties recently the administration of Saudi government on national and local levels was highly centralised, and the decision-making process in administering local governments was mainly in the hands of the Ministry of Interior, which was the only reference for the various regions and localities of the country.

Since its establishment in December 1931 (1350 H) and until the issuance of the New Provincial System in 1992, the Ministry of Interior began to play an important role in keeping order, maintaining security, and in administering the local and the regional governments in the various parts of Saudi Arabia. This is not the case in many Arab Countries, where the local and regional governments are attached to the Ministry of Local Governments and not to the Ministry of Interior. In

Saudi Arabia, regions were directly related to the Ministry of Interior and the regional governments had no right to make direct contacts with any ministry or governmental department regarding their needs, budget allocation and developmental plans. Local authorities have to refer to the Ministry of Interior regarding their needs and requirements. Then, the Ministry of Interior communicates with the concerned ministry regarding the developmental policies and the needs for all the regional and local governments in the Kingdom.

Due to this highly centralised policy, people were convinced that individuals' interests in the different regions of the country were delayed to an unreasonable extent. For example, when the people of a village located in the southern part of the Kingdom, asked for a new school, the procedure was as follows: The citizens of the village submit their application to the District Commissioner, asking an approval for a new school. The District Commissioner writes to the Regional Governor, who himself submits the application to the Ministry of Interior. The cycle continues, and the Ministry of Interior writes to the Ministry of Education regarding the approval of the school. When the ministry of education makes its final decision, the governor was notified through the Ministry of Interior. Finally the District Commissioner is informed by the decision through the governor. Sometimes, people repeat the same procedure if their application is rejected or delayed. In this way more time is wasted due to the highly centralised administrative policies.

Ministries, directorates and governmental agencies existing in the various regions of the Kingdom were suffering from the absence of channels for direct communication with the local governments. For example, before the issuance of the New Provincial System, the Ministry of Health could not communicate directly with the governor for establishing a clinic or a hospital, because such a procedure is not allowed by law and regulations. Therefore, the Ministry of Health must contact the Ministry of Interior, which administratively supervises all the local governments in the Kingdom.

Owing to this highly centralised administrative policy, specially in responding to people's needs, representatives of some villages usually move to Riyadh (where the Ministry of Interior is located), and stay for some days waiting for a meeting with the Minister of Interior or his deputy to forward their application, and to seek for immediate approval from the minister. Such a procedure was costly and time-consuming.

People's participation in political, social and economic life is becoming an important demand nowadays for governments, as well as for citizens. Every country in its own way is trying to expand the scope of citizen's direct participation in public affairs. Procedure of direct participation in administrative law-making and administrative decision-making is one of the instruments of internal development strategy. Since the issuance of the 1992 Provincial System, the government of Saudi Arabia began to realise the importance of citizen's participation in local administration. Needless to say that a highly concentrated closed and

pyramid type of administrative system hindered the scope of direct citizens' participation in local administration.

With the flow of oil revenues, at the beginning of the second half of this century, the technological, social and economic development began in Saudi Arabia. The continuous expansion of developmental projects in both public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia during the past 30 years, required efficient governmental organs to promote decentralised policies that lead to comprehensive development in all the provinces of the Kingdom. Also, the Gulf crises in 1990 encouraged the discussions in business and academic circles regarding the role of the government in recognising the need for administrative reform and for citizen's participation in the socio-economic and political aspects.

However, since 1992 the Ministry of Interior began to soften the rigid centralised policies with regard to local administration. This policy towards decentralisation was further encouraged by the King's announcement (in March 1992) for the new systems of government, namely: (a) The basic system of government (b) The consultative council system (c) The Provincial System. According to AL-Ammaj the announcement of these systems seems to be based on "the governments recognition of the need for organisational uniformity, and to a certain extent that some authority could be delegated to the provincial governors" (AL-Ammaj, 1993: 77).

According to the Royal decree No. A/92 dated March 1, 1992 (27/8/1412 H) revised by the Royal decree No. A/21, dated September

16, 1992 (30/3/1414 H), Provincial Councils were formed in each of the thirteen provinces of the Kingdom. The provincial system was initiated to upgrade the efficiency of the administrative function and development in the different provinces of the Kingdom. It also aims to maintain peace and harmony, and to ensure citizen's rights and liberties within the framework of Islamic laws. The establishment of the new Provincial Councils may help in expanding the scope of citizen's participation in the administration of local governments through members of these councils. However, this participation is currently limited to social and economic aspects. The citizen's participation in political affairs is not yet considered in Saudi Arabia. This new administrative system is compatible with the development of the Kingdom which is witnessed in all walks of life including infrastructure, development, manufacturing trade, commerce and others.

The regulations relating to the Provincial System is composed of 41 articles covering aspects such as: (a) the Kingdom's provinces; (b) their divisions; (c) governors (Amirs), (d) administrative, financial and other responsibilities; (e) governorates and districts in these provinces; and (f) Provincial Councils- their formation and relationship with governmental departments. The Provincial Council, which began to undertake its responsibilities within the framework of Provincial System in 1994, could be a step forward towards people participation in administering regional and local governments. It provides linkages between districts, governorates and Provincial Councils in terms of



local administrative hierarchy and the distribution of responsibilities and duties. The selection of council members represents a sort of citizen's participation, in promoting socio-economic development in their governorates and districts. Examining the role of the new provincial system may help in identifying the obstacles facing attempts towards decentralisation of administrative policies.

## **1.2 Research Objectives:**

The main objectives of this research are as follows: First, to examine the various administrative systems in Saudi Arabia, and to show how they differ from the New Provincial System. Secondly, to examine the New Provincial System, and its role in promoting and enhancing local development. Thirdly, to examine the role of the New Provincial System in achieving decentralised policies, and in speeding the decision-making process. Finally, the present research will examine the extent of coordination between the Provincial Councils and the concerned ministries and governmental departments, in providing, promoting and developing public services for the citizens.

## **1.3 The Rationale For The Study:**

The interest in carrying out this research developed as a result of the researcher's own involvement in implementation of the New Provincial System as a Director of the Department of Provincial Development Planning, at the Ministry of Interior. The researcher's

experience enables him to review the minutes, reports and recommendations of the meetings of the Provincial Councils. This experience provided him with a golden opportunity to ascertain the problems and difficulties associated with the implementation of The New Provincial System. Such observations served as a basis for generating the central research questions. The present research may set forth recommendations for the better implementation of the New Provincial System and its role in resolving the administrative problems at the province, governorate, and district levels. Such recommendations could improve the administrative procedures at different governmental levels. Moreover, to the best of the researcher knowledge, this New Provincial System has not been studied. This research took the first step in the direction of understanding the role of the New Provincial System in administrative reform in Saudi Arabia.

#### **1.4 Research Questions:**

The research questions are as follows:

- (a) What are the main objectives of the New Provincial System?
- (b) How does this New Provincial System differ from the old ones?
- (c) Does the New Provincial System fulfill the tasks which were set by the legislator?
- (d) Are these tasks correctly formulated?
- (e) To what extent does the New Provincial System accomplished its duties and responsibilities?
- (f) What has been accomplished by the New Provincial System regarding decentralised policies?

## 1.5 Methodology

The above research questions are going to be answered by various methodologies and research instruments such as "survey research" and "content analysis". The survey research is applied in the present study through the use of structured questionnaires to meet the research objectives. In a conservative society like Saudi Arabia, questionnaires may be a more suitable instrument of data collection compared to a "focus group method". People in Saudi Arabia are not willing to speak freely in public or in small groups about sensitive issues concerning the administration of the government. Survey research is one of the most popular methods used in social research. According to Babbie:

"Survey research is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to be observed directly. Probability sampling provides a group of respondents whose characteristics, may be taken to reflect those of the larger population and carefully constructed standardised questionnaires provide data in the same form from all respondents", (Babbie: 1986: 203-204).

Surveys are also useful vehicles for measuring knowledge, attitudes and practice for a sub-group of population. The survey research will be used in the present study to investigate the opinions of

three groups of respondents about the New Provincial System and its role in raising the level of administrative efficiency in the various provinces of the Kingdom, namely (a) the local officials working at the governorates and districts of Riyadh province, (b) citizens receiving the services, residing in Riyadh province, and (c) a self reported questionnaire was administered to the members of Riyadh Provincial Council. An interviews is conducted with the Amir of Riyadh province.

There are many ways and tools by which the researcher can explore public opinion, such as self-administered questionnaires, interviews, telephone interviews, electronic surveys, extensive interviews, focus groups, documents and biographies. In the focus group, "typically 12 to 15 people are brought together in a room to engage in a guided discussion of a particular topic" (Babbie, 1986:248). It is worth noting here that the focus group is not an appropriate tool for the present study, because the present study includes a larger sample size for citizens and government officials. Moreover, the focus group method is not usually adopted in a conservative and traditional society where freedom of thought is limited, as is the case for Saudi Arabia. In addition, the big sample size and the detailed nature of the present topic necessitate the adoption of the questionnaires for exploring the public opinion about the new provincial system.

The citizen's questionnaire is designed to obtain information concerning the following areas of research interest: (a) Background variables, (b) The role of the New Provincial System in providing

better service to the citizens, (c) The role of the New Provincial System in broadening the base of public participation, (d) The role of the New Provincial System in promoting local development, and (e) The role of the New Provincial System in raising administrative capability. (See Appendix I).

The questionnaires for government officials working in governorates and districts and for members of Riyadh Provincial Council are composed of two main sections: factual questions and attitudinal questions related to the new provincial system. Factual questions were designed to obtain objective information from the respondents regarding their backgrounds. The factual questions did elicit the age, marital status, educational attainment, occupation, nature of work, delegation of authority, authority and job responsibility, and familiarity with the New Provincial System. The second section of the questionnaires, asked for the respondent's opinion of the attitudes towards various aspects of the new administrative system. The respondents were inquired, for example, about their opinions regarding the role of the New Provincial System in achieving decentralisation, in supporting local development, and in encouraging citizen's participation in local administration (see Appendix I).

The basis of the most of the attitudinal questions was a Likert-type scale, ranging from "Strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The respondents were asked to choose one of the categories of the scale in

expressing their opinions. The researcher established a coding system for the Likert-type scale, that ranges from "1" for "strongly disagree" to "5" for "strongly agree".

The unit of analysis chosen for the present study is the "individual", which is most commonly used by social researchers. The "individual" as the unit of analysis can be characterised in many ways: students, workers, parents, farmers, members of households, and so forth. In the present study the individuals are citizens, government officials and members of Riyadh Provincial Council. It is worth noting, at this point, that although the individual serves as the unit of analysis, our analysis for the empirical data is not on this individual level. The researcher will be interested in knowing the opinions and perceptions of an aggregate of citizens, government officials and members of Riyadh Provincial Council about the New Provincial System.

### **1.5.1 Sample Selection:**

The selection of Riyadh province for the present study is justified by many reasons; the most important ones are as follows: (a) Riyadh province houses Riyadh city, which is the political, economical and cultural capital for the Kingdom. Riyadh is a centre for most of the governmental departments, diplomatic missions, banks, commercial centres, cultural centres, sport clubs and youth centres etc. (b) Riyadh province is one of the largest provinces in the Kingdom. Riyadh province includes 19 governorates and 346 districts. Most of the

localities in Riyadh province are not different from other localities in the rest of the Kingdom, regarding administrative structure and cultural background.

However, this selection does not mean that the field work covers the Riyadh metropolitan area, but it covers all the governorates and districts of Riyadh province. The governorates selected for the present study using simple random sampling include governorates that are 15 to 120 kilometers away from the Riyadh metropolitan area.

Moreover, the selection of Riyadh province for the field work, represents a big challenge to the researcher. This is due to its large number of governorates, districts and population compared to other provinces. In addition, Riyadh Provincial Council has the largest number of council members, due to its importance as a political, economic and social centre. Although the present fieldwork is carried out in Riyadh province (the largest province in the Kingdom), yet the research does not claim that the results could be generalised to other provinces of the Kingdom. This is because each province has its own socio-economic and cultural particularities.

The present study is confined to Saudi-male population aged 20 years and over and residing in Riyadh province (see Figure I). The main reasons for excluding non-Saudis from the sample, is that non-Saudis have a limited period of stay in the Kingdom. Moreover, they are not involved in the administration of the local governments. The main reason for limiting the present study to male population is that

women in the Saudi culture have very low participation rate in the labour force and very limited involvement in the decision-making process with regards to employment in local government. Moreover, few Saudi families allow their women to be interviewed in such a conservative society.

Previous studies have shown a very low rate of female participation in the labour force in Saudi Arabia (about 7.8%), specially when compared with rates for other Arab countries (Nour, 1416: 48). This low rate of Saudi female participation in the labour force is attributed mainly to social, cultural and religious factors, which shape the woman status in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Saudi women do not participate effectively in the various economic and social activities. Women are not allowed to work in many jobs, and their activities are limited to certain jobs, such as teaching, nursery, medicine, child education, female banking and social work. In these fields women work in a separate building and do not see or mix with males.

The sample size of any study depends on various factors. The most important of these factors are: (a) the cost of data collection, (b) the efficiency of data collection and precision, and (c) the objectives of the study (Sudma 1976: 69). Taking these factors into consideration the most appropriate sample size and sampling procedure for the two groups of citizens and local governmental officials are described in the next pages.



**Table (1.1)**  
**The breakdown of population in**  
**Riyadh province by sex and nationality**  
**- 1992 Census -**

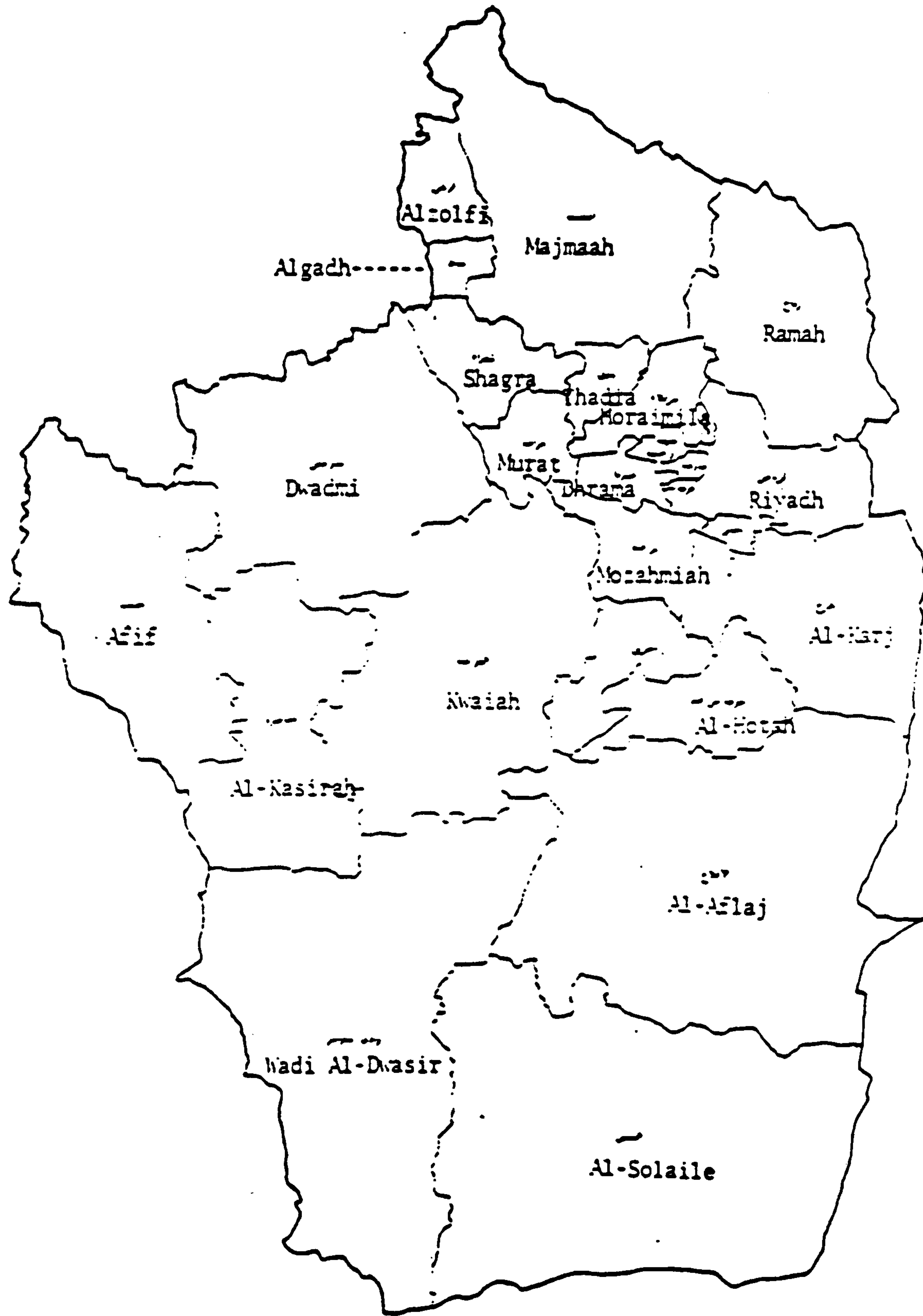
Nationality	Sex		Both Sexes
	Male	Female	
Saudi	1,341,594	1,272,321	2,613,915
Non-Saudis	881,909	339,162	1,221,071
	2,223,503	1,611,483	3,834,986

**Source:** Department of Statistics, Preliminary Findings of the 1992 Census of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The data in Table (1.1) shows the distribution of the population of Riyadh province by sex and nationality. The total population of Riyadh province is about 3.85 million, constituting 22.65% of the total population of the Kingdom. The Saudi population in Riyadh province is about 2.61 million, constituting about 21.24% of the total Saudi population of the Kingdom. It can be deduced from Table (1.1) that the Saudi male population is slightly higher than Saudi female population; i.e. 1.34 and 1.27 millions males and females respectively.

Figure I

Map of Riyadh Province



The 1992 census shows that Saudi male population ages 20 years and over is about 52% of the total Saudi male population. Since the present study is limited to the Saudi male population, the sampled population will be selected from 697,629 males, aged 20 years and over. The following formula has been used to estimate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{4P(100-P)D}{(\text{Precision required})^2}$$

Where "n" stands for the sample size, "P" stands for the percentage of those reporting that the "New Provincial System" will promote decentralisation policy in the pilot survey.

"D" stands for an estimate of the design effect.

$$n = \frac{4(35)(100-35)1}{(5)^2}$$

$$n = 364 \text{ respondents}$$

The sampling procedure is a multi-stage sampling technique. The data found in Table (1.2) shows that there are 19 governorates and 346 districts in Riyadh province. First, a number of five governorates will be selected from the 19 governorates in Riyadh province by simple random sampling. Secondly, a number of thirty districts will be selected

from the five governorates proportional to the size of districts in each governorate using simple random sampling. Finally, about 364 respondents will be selected from the thirty districts using simple random sampling.

The selection of individuals in the selected districts is made by simple random sampling using the health records available at the Primary Health Centres (PHC) located in towns, cities and villages. The health records are used to locate the address of the selected individual from a particular district. It is worth noting here that there are more than 1800 Primary Health Centres distributed among the various parts of Saudi Arabia. Health records are available for almost all the families serviced by a particular health centre (Ministry of Health, 1996).

**Table (1.2)****Governorates and Districts in Riyadh Province**

Governorates	Districts
1- Diriyah	3
2- Dwadmi	89
3- Kwaiah	55
4- Majmaah	32
5- Wadi AL-Dwaiser	32
6- Kharj	22
7- Aflaj	22
8- Shagra	16
9- Al - Hotah	8
10- Alzolfi	4
11- Romah	11
12- Afif	9
13- Horaimila	9
14- Thadiq	8
15- Mozahmiah	8
16- Alsolaile	7
17- Dharama	3
18- Algadh	2
19- Al Harih	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>346 **</b>

**\*\* There are five districts reporting to the capital of Riyadh province.**

Another sample of 150 local officials is selected from 3,115 persons working in the 19 governorates. The sample of the local officials is selected by simple random sampling from the nationals working in the five selected governorates, using the monthly pay-sheet available at governorates and districts. It is worth noting here that eight questionnaires were deleted from the analysis due to inconsistency in the responses. The third questionnaire is self administered to all the members of Riyadh Provincial Council. Here the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the members of Riyadh Provincial Council, and came back the next day to collect them, after being completed by the respondents. The data for this category is collected on full coverage basis due to the very limited number of the population.

### **1.5.2 The Pilot Survey:**

The pilot survey was conducted in May 1995. The main objectives of the survey were: First, to determine whether or not the questions were clear and understandable in their wording, structure and sequence; Secondly, to determine whether or not the questions were written in such a way as to measure the opinions they were intended to elicit and measure and thirdly, to show the need for additional questions or for elimination of others. The sample for the pilot survey consists of 63 questionnaires distributed among the two groups of respondents as follows: 51 questionnaires for the citizens 12 for the local officials. The pilot survey for the two groups of citizens and local officials were

carried out in the governorates of Diriyah and Kharj near Riyadh city, the capital of Saudi Arabia. The final survey was carried out by the researcher during October - December of 1995. The pre-coded questionnaires were analysed using SPSS programme (Statistical package for Social Sciences) to examine the responses of the respondents. The following are the most important observations from the pilot survey:

- The researcher has noticed that the screening questions have negatively affected the answers to the consequent questions. Consequently, they have been deleted.
- Some of the governmental officials were very conservative in releasing information about the "New Provincial System". They tried not to be very critical about this new system. However, the responses of others were very useful for the present study.
- The Pilot Survey shows a need for additional questions regarding the administrative and the financial power given to the Provincial Councils. These questions are added at a later stage to the questionnaire of the governmental officials.
- Some of the questions have been re-stated to avoid confusion and inconsistency in responses. Other questions are corrected for spelling and other typing mistakes.
- According to the findings of the pilot survey and the useful observations made by the researcher earlier academic advisor, minor modifications and corrections were made in the questionnaires for officials. However, some modifications were

made for the citizen's questionnaire: some questions were deleted, others were added, while others were rephrased in order to avoid ambiguity and confusion. The final version of the two questionnaires were distributed among the two groups of respondents. [For more details about the findings of the pilot survey, see Appendix II].

### **1.5.3 Other Sources of Data:**

In addition to the findings of the three questionnaires, the following information was used to answer the various research questions mentioned earlier in section 1.4, namely, governmental reports and interviews. The present research has made use of the available Royal decrees, acts, Provincial Council minutes and other governmental documents to answer the research questions. Formal interviews about the New Provincial System have been made with the Amir of Riyadh province and notable persons who were involved in the formulation and the application of the "New Provincial System."

### **1.5.4 Methods of Data Analysis:**

As mentioned earlier a simple random sample was used to select 150 governmental officials (working at the governorates and the districts) and 364 citizens residing in the selected governorates and districts. The self administered questionnaire was distributed among the officials under close supervision of the researcher. According to Babbie in self-administered questionnaires, respondents were asked to complete



the questionnaires themselves (Babbie, 1986:257). The citizens questionnaire was administered by the researcher himself. In this situation the researcher and the five interviewers meet the citizens in their respective governorates.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the present study. Some of the research questions presented in this chapter are addressed by the method of "content analysis" which is considered as an important method of observation and data analysis in many studies of social research. Instead of directly observing people, or asking them about their behaviour, the researcher makes a deep analysis for any piece of communication. For example, the researcher in the present study analyses the minutes and the discussions of the various meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council in order to assess the new administrative system. "Content analysis may be applied to virtually any form of communication among the possible artifacts for study of books, magazines, poems, newspapers, constitutions, minutes of the meetings and the like." (Babbie, 1986: 267).

The data compiled were analyzed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis of the data was achieved by using frequency distribution of several variables of each questionnaire in order to provide answers to the major research questions. The descriptive statistic include measures of central tendency, such as means and medians for qualitative variables like age, duration of services, years of schooling ... etc.

Inferential analysis of the data was performed by using chi-square through the use of cross-tabulation involving a variety of bivariate relationships. The ANOVA (analysis of variance) technique was used in analyzing the comparative means among a set of variables.

The chi-square based test of significance, was employed in order to assess the differences among the various sub-groups of the sample.

Statisticians usually recommend a .05, .01, or even .001 level of significance in testing hypotheses in order to secure a 95, 99, or 99.9 percent confidence level in the interpretation of the test results. These levels of confidence depend upon the nature of the study and the reasonable risk of error in interpretation of the statistical findings. In accordance with previous studies concerning human attitudes, and with regard to the nature of this study, the investigator decided to select a .05 level to test the differences among the sub-groups of the population.

## **1.6 The Organisation of the Study:**

The present study is composed of ten chapters. The first chapter covers the methodological issues namely, Statement of the Problem, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Rationale for the Study, Sample Selection and Methods of Statistical Analysis.

The second chapter reviews concepts, definitions and some studies on local government and "decentralisation" in both developed and developing countries, with emphasis on Arab countries. Chapter III

attempts to review briefly the geographical, demographic, political, social and economic situation of Saudi Arabia with special emphasis on the period since the unification of the Kingdom in 1932. Chapter IV affords the reader with a wide historical perspective of the various administrative systems in Saudi Arabia: the administrative system before the unification of the Kingdom, Omara system, Nizam Al-Mukataat (Regional system) and the New Provincial System.

Chapters V and VI provide a detailed analysis for the New Provincial System, issued by the Royal Decree No. A/21 in March 1992. Chapter V tries to answer the following question: (a) What are the main objectives of the new provincial system? (b) How does this new system differ from the earlier administrative systems in Saudi Arabia? (c) Does the new provincial system fulfill the tasks which were set by the legislator? (d) Are these tasks correctly formulated? Chapter VI discusses the various aspects pertaining to the Provincial Council: its composition, member's duties and responsibilities. Chapter VI includes a brief discussion regarding the functions of the specialized committees of the Provincial Council, and their role in speeding up the decision-making process of the council.

Chapters VII, VIII and IX deal with the empirical findings of the present study. Chapter VII provides a detailed analysis of citizens' views about the New Provincial System, and its role in decentralisation, the decision-making process, and local development. The analysis in Chapter VII affords the reader with the citizens' views about the

sufficiency of services available.

The primary aim of Chapter VIII is to present the views of government officials about the New Provincial System. Chapter IX shows the views of appointed members of Riyadh Provincial Council, Amir of Riyadh province and notable persons about the Provincial Council. The analysis in Chapter IX depends mainly on the findings of the field work conducted by the researcher. Finally, Chapter X provides a summary of the most important findings of the present study, and some recommendations which may help in meeting the objectives of the new administrative system in Saudi Arabia.

## **1.7 The Research Contribution:**

A scientific study has to depend on a theoretical framework, definitions and concepts which help to organise and explain data. Such theoretical framework may help in better understanding the administrative set-up of local governments in Saudi Arabia. However, studies on government administration at national and local level in Saudi Arabia are limited in area and scope, and most of these studies are dissertations submitted by Saudi students as partial fulfilment of their requirements for attaining degrees and diplomas.

This research as far as I know, after making exhaustive inquiries, is the first study that has been conducted regarding the new provincial system since the system was established in 1992. Furthermore, the system was applied until the year of 1994. The

researcher has visited five governorates and thirty districts, and met Saudi citizens and local government officials, in order to investigate their opinions and thoughts regarding the role of the new provincial system in promoting local development.

The present research analysed the structure, the composition and the functions of the Riyadh Provincial Council. This research analysed the empirical study which investigates the opinions of citizens of five governorates belonging to the Riyadh province and their governmental officials regarding the role of the new system in promoting the decentralised policies, local development, and provision of services.

The present study will contribute to the general knowledge base about the new administrative system in Saudi Arabia, and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of citizens for public services. The study generates a set of recommendations for legislators and policy makers to reconsider the shortcomings in the New Provincial System, especially in areas like public participation, delegation of power and financial autonomy. The Saudi legislator and policy makers could make use of our findings to correct, maintain, and/or eliminate any obstacles facing decentralisation of administrative policies in Saudi Arabia.

Saudi universities, nongovernment institutions and other information seekers about the earlier and the new administrative systems in Saudi Arabia could also benefit from the present study in that it could enrich their knowledge and understanding of local

administration in Saudi Arabia. In general, the present study could fulfill its primary objectives in generating greater understanding of the role of the New Provincial System in promoting decentralisation policies, decision-making process, provision of services and deligation of power.

# CHAPTER II

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction:

Recently, the world is witnessing revolutionary changes in politics, economics, social and administrative reform. The administrative reform is becoming a symptom not only in the developed countries but also in many developing countries. The most salient features of this administrative reform is the contribution and participation of many nations in the decision-making process regarding economic and political development, as well as the feeling of responsibility and the consciousness of what goes on, in the social changes in societies. Some of the most important political and administrative approaches through which the society can contribute to decision-making, is the division of authority and financial responsibilities between the government and the citizens. This contribution can take different shapes such as devolution, deconcentration, delegation and decentralisation. Local administration and local governments have been important concerns of writers in public administration, law, politics and economics.

Because the Kingdom is a large country with many variations in topographical and demographical conditions, together with the responsibility of the people to participate in the growing socio-economic

development, the researcher visualises that there is a need to introduce decentralized policies, through administrative reform. Why? This is because the government will not be able to control the economic, social, political and security from the centre, as a result of the growing needs of the population. The best way is to decentralise the government responsibilities and to enlist the participation of the citizens' in order to attain the listed targets for development.

The present study will focus on certain criteria for monitoring and evaluating decentralisation of policies in Saudi Arabia, such as legitimacy, participation, autonomy and decentralisation of power and wealth. Needless to say that, these values are affected by the cultural, economic, social and political environment. These values will become our measuring rod against which we assess the performance of decentralisation of local government in Saudi Arabia. The quest for legitimacy is an essential requirement for the continuity of the decentralised local government unit. This is because legitimacy is a process through which the unit gains popularity and acceptability. Participation is one of the important pillars of democracy and local government. Consequently no local government reform can be ideologically justifiable or politically acceptable if it ignores the concept of participatory democracy.

Decentralisation offers a considerable degree of autonomy in handling local affairs with minimal interference from outside. It helps reduce unnecessary and excessive control from above and stops



infiltration of undesirable external influences.

It is worth noting here that decentralisation of power and wealth is the core of all local government reform movements. The assumption is that infiltration of power down to the grass-roots, local units through decentralisation, either by transferring departmental functions to statutory bodies in the province, district or village, or by transferring ministerial or departmental functions to field units, is conducive to the diffusion of innovation and change.

When the new provincial system was enacted in 1992 and implemented in 1994, and thirteen provinces were established throughout the Kingdom, it was a move towards decentralisation. We believe that such a gesture is likely to introduce greater citizens' participation and socio-economic development, if the new administrative system is properly implemented. Has decentralisation in Saudi Arabia been realized by the implementation of the new provincial system? The present research will try to answer this question and many other questions related to delegation of power, decision making process and citizens' participation in socio-economic and political development.

Before embarking on the present research, we will review some writings, theories and studies related to decentralization, and local government, in both developed and developing countries. All these will be discussed in a framework linking them with wider issues of development and modernisation.

## **2.2 Definitions:**

### **2.2.1 Local Administration:**

The concept of local administration tends to differ from one society to another depending on the differences on cultural, political, social, economic and environmental factors prevailing in the that society. The western countries, namely the United States and Western Europe differ in terms of geography, politics and culture, from the Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, the stages of development may have an effect on the type of local administration. For example, in the modern state which replaced the feudal system, centralisation of the state policy has become a practical necessity (Badran, 1986). Later on when countries realised the need for implementing developmental plans, decentralised policies become a necessity to administer local governments. They differ in many aspects such as administrative set-up, particularly local administration which is a focal point in the present study. According to Stewart local administration is interrelated with its surrounding circumstances and responsibilities. He stated that, "Management in local government has its own purposes, conditions and tasks. Administrative Managment has no universal principles that can be applied to each and every situation. There are no standard packages" (Stewart, 1988: 2). The concepts of local administration and administrative decentralisation as expressed by western and Arab scholars, has been subjected to different interpretations. Sometimes it is termed "administrative decentralisation" in some other instances

"Regional decentralisation", "Deconcentration" and some have used the term "Political Decentralisation". It is also called local government. The concept, however, varies according to the given political, social, economic and cultural factors that distinguish one society from the other (AL-Tamawi, 1961).

The focal point in the present study is local administration and decentralisation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and their roles in the decision-making process, development process and rendering of public services. Since it is not easy to review the massive literature on local administration in both global, and regional levels, this chapter will focus on studies that concentrate on the important studies related to the theme of our research.

### **2.2.2 Devolution:**

The concept of devolution is defined as the creation or strengthening financially or legally of subnational units of government, the activities of which are substantially outside the direct control of the central government. Under devolution, local units of government are autonomous and independent, their legal status makes them separate or distinct from the central government. In this situation, the central authorities frequently exercise only indirect, supervisory control over such units. Normally, local governments have clear and legally organised geographical boundaries within which they exercise an exclusive authority to perform explicitly granted or reserved functions (Rondinelli and others 1984: 19 - 20). This definition is not different

from the one proposed by Assaf, which reads; "Transfer of authority to departmental field units to exercise all the powers and authorities of the central body. The local authority enjoy full powers and authorities and great degree of autonomy" (Assaf, 1990: 174 - 175).

### **2.2.3 Deconcentration:**

Deconcentration is defined as handing over of some amount of administrative authorities or responsibilities to lower levels within central government ministries and agencies. Deconcentration is thought as the shift of the workload from centrally located officials to staff or offices outside the central government (Rondinelli and others 1984:10). According to Alderfer, deconcentration merely sets up administrative units or field stations, singly or in a hierarchy, separately or jointly, with orders as to what they should do and how they should do it. No major matters of policy are decided locally, no fundamental decisions are taken at local governments (Alderfer, 1964:167).

### **2.2.4 Delegation:**

According to Assaf, delegation is considered when the central authority, delegates some of their authorities to the lower level units to exercise power according to its own conception (Assaf, 1990:176). Delegation means transfer of managerial responsibility for specifically defined functions to organisations that are outside the regular bureaucratic structure and that are only indirectly controlled by the central government, "In some countries, delegation is looked upon as a way of removing important functions from inefficient government

bureaucracies. In other countries it has been viewed as a way for government indirectly to provide goods and services for which user or unit charges can be made, but which are not effectively provided by the civil service" (Rondinelli and others 1984: 15).

"Delegation is the most effective means and process for assigning and coordinating the work done by many people. Delegation achieves greater results with less of the manager's direct involvement. Delegation promotes cost effectiveness, job enrichment, higher morale, lower turnover, and more initiative from team members (Nelson, 1990: 8-9).

### **2.2.5 Decentralisation:**

The concept of decentralisation means that responsibility for administration is divided geographically between the centre and the outlying regions. The growth in government responsibilities for services has made it absolutely essential for administration to be divided between the centre and the provinces. According to Macrae and Pitts, "a country in which all administration is concentrated at the centre would probably suffer a poplexy at the centre and anaemia at the edges too much blood in the head and too little in the feet" (Macrae and Pitts, 1980: 71). For many scholars decentralisation is seen as referring to both devolution and deconcentration. Smith, for example defines the term as "the delegation of power to lower levels in a territorial hierarchy, whether the hierarchy is one of the governments within a state or offices within a large - scale organisation. Thus decentralisation refers to territorially based delegation and not to purely functionally

based delegation" (Turner and Hume, 1997: 154 - 155). This definition would be too narrow for Rondinelli, who broadens the definition to include parastatals, and particularly regional development authorities (Rondinelli, 1986). "Most authors agreed that decentralisation within the state involves a transfer of authority to perform some service to the public from an individual or an agency in central government to some other individual or agency which is "closer" to the public to be served." (Turner and Hume, 1997: 152).

The transfer of authority is of three types: (a) when delegation is within formal political structure, i.e. when the central government delegates additional authority to local government, (b) when the transfer is within public administrative or parastatal structures, (c) when the transfer is from an institution of state to a non-state agency. If the transfer of authority from central government to a decentralised agency is to be effective then it must be matched by a transfer of responsibility; that is, the decentralised agency must provide the particular function (s) for which it now has authority (Turner and Hume, 1997: 153 - 154).

It must be noted that decentralisation does not imply that all authority should be delegated. The central government must retain a core of functions over essential national matters and ultimately has the authority to redesign the system of government and to discipline or suspend decentralised units that are not performing effectively. However, the researcher believes that how extensive this core of central government functions should remain a major ideological and intellectual

debate of this new century.

AL-Mutairy and others share the same opinion when they indicated that, the appropriate definition of decentralisation within the framework of their study of local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. AL-Mutairy and others indicate that "it is the first method of the state administrative organisation to be based on the idea of allocation of authorities and responsibilities between the central and the local government bodies in order to enable the central government units to concentrate on the formulation of the general policy of the state. In addition to management of the national utilities allowing the local government institutions to run local utilities with efficiency in order to achieve its objectives". (AL-Mutairy, 1989: 20).

According to Badran, "Decentralisation is the distribution of power among many institutions so that these powers are not concentrated at the central government level, but allocated to other regional, utility or political institutions (Badran, 1986:17). Badran divided decentralisation into three categories: Utility decentralisation, regional or local decentralisation and political decentralisation. The political decentralisation, as he stated, is based on the distribution of political power i.e. legislative power, judicial power and administrative power between the central government and the state government which combinedly constitute the state. The political decentralisation, is therefore, related to the constitutional system of the state (Badran, 1986: 18).

This definition agrees with our opinion regarding the need for

distribution of authority between the central government and the local government bodies and thus expediting the process of local decision-making, bring it close to the local unit and consequently expedite the process of development and broaden social participation.

Some of the Arab scholars viewed decentralisation from the point of view of the manner in which authority is transferred from the central government in the capital to the different local units. Badran as one of those scholars indicated the way authority is transferred could be by many ways most important of which are: Transfer by delegation, devolution and deconcentration. He defined each of these types and quoted examples from different countries (Badran, 1986; AL- Tamawi, 1961).

### **2.2.6 Local Government:**

As its name implies, local government is a system of decentralised decision-making in which local authorities are subject to local democratic control in a way that local offices of governmental departments are not "(MacRae and Pitt, 1980: 73 - 74). There are many functions for local governments. However, the most important ones are: (a) local governments enable the citizens to have a degree of democratic control over many important services, (b) local governments play an important educative role in a democratic political system, (c) give scope for democratic participation in running the affairs of local units, (d) the experience gained in local government is an invaluable rehearsal for taking part in national politics (MacRae and Pitt, 1980: 74). In this



respect MacRae and Pitt tends to agree with Humes and Martin who believe in the similarities among local government systems in countries which share the impact of many factors, such as historical, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental (Humes and Martin, 1961: 37).

Humes and Martin's classification of local government is based on the relationship between the capacity of the authority and the nature of its responsibilities on the one hand, and the way how the authority is formed on the other hand. Accordingly, they identified four main types of local government systems: (a) Multi-purpose representative local governments, (b) Multi-pupose non-representative local governments, (c) Limited purpose representative local governments, (d) Limited purpose non-representative local governments.

According to Rasheed, (1987) local government is associated with political authority, where as local administration is associated with administrative authority (local administration). This is currently practised by the promulgation of the provincial system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia issued in 1992 .

In Rasheed's (1987) opinion local government represents political decentralisation characterised by the following: a) existence of local councils elected according to constitutional and legal laws, b) local councils are empowered to levy taxes to finance its local policies, where as local administration is the organisation of the state administrative machinery which co-ordinates the relationship between the central and local authorities. In his opinion the administrative decentralisation must

meet the following conditions:

- Administrative units should enjoy "Local autonomy".
- The local unit should be represented by a body which has special entity, and which exercises the powers and authorities which have been delegated to it.
- There should be special relationship between the local bodies and the central government to ensure that the local institutions exercise their powers and authorities within the framework of the general policy.

Mik has pointed out the distinction between local government and local administration by saying: "not all local authorities have high autonomy and powers to be considered as a "government", but rather seen as local administration within the apparatus of the state that is in favour of the national government" (Mik, 1999: 1).

## **2.3 Background of Local Government in Industrialised Countries.**

### **2.3.1 Introduction:**

The system of local government which came to existence a long time ago did not assume its legal shape before the emergence of the modern nation state, which had assumed increasing responsibilities towards the citizens. Eventually, decentralization of some of the state powers to local government units become inevitable.

In the late nineteenth century, law scholars and political scientists started to develop interest in the field of local government. However, the study of local government had remained a branch of the administrative law. Nevertheless, this science got dissociated with the disciplines of politics and public law to become an independent discipline. At the earlier stages of its development, local government systems reflected the prevailing social and political structures. It developed from the stage of tribal formations, regional governments, early empires, feudal systems until it reached the age of modern state. These systems reflected the intermarriage between centralisation and decentralisation within the framework of local government.

The system of local councils which represent a group of villages were known early in India. This was even before the emergence of local councils in many European countries (Harris, 1948: 10). Yet these forms of limited representation could not be considered as a type of local government as it is practised nowadays. It was more prone to aristocratic minority rule or rule by the notables. City states were run and administered by the powerful families. In other instances this was carried out by guild groups. "There were some exceptions such as Switzerland, which was practising some sort of government characterised by a high level of popular representation due to the direct democratic rule which was practised in some of its regions" (Humes and Martin, 1961: 29).

In Greece, the prevailing system was the city state system which

was considered to be self-sufficient independent political entity. The Greek city-state was composed of a number of villages which in turn embraced a number of tribes. The tribe was considered to be the basic unit which constitute the underlying structure of the human society. This system would have been considered as idealistic if it had achieved more self-sufficiency and more self-autonomy. In a later stage the regional government emerged, as a result of federation of some local entities, as a rival to the tribe, and took the form of centralised Kingdoms extending its domination over the regional entities beyond the village and city levels (Badran, 1986: 39).

Then the regional governments extended to give rise to the empires. Throughout this period, convergence and intermingling between centralisation and decentralisation has been a characteristic factor. However, the emergences of the empires were accompanied by excessive centralisation necessitated by the need to control the rest of the geographic area, besides the spiritual homogeneity of the people and consequently the uniting factors prevailing over the disuniting ones (AL- Tamawy, 1961: 12).

The idea of local government was revived due to the interaction of the ancient empires with diverse nations, regions and races, at the expense of these empires. New systems emerged, because of the decadence of the feudal system, the small cities and regions. By its nature the feudal system is a local system based on parochial loyalty and sharing of power among the feudal lords as each feudal state constituted

an independent entity (Badran, 1986: 44). The modern form of the nation state had appeared through the British and French states. It was not long until it spreads all over the world as a heir of the ancient empires and the feudal states.

The studies of decentralisation and local government had attracted more attention in the developed countries, particularly Britain and France (Lagroye and Wright, 1979; Jackson, 1978). This could be attributed to multiple factors: one of these is the initiatives taken by those countries to consolidate the concept of decentralisation in their countries, then transferred these concepts and transplanted them in their colonies in other parts of the world at that time, to the extent that it had become prototypes with some modifications to suit local circumstances in those countries which had newly attained their independence. There is another factor which could explain the attention being accorded to these studies in Britain and France. It was the fact that local government is deeply rooted in these countries to the extent that some of the local units had preceded the establishment of the present central government organs such as "Parishes" in Britain.

In America, the states came into existence before the formation of the Federal Union of the American states. These states, still constitute middle links between cities, rural areas and administrative units at the bottom of the administrative structure and the federal government at the central level. It supervises the local units in that particular state, play developmental role at one hand and it is subject to central government

control at the federal level on the other hand; with respect to project implementation and the programmes that are funded by loans and central government financial assistance so as to ensure allocation of services and guarantee good performance levels. By the advent of the French revolution in 1789, decentralisation and deconcentration came up as a philosophy of administration then spread out to Europe and the rest of the world. In order for the central government to guarantee the loyalty of the governors of the French regions, it replaced them by central government officials who owe their loyalty to the central government. The principles of "non-ministryship" and "deconcentration" emerged in order to curb excessive centralisation (Sabir, 1963: 44). Al-Afandi indicated that Federalism came to existence, simultaneously with the emergence of the American Revolution (Al-Afandi, 1972: 45).

### **2.3.2 Models of Local Government:**

Four basic models of local government seem to exist in the world. Alderfer examined the four models of local government: the French, the English, the Soviet, and the Traditional. He categorised most local governmental systems in developing countries under one of these models (Alderfer, 1964). Here, we will examine these contemporary models, their features, their structure, and their influence on the formation of local governments.

#### **a- The English Model:**

The English model of local government is characterised by a

number of features to ensure effective control of local government. In the English model there are no higher authorities or bodies that separate the local units from the central ministries or the parliament. The local government units in Britain enjoy a great degree of decentralisation in running the local affairs without intervention from outside. It runs many utilities of local nature. The real authority is rested in the locally elected council which, supervises and directs the area, through its committees. In order to upgrade the quality of administration in the local councils and make them more effective, generally it may select local people who enjoy particular experience and expertise that is required for the council (Alderfer, 1964: 9).

Alderfer confirmed that, with respect to local government, the English system is characterised as being a decentralised system with highly effective legislative bodies. The English system depends on committees to a large extent, and on the establishment of local councils which undertake various activities and popular participation. The English model is based on the principles of democracy and legitimacy of the democratic society which believes in democracy as a political, social and economic system. The local administration in Britain is based on elected representatives who are close to the people they serve. Hill argued that "the democratic theory and local government were related" (Hill, 1974: 16). He is concerned with democratic theory and local government.

According to Mik, the British local government system is one of

the most complex structures in the Western World, which has been subject to endless changes and reforms initiatives, and has been a major battle ground for central and local politicians (Mik, 1999: 7). Local government in Britain existed many years before any central government was established. The people living in small communities involved some simple organisations for dealing with local matters. According to Stout the country is subdivided into Urban and rural districts. The government institutions in these districts are similar to those in the counties. Each district has a popularly elected council consisting of an appropriate number of councillors. The council elects a chairman who presides over its deliberations. It is then divided into committees, each of which maintain supervision over various district activities (Stout, 1953: 76 - 79). Below the rural and urban districts, there are the smallest units of English local government, the parishes. Each parish has a council of its population of sufficient proportional size. Regardless of its size, each parish will have at least one clerk who will perform all necessary local and legal administrative functions (Stout, 1953: 285).

Although the basic characteristic of English local government is decentralisation, the central government is gaining increased powers over local affairs. A fair amount of administrative control is currently exercised through various central ministries and national agencies. Such control includes the approval of some appointments, the threat of substitute administrations, the making of regulations to implement



parliamentary statutes, the refusal to approve certain local actions, the granting of provisional orders, and the giving of advice and information (Gooch, 1939: 76 - 79). Another important characteristic of the English model of local government is the inspectors. Inspectors have a long history in British government, but in recent years their administrative virtues have been somewhat neglected with the emphasis having been placed on their advisory role.

**b- The French Model:**

France has presidential democracy with popularly elected and influential president performing functions both as the head of the state and as the head of local governments. The administrative system has traditionally been very centralised, strong until recently. However, the constitution in the last three decades enacted several changes to allow for more decentralisation of powers and authority to local and regional governments. The previous strong grip of the central government was relaxed and the previous bodies working as agents of the central government can, now, levy taxes, and also receive grants from the central government. Thus solving to some extent, the problems of centralisation without affecting the problem of unity (Mik, 1999: 8).

In the French local government system the basic unit is the commune - the electors of all French communes choose every six years, their municipal councillors. The council elects a mayor and assistants who act as the parliamentary government of the council. It adopts broad policies and votes on the budget; it is up to the mayor and his assistants

to implement this policy (Khashogji, 1979).

The power, however, is actually in the hands of the central government appointee, the "prefect". The "prefect" is responsible for various services of the central government such as finance, public works, agriculture, labour, police, etc. He is also responsible for the coordination of activities of the national ministry representatives. Since he is responsible for the implementation of the decisions of the council, he has to be adopted at political diplomacy and acumen driven by his own strong-mindedness. The "prefect" is formally responsible only to the Minister of the Interior and through him, to the French government as a whole (Khashogji, 1979).

The French model of local government is characterised by a high degree of centralisation. The local units are organs of the central government and as such, have no powers except those granted to them by constitutional authority.

From what has been mentioned, it can be concluded that the two administrative models differ in the following aspects. First, the French administrative model depends mainly on defining the authorities at the local level, and all local governments are similar in their defined authorities, irrespective of their population size and the number of their housing units. Secondly, the French model emphasises the power of the central government and limits the authorities of local units. On the other hand the English model defines the local authorities for each local unit separately, so that the administrative units are not allowed to practice

any authorities not specified by the legislator. The English model, has defined the authorities for each local government depending on the prevailing socio-economic and demographic conditions. As a result the English model is considered as more practical compared to the French model, since the English model defines the authorities at the local governments according to the prevailing conditions in each administrative unit. Finally, the origins of local governments in France are administrative rather than political, and scope for genuine local government had been very limited.

**c- Soviet Model:**

Alderfer described the Soviet Model as; "soviet local government is characterised by communist party control under the name of democratic centralism, single-candidate elections, hierarchicol chain of command and a broad scope of government power to local councils" (Alderfer, 1964: 14). This type of local government is based on the Marxist philosophical thought where all powers are vested in the central government. Regarding the powers of local government councils, it was stated in the Federal constitution of the Republic of the Soviet Union in general terms. There are general responsibilities which involve the direction of cultural, political and economic structures in the area that comes under the jurisdiction of the local council by using its organisational power which enable it to issue the necessary regulation that do not contradict with the prevailing rules and regulations which are enforced at the Republic level or Federal laws. The central

government structure which decides the power of the local councils according to the general principles laid down by the federal constitution and the respective constitutions of the Republic of the Soviet Union at that time (Fahmy, 1974: 14). In the Republic of the Soviet Union, the communist party was the leading power of the society, and there was an extremely centralised system of decision making. Such a system allowed strict control over local governments in the form of direct interference in administrative affairs by higher level authorities within the centralised and hierarchical state apparatus. After the latest political transformation and the break down of the Soviet Union, new writings have emerged in the field of local administration explaining their conception of local administration and decentralisation in the economic, political and social aspects which might contribute to the invention of a new decentralised system that could cope up with the changes that took place in 1989. Fath Al-Bab referred to one of these studies when he said, "In the socialist countries and the countries which had adopted the Marxist system, direct elections are practiced to constitute their local popular elected councils and which was called "Local Parliament". But did that mean the existence of local administration as this system implied? The answer is absolutely negative. These councils lack the power that enable them to run the minimum tasks of their local affairs. Rather; they were subjected to excessive and comprehensive rules to direct all its activities. (Fath Al-Bab, 1993 : 80).

On the other hand, there are other studies which expressed



different opinions; some of these studies were published by Bird, Freund and Sallic under the title. "Decentralisation of Inter-governmental Finance in Transitional Economies". They pointed out that there is "extensive political and fiscal decentralization is now underway in almost all countries in central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union" (Bird and others, 1994: 149).

In the Soviet model, the administrative system is a more centralised type of government, specially when compared with Western countries and some developing countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The administrative system in the Soviet model is characterised with strict control of local governments in the form of direct interference in the administrative affairs of local units.

Khashogji argues that "despite federalist forms and what is often called "local autonomy" in the soviet republics, local authorities in the Soviet Union were severely handicapped not only by the scarcity of resources, but especially so by the ultra - centralisation of the entire system. Soviet local administrations are primarily agencies of a highly centralised bureaucracy. Moreover, since local matters are decided by many agencies which may or may not be responsible to local authorities, local government is often more helpless and ineffective in regulating matters of local concern than local governments are in Britain, France, or the United States. (Khashogji, 1974: 26).

**d- Traditional Model:**

This type is famous for its primitive nature. It prevails in the

traditional cultural structures and characterised by its simple political structure and complex social structure. Alderfer noted that, "the term traditional local government as far as we are concerned here, means that government is indigenous to the place where it exists" (Alderfer: 1964: 14). In this respect the traditional model means the one that does not fit in the Western model. All the traditional models share similarities all over the world and it is developing towards democratic and liberal type. Alderfer added: "they inclined to be simple in political structure which is backed up by complex sociological moves and originally tended towards the direction of democracy and freedom. But the residues which exist now are fragmented and appear side by side with the political institution of a more highly developed culture; namely the Western culture" (Alderfer, 1964: 16).

The Traditional Model of local administration is the product of the first civilisations of the world. The system's roots go back to ancient ages when a group of people would get together in some places, with a common goal. The traditional local government would likely be headed by a tribal chief, a village head, or some other kind of local leader, acting either as the sole authority or the major authority figure assisted by a council of elders or the like. The power structure is a kin to an extended family, clan, tribe, religious elite, or economic class. The functions of government were constant with the developmental stage of the people, and jurisdiction was usually limited to a village or group of villages in a contiguous geographic area (Khashogji, 1979: 26).

The old traditional model where village dignitaries headed by the tribal chief or chiefs, held their village council under a tree or in a tent to resolve "hot issues", is well represented by the old African traditional society where the sheikhship, the tribal chief and the wizard are not only a leadership style but a social doctrine predicated upon a political and administrative philosophy. They derive their authority from a legitimacy base well grounded in tradition. The sheikh, the chief or wizard may have his own charisma but as Fadlalla put it "The charismatic authority does not guarantee continuity and sustenance of power, let alone confirmity or patronage" (Fadlalla, 1999: 81).

## **2.4 Local Governments in Developing Countries:**

Transitional societies are considered as halfway between the disperser and the collector societies, as the case for Saudi Arabia. Transitional societies have the traits of both societies, have the simplicity of collector societies and the complexity of disperser societies. The transitional societies are the ones with the traditional constituents, such as hospital, schools, parliament, and banks (Fadlalla, 1997: 95).

In the transitional society, laws and regulations determine roles according to qualification and experience. In fact filling vacant jobs is done according to tribal considerations or the social position in the tribe. There is a distinction between men and women even if they hold the same qualifications, a distinction between men according to their tribes when they have similar certificates.

The structure is formalist when legal procedures and behaviours are not respected. In the disperser society, economic, political and administrative structures are only found on papers. Positions in the fields of politics, economics and administration are based on collector structures like those found in the collector societies. The family and religious sect dominate behaviour as the market or political party does. The economic performance is determined by non-economic activities, as the administrative performance is affected by non-administrative factors.

The system is called formalist when its behaviour is different from its official procedures. Formalism is smaller in disperser societies as there is a compromise between behaviour and official structure in the general performance. On the other hand, we find that organisations of the collector society do not respect the official performance. Thus work in a way different from their counterparts in the disperser societies. The latter adopt market system: Offer and demand, determine the prices of goods. In the collector society, the market performance reflects personal, social or political values.

On the other hand a group of writers and scholars have recently argued that, the reality of local government seems to bear little relationship to normative claims i.e. meeting demands and needs of local communities, delegating physical and administrative power to carry out their responsibilities. Such kinds of policies, they think, increase liberity and provide better opportunities for people to participate in the



decision-making process (Kjellberg, 1995; Wolman, 1990). Despite today's strong belief in the foregoing arguments of scholars propagating decentralisation, there are latecomers who criticise local government and decentralisation for not being concerned with promotion of issues of equity, integration and redistribution (Goldsmith, 1992; Mik, 1999). Rosenbaum argues that "decentralisation can also serve as a facade for the avoidance of responsibility for major services on the part of a national government. Increasingly, national government pressed by their own financial problems are exhibiting a tendency to devolve responsibilities to regional and local governments without providing the necessary resources" (Rosenbaum, 1998: 10). To give another example, "the need to share the wealth of affluent communities with poor neighbourhood may require some central or regional management and a reshuffling of the competencies between the various levels." (Kjellberg, 1995: 46 - 47). During the 1950's and early 1960's many developing countries had become more centralised, after receiving independence from Colonial regimes. They were involved in nation-building and in implementing socio-economic programmes. Both processes seem to require and legitimize centralised management. But over time, the modest and sometimes negative consequences of central planning and administration became apparent.

Despite these pressures for increasing centralisation, Rondinelli and others argue that a large number of developing countries started decentralising some development planning and management functions

during the 1970's and early 1980's. This move is due to the dissatisfaction with the results of national planning and administration, and because the underlying rationale of international development strategies changed during the 1970's (Rondinelli and others, 1984: 2) and by the end of the 1970's most developing countries faced several financial problems, such as decreasing levels of exports, raising prices for energy and imported goods, and diminishing foreign assistance. For all these factors and others governments in some developing countries tried to use their limited financial resources more effectively. As a result, decentralisation appeared to be one of the solutions to the growing problems in developing countries. "Indonesia's Provincial Development Program, Morocco's Local Government Reform, efforts of decentralisation in Thailand, Pakistan, Tunisia and other cases, show perceptible improvements in resource distribution, local participation, extension of public services to rural areas and project identification and implementation" (Rondinelli and et al, 1984: 4).

Many countries have decentralised physical structures. Decentralisation has worked well in some industrial countries (Austria, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and the United States) and in Indonesia and perhaps Malaysia among the developing countries, and less well in others (Argentina and Brazil) (Tanzi, 1996: 300).

The central government in Pakistan has created and supervises Maraz (district) councils to integrate and coordinate the agricultural, credit, public works, marketing, and infrastructure development

activities of central government ministries with those of local agricultural cooperatives and private sector firms. The Philippines, with the assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development, provides technical, financial, and management assistance through the Provincial Development Assistance Program (PDAP), supervised by the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development to provincial governors. The program aims at building a provincial development staff (Rondinelli and others, 1984: 11 - 12).

In India, the local government institutions (city corporations, municipalities, Panchayati Raj institutions etc.) have been very crucial as these institutions have played a very significant role in the legitimation process of democracy in the post colonial era. However, according to Saxena, local government institutions have not been able to reach at the expected level of the people's aspirations in providing civic amenities, service delivery, developmental programmes etc. The reasons are attributed to their incapacities, poor management, administrative centralisation and financial crises (Saxena, 1999: 1).

Nigeria embarked on a very ambitious global reform of its local government in 1976 to reverse its increasingly centralised political and administrative system. The reform was meant to make local governments become a third tier of government and of governance. Local governments were not only to provide services as any other tier of government, they were to serve as the lynchpin for democratic accountability, national political renewal in post-military civilian

politics and as effective mechanisms for ensuring that every segment of the national population benefited from the country's increasing prosperity (Olowu, 1999: 21).

The situation in South Africa is different from many African countries, as local government in South Africa has a long history which was originally based on the British and Dutch model. However, Reddy argues that, it is generally accepted that local government is an intergral part of the broader issues of governance, transition and development. The political events at the local government level in many ways contributed to some of the fundamental political and social changes in recent years (Reddy, 1999: 30 - 31).

The present trend towards governmental decentralisation in Cameroon, and more specially the new political and associative freedom as exemplified by the new law on associations, augur well for the future of indigenous Non Governmental Organizations (NGO'S) and hence the improvement and sustainability of self-help programmes in the development process of Cameroon. It is worth noting here that the current decentralisation in Cameroon is taking place along three approaches namely; (a) Decentralisation of government services through the creation of more administrative units, (b) Privatisation, (c) Encouragement of the creation of small and medium size enterprises (d) Greater awareness and collaboration with self-help indigenous (Mathew and Paul, 1997: 12).

In Latin America, governments have delegated a wide range of

functions from the production of essential inputs for industrialisation through the management of industrial enterprises to the provision of social services to public authorities. For example, Mexico has made extensive use of public corporations, state marketing boards, and mixed enterprises, which combine state and private capital for investment in high priority development ventures. The measures adopted in Colombia as part of the decentralisation process seek principally to give the local governments a larger role in national development, largely by making them more accountable to the local community (Forero and Salazar, 1991: 125).

From the above examples, one can conclude that many of the countries which attempted decentralised policies, have faced serious problems during implementation, such as insufficient central political and bureaucratic support, in an appropriate design of decentralisation of policies and programmes, and shortage of financial resources.

## **2.5 Local Government and Modernisation and Development:**

Today, there is an increasing concern about the relationship between democratisation and decentralisation on one hand and between decentralisation and development on the other hand. These three issues remain to be the aspirations for many developing countries. Ideally, the three together project a dynamic society with a quality of life reflecting harmony and balanced development. These relationships have dictated a new line of questions on how best to restructure local government in

order to improve efficiency and create more effective governance. "As many countries of the developing world undertake the initial steps necessary for democratic transitions, the role of local government is being reformulated and specified. This may stem from the notion that local government is a training ground for democracy or simply from the assumption that government closer to the people is part and parcel of democratic reform" (McCarney, 1996: 8).

Many developing countries are presently undertaking administrative reform, which created pressure and potential for new forms of local governments. Some developing countries such as The Phillipin, Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan and India which are undertaking government and civil service reorganisation are currently engaged in the process of decentralisation of state structures and functions, and are initiating critical transitional steps towards democratisation (for more details see section 2.4). As a result of this administrative reform, these countries have become critical for the development in both urban and rural areas. For example cities of Latin America, Asia and Africa are facing profound changes as a result of citizens' participation in political as well as in socio-economic issues of development.

According to Castells and others, a notion of urban governance helps to shift thinking away from state-centred perspectives which have predominantly focused on urban management to include elements which, in conventional terms, are often considered to be outside the public policy process. These include civic associations, private sector

organisations, community groups and social movements, all of which in fact exert pressure on the development of urban centres (Castells, 1983; Mabogunje, 1990; Turner, 1990). For example, the success of democratic decentralization and community development strategy in India is attributed to the political will, leadership and the political consciousness of the people (Saxena, 1999: 13). The process of decentralisation and the strengthening of democratic participation which has been introduced in Colombia, have helped to pave the way for more thorough administrative reform. The new constitution in Colombia gives considerable support to the decentralisation process. Forero and Salazar concluded that the process of decentralisation in Colombia is well under way and, for the first time in this century, it seems that local government will play the part that it rightly deserves in the political life of the country (Forero and Salazar, 1991: 126).

It can be concluded from the above arguments that there is a need for deeper analysis of local governments in relationship to citizens' and political affairs. If local government structures are to be developed, and have more open channels of communication and participation, then what is also required is an improved understanding of local political organisations.

The nineteen fifties, sixties and seventies witnessed a huge surge of writings and research on the concepts of decentralisation and local government. Developed countries of Europe out of the World War II were anxious to embark on extensive development plans on the

economic and social fields. Researchers, writers and theorists speculated that the proper solution to this problem is to find ways of removing obstacles in order to allow for development. Programmes are decentralised with the expectation that delays will be reduced, the government will be more responsive to the local public demand and will increase the quality and quantity of the services it provides.

Rodinelli argued that "when central planners design rural development projects in the national capital without thoroughly understanding local social, economic, physical and organisation conditions, they often generate opposition among local groups or encounter such apathy that the projects are doomed to failure at the outset" (Rondinelli, 1984: 3).

The situation during 1950 - 1970 in the third world countries was different. Most of these countries who were subjected to colonial rule were centralised politically, economically and administratively. Sarcastically, when they had their independence from the colonial rule they continued to be suspicious of decentralisation. However the wave soon reached their shores; the group of elites who have been educated in the west and witnessed the move for decentralisation and local government were anxious that such democratic practices should be embodied in their emerging constitutions. They believed that different regions in their countries have different needs, and can only be served through the delegation of the central powers by the government to the grass-roots. Rosenbaum stated "that the movement to decentralisation has been



fueled by disillusionment with the administrative and policy implementing capacity of highly centralised governance systems (Rosenbaum, 1998: 4). A large number of developing countries that are politically, economically and ideologically diverse began to accept the decentralization pattern of the West in both the economic and administrative fields. As Rodinelli put it "the goal of development policies in most countries was to distribute the benefits of economic growth more equitably, to increase the productivity and income of all segments of society and to raise the living standards of the poor" (Rodinelli, 1984: 2). Yet many politicians in these countries consider decentralization as a tool to mobilize the support of the people for national development policies by making them better known at the local level.

## **2.6 Comparative Experience of Local Government in Arab Countries.**

The experiences of local government in the third world varies according to its political, economic, cultural, stages and development, geographic realities and demographic structure. The colonial background also affected these experiences. In North Africa, the Franco-phone countries were affected by the French colonialism in their versions of local government. In the Middle and East Africa, the Anglo-phone countries were subjected to the British colonialism in some stage of their political development. There are some countries, however,

which have not experienced colonialism in any stage of their historical development. Some countries apply the rule of law and others are governed according to Islamic rules.

AL-Tammawy stated that, the administrative system which the state follows is related to its political and economic set-up. In the modern state which replaced the feudal system, centralisation of the state policy has become a practical necessity so as to prevent the come back of feudalism and to ensure the rule of law in a state which has recently been united. Central administration enhances the authority of the central state to consolidate national unity and prevent separatism trends and to ensure maintaining law and order. When the state is stable, and law and order are maintained and all dangers have disappeared, then the state will adopt the administrative system that allows for citizen participation in the public affairs to satisfy their local needs; allowing the central government to concentrate on important issues which concern the state as a whole like defense, security, and foreign affairs etc. (AL-Tammawy, 1961: 8). Due to this tentative balance AL-Tammawy was of the opinion that the combination between centralisation and decentralisation is considered to be one of the most delicate tasks which the legislator has to tackle in dealing with the administrative systems. Most often, the legislator may modify the administrative system that he adopts in the light of practical experience. (AL-Tammawy, 1961: 8).

The researcher seems to agree with AL-Tammawy in his opinion when he called for the establishment of a ministry for local administration to be in charge of, control over local affairs and perform

whatever necessary role to promote the local councils and local government units. In Egypt, the Ministry of Interior was in charge of this work before 1961. The Ministry of Interior supervising local administration and all the governors were associated with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Interior was also supervising the provinces. The province commissioners were affiliated to the Ministry of Interior. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia however, the Ministry of Interior has been and still supervising the work of the provincial councils. It is possible, as AL-Tammawy suggested to annex the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs to a newly established Ministry of Local Administration in order to streamline responsibilities. (AL-Tammawy, 1961: 22).

According to Awadah local administration is practised in the state administrative systems through, "the central government system which allocates the administrative function between the central authority and local councils which are established on regional basis to undertake local tasks which are basically part and parcel of the state public task and responsibilities". (Awadah, 1983: 5).

I would agree with Awadah in that the Arab States combine between centralisation and decentralisation to the extent that suits political and social conditions of each state. Awadah added that, "By virtue of this combination it was possible to attain the required balance in the state as a means of curbing the disadvantages of centralisation and rectify it by appointing some jurists at the local level empowered to settle whatever concerns the interests of the citizens without defecting away from the general policy of the state or the prescribed political and

legal general framework. (Awadah, 1983: 5).

Awadah's study about the applications of local administration in the Arab countries is considered to be a relatively recent one. The study covered a number of Arab and foreign countries, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as one of the Gulf Co-operation council states. Local administration was discussed in scattered parts of his study according to the issues which have been dealt with and according to the organisation of the study. Most important of these issues were, the right of the central authority to exercise control over local administration, the jurisdiction of local administration, its councils and in his analysis of the sources of local administration finance. Awadah's comparative study revealed that central control which is exercised over local administration units varies in extent from one state to the other.

As far as, the responsibilities of local councils are concerned, Awadah reached the conclusion that the Gulf states including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had specified the general objective of the local council acts. The details of the overall objective have been worked out very finely in a manner that resembles the French Model of Local administration with respect to the powers and functions of local councils. The Board of Directors of the local councils are mostly nominated elements; where as some countries combined between election and nomination (Awadah, 1983: 205-211). He also maintained that the local Board of Directors, to a large extent, depends on the government for securing enough financial resources to cover its expenditure.

Perhaps AL-Mutairy (1989), Awadah (1983) share the same

opinion when they indicated that, the appropriate definition of decentralisation within the framework of their study of local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. AL-Mutairy et al indicate that "it is the first method of the state administrative organisation to be based on the idea of allocation of authorities and responsibilities between the central and local government bodies in order to enable the central government units to concentrate on the formulation of the general policy of the state. In addition to management of the national utilities allowing the local government institutions to run local utilities with efficiency in order to achieve its objectives". (AL-Mutairy, 1989: 20).

According to Ramadan's study in United Arab Emirates, a distinction should be made between local government and local administration on the basis of the main elements of these systems. These elements, however, are considered to be the basic criterion in distinguishing between them, where as the first system of local government is supposed to be political system associated with the constitutional set-up of the state, local administration is an administrative system and is therefore, governed by the administrative law. (Ramadan, 1989: 56). In his opinion, administrative decentralisation (local administration) represents a style or a way of exercising the administrative function, whether this state is simple or complex. Whereas political decentralisation deals with the state policy, unity and the government function and consequently it exists only in the federally or centrally united countries. (Ramadan, 1989: 56).

Al Ruwashda mentioned that the local administration system in Jordan is a partnership between the central government, represented by administrative chiefs in the ministries, and local authorities at municipal and rural councils (Al Ruwashda, 1987: 73-74). The central authorities carry out some of the services via local branches where local authorities handle other services. As this system exists in Jordan there was a need for the creation of an independent department in the Ministry of Interior, specially after the issue of the Municipality Act No. 29 (1955), to supervise the relationship between the central government and local authorities and to coordinate central legislations and activities concerning the local affairs. The department had no independent financial resources at the state budget, but its budget is taken from funds allocated for municipalities in addition to custom duties imposed on transportation and imported items.

With the expansion of construction activities, the responsibilities of municipalities have increased, which necessitated creation of strong governmental body to keep equilibrium between the central government and local authorities. This was also essential to take timely steps whenever any problem arises. This had encouraged the Jordanian government to expand the rural and municipal affairs department by appointing an Interior Ministry Under-Secretary assigned to supervise municipal and rural affairs. In 1960 an independent budget was allocated for that department.

Al Ruwashda also covered the period extending between 1962-1983 and examined the wide jurisdictions given to governors, managers,

administers and area directors based on Act No. 26 (1962). He discussed systems of municipalities, rural areas, governorates, and local administration in Jordan as well as executive and consultative councils and administrative structures in districts and areas.

Awadha indicates that there is a growing awareness in Arab countries for local administration despite the fact that they got their independence recently and despite the difference in historical and political conditions between Arab countries and European countries, prevailing during their respective periods. Awadha says that:

All Arab countries, regardless of different political system, adopted the local administration system in one form or another, which leads us to conclude that the system has become one of the aspects of a modern state directly associated with the distribution of functions to its different administrative organs (Awadha: 1983: 5).

According to Awadha, Arab countries had given their local councils diversified jurisdictions. In defining these jurisdictions, some Arab countries have tended to exclusively enact legislations establishing the jurisdictions; other countries adopt a comprehensive method to define local matters within what is known as "local utilities". Methodology in forming the local councils differs from one country to another depending on their own considerations. It has been observed that some of the Arab countries depend on elections as a mechanism to set up local councils on partial basis whereas other countries follow a policy of appointing the council members on a whole or partial basis but

without depriving these councils of their role in performing their assigned duties (Awadha: 1983: 6). Awadha added that it has become clear that the central government with its limited scope and capabilities cannot attain desired success in the development process and that the participation of citizens in towns and villages is a necessary step to achieve these objectives. These steps taken with the involvement of local councils are contributing to the development process and proving their effectiveness. The participation of citizens at the local level is no longer confined to the economic field but has become a political necessity in reinforcing democratic values and ensuring social justice.

According to Rodinelli and others, "the governments of Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco all claim to have embarked on a process of putting power and responsibility into the hands of the people in their countries. The claim is that democratically elected representative local institutions have been or are being given jurisdiction over issues formerly controlled solely by central decision-makers" (Rodinelli and others, 1984: 13).

As an outcome of local administrative development in the Arab countries, specialised organisations concerned with local affairs have emerged to help those local councils realise their objectives. One of these organisations is the Kuwait-based Organisation of the Arab cities which was established in 1967, representing 287 Arab cities. There are two agencies affiliated to this organisation: One of them is Arab cities Development Fund entrusted to provide Arab local departments with loans to finance projects; and the other is Arab Development Institute entrusted to train and develop manpower at local levels.



Arab countries differ from one another on the concepts of "local administration" and "local rule". The term "local administration" is being viewed by most legislators to denote decentralisation and regionalism as a method of administrative organisation while others use "local rule" in the same context. In Egypt, whereas the 1961 constitution described it "local administration", the Act No. 57 (1971) called it "local rule", which was similarly followed by Act No. 43 (1979) issued under the Presidential Decree on June 21, 1974. (Awadah: 1983: 15).

Sudan has a long history of local government. In 1951 local government law established nine provinces and 86 local government councils (67 rural councils and 19 townships and municipalities). The status which established the administrative units gave wide scope for the participation of local inhabitants (Fadalla, 1999: 90). In 1971 the second military government issued "peoples local government model. The 1971 local government model, unlike the 1951 model, which was more compatible with varying contingencies of the diverse communal setting, was alienating. The 1971 local government model was based on the assumption that the traditional local government model, with its entire power configuration, was not equipped to absorb the new political and administrative values maximised by the May Revolution (Fadalla, 1999: 87: 91).

In the Islamic thought administration ranks at the top of literal, social and developmental interests. Islamic literature indicates that local administration was applied during the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) and the Orthodox Caliphs. The question is: Did the Islamic state apply central rule governed by the political capital or did it tend to apply a

decentralised system where the regions enjoy independent powers ?

In fact, the Islamic state applied decentralisation in the administrative operations due to remote distances and lack of means of communications to enable the central government to carry out security and developmental tasks. [The Islamic state dated back to as far as the year 1420.] There was a need to appoint governors to rule the state regions independently with respect to financial and administrative matters. When the Islamic State expanded to embrace all the Arabian Peninsula, the Prophet (PBUH) started to select the governors from those who were known to be qualified and honest. He defined their responsibilities and powers and dispatched them to the different regions.

In as far as the local administration in Islam is concerned, Abu Sinn stated that the reign of the Orthodox Caliphs witnessed the territorial expansion of the Islamic state which necessitated the introduction of a decentralised rule, although no legislation has been made by the political capital (Madinah). Abu Sinn believed that "decentralisation" became evident in the following: (a) existence of local interests in the different Islamic communities with its particular characteristics and problems, (b) The financial independence which the governor exercised without the intervention of the Caliph. He used to implement local development projects and send the balance to the central treasury in the political capital after satisfying the local needs, (c) existence of consultative institutions (Shura) selected according to the political norms prevailing at that time and enjoyed freedom in administrative decision making without resorting to the Caliph. (Abu Sin, 1984:143).

After reviewing the Islamic history and Islamic literature, it became evident to the researcher that, the organisation of the Islamic state into administrative units had started during the reign of Prophet (PBUH), who made the first attempt to lay the foundation of the administrative system to the newly emerging state. He dispatched learned people to the tribes to teach them Islamic religion. He sent out delegates to Hijaz and Yemen and assigned them religious duties, administration of justice, collection of taxes (Zakat) and charity. Abu Sinn emphasised that when the Islamic state territorially expanded during the Caliph Omar's reign, in order to make the state manageable, he divided it into administrative divisions: AL-Ahwaz state, Bahrain state, Sajestan state, Makran state, Karman state, Tabrstan state and Khurasan state. He divided persia into three states. Iraq, however, was divided into two parts. The capital of one division is AL-Kufa, the capital of the other part was AL-Basra. Bilad Al Sham was divided into two regions one Hims and the other was Damascus. In as far as Palestine was concerned, it was considered to be an independent entity. Yet, Africa was subdivided into three states: Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, Western Egypt and Libyan desert. (Abu Sin, 1984: 143).

We tend to share Abu Sinn's view which emphasised that decentralisation in decision making will lead to widening citizen's popular participation which will consequently facilitate the task of development and secure financial resources. Therefore, Omar's decentralisation policy aimed at giving complete freedom to the government officials in the local affairs and allowed them the right to

dispose of local affairs within the jurisdiction of their states. One of the basic pillars of local administration in Islam is the financial independence.

The Islamic state had enjoyed considerable financial autonomy. One of the examples was that Amr Ibn AL Ass used to remit the money balance to the central treasury after reserving the state required expenditure for state construction like excavation of canals, construction of bridges, construction of archways, maintaining of islands and the sustenance and grants of Muslims.

The governors in the Islamic states enjoyed freedom of expression and freedom in administration of their states. Later on this became a cause of dispute between the Caliph and some of his governors as was the case between Caliph Omar and Amr Ibn AL Ass. (Abu Sin, 1984:146). There were also consultative bodies. More than often the Caliph had instructed their governors in the different states to the necessity of observing consultation (Shura) and consult the companions of the Prophet and The Muslims at large in all the essential matters and this is the third pillar of autonomous local government. This testified to what extent our theory of popular participation coincides with the Islamic system of local administration.

This indicates that local administration is deeply rooted in the writings on the Islamic administrative history. It was a matter of fact that the Islamic state did not practise elections in the western sense of the term, nevertheless, there was Islamic deliberation and consultation (Shura) which was in essence popular participation in the local government. It is not enough to conduct elections as the only means

whereby citizens can participate and be represented. What is crucial is the actual participation in public affairs irrespective of the means.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, during the rule of prophet Mohammed and his Caliphs, the Islamic State was unified and the concept of decentralisation was also adopted. The leadership, then was not an autocratic leadership. The administrative system is based on Shura, which is a political institution that gives advice to the ruler. Yet all the Muslims are not bound to agree with the leader or the ruler if his decisions are against the principles of Islam.

After the 12th century, the United Islamic State, had started to disintegrate into regional states, and each of these regional states had been divided into smaller provinces. Despite of this disintegration all the Islamic states still had allegiance to the ruler in Bagdad (the Caliph of Islam), and they paid dues (taxes) to the treasury in Bagdad (Ganim, 1990. Hassan, 1979).

The modern Arabian renaissance began in the 19th century with pioneers like Gamal EL Deen Al-Afagani, Mohammed Abdu and some of Al Azhar <sup>(1)</sup> scholars. Those scholars tried to explore different aspects of Islamic arts and literature. A lapse followed during the colonial period, then rival started again after the independence of most of the Islamic states (Abu Sin, 1984: 152). Although the recent Islamic writers and scholars agree that the principles of Islam should be preserved, yet they have developed two different schools of thought. The traditional school advocates the application of Islamic principles in all walks of life, including local administration without introduced any changes or

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(1) Al - Azhar is an Islamic University established about 1000 years ago in Cairo.

modifications. The modern school of thought believes in the original principles of Islam, and at the same time consider the necessity of introducing modifications to suit the emerging changes in socio-economic, political and administrative aspects. For example, the concept of Shura should be modified to meet the recent trend of choosing representatives of the people by election rather than by nomination. Furthermore, the modern school suggests that Beit Al-Mal (Financial Treasury of the State), should be fashioned as a financial institution according to modern standards of economics and trade.

Some of the present Islamic countries have adopted Islamic law (Sharia) in all aspects of life, such as Saudi Arabia. For example, the Shura council, which is composed of 90 members is appointed by royal decree rather than by the process of election (for more details see Chapters five and six). Other Islamic countries have preserved the basic principles of Islam, allowing room for changes. These countries introduced election rather than nomination for the members of parliaments. Moreover, women are given the chance to participate in political and social life.

In view of the preceding discussion of the theories and themes regarding the concepts of local government, local administrative, decentralisation and its role within the framework of each administrative system, whether in developed or developing countries. It seems that the term local administration is controversial in all the countries either in the Western or in the Eastern countries. We can not coin universally applicable term that could be valid in all the

communities, because each community has its distinct political, social stages of development and cultural circumstances. It is therefore left open for each country or nation to choose what is appropriate administrative system for it, and the one that suits its social and economic conditions and the one which is consistent with its human and financial resources.

When we consider local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia it should be consistent with the Islamic thought which considers the consultation (Shura) as basis for participation with the guardians and in harmony with its central economic structure, which considers equality between the provinces as inevitable either in administrative set-up, constitution of local councils and how their members are selected or powers and authorities that they exercise in the different provinces of the Kingdom.

We suggest that the central authority should relinquish some of its power and authorities, as it deems appropriate, to the local units in the provinces in order to ensure that these units undertake the administrative and developmental role, render services to the citizens and give the local units legal entity. This will enable it to carry out its duties and responsibilities within the framework of central control system which will not hamper it from undertaking these responsibilities.

# CHAPTER III

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SAUDI ARABIA

### 3.1 Introduction

The present chapter attempts to review briefly the geographical, demographic, political, social and economic situation of Saudi Arabia, with special emphasis on the period since the unification of the Kingdom in 1932. Without understanding these basic dimensions about Saudi Arabia, an account of the transformations in local administration, decision-making process and local government can not be properly realized.

Before the unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the late King Abdul Aziz, the social structure of the country was essentially tribal and semi-tribal system based on pastoralism within traditional territories. The urban centers were very few, mainly concentrated in the Western region such as the two holy cities of Meccah and Al-Madinah. However, the unification has changed the country from a nomadic lifestyle into village life, along with introduction of education which played an important role in changing the views of the people and their values (Samman:1982:24-27). The “Katateeb” (weekly discussions held at the mosques) were replaced by a new educational system consisting of



traditional schools. Being the centre of the Muslim world, King Abdul Aziz considered Sharia as an Islamic law of the Kingdom. Islamic law embraces the entire range of personal and social lives of the people in Saudi Arabia. The discovery of oil and its huge reserves have changed the traditional economy of Saudi Arabia into modern economy with strong infra-structure. For example transportation and communication net-works have linked every major city in Saudi Arabia. Extensive highways have been constructed linking the Kingdom to its neighbouring countries (Samman: 1982: 30).

The system of government in Saudi Arabia has developed continuously since the unification of the country by late King Abdul Aziz in 1932. The administration of the country between 1932-1953 could be “described as a fragmented machinery whose structure, method and authority varied from one situation to another, according to the variation in regional historical background which the new political reality did not profoundly alter” (Al-Awaji, 1971: 34). After 1953, the council of ministers was created and in March 1992, the King introduced three new systems of government namely, (a) the basic system of government, (b) the consultative council and (c) the provincial system (Al-Ammaj: 1993: 62).

### **3.2 The Geography of the Country**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a vast land occupying an area of

865,000 square miles, nearly 50% of the area of the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia is bordered on the North by Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait; and on the East by the Arabian Gulf, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Oman. It is bordered on the West by the Gulf of Aqabah and the Red Sea, and on the South by Yemen. Most of the land is arid desert with steep mountains near Taif. Mountains are encountered in other parts of Arabia including the Asir region along the southern portion of the Red Sea. Its coastline is 1174 miles on the Red Sea and 341 miles on the Arabian Gulf (Rashid & Shaheen, 1995 : 1). Saudi Arabia contains the world's largest desert, Rub Al-Khali (the Empty Quarter), and perhaps the world's largest Oasis, Al-Ahsa. Strategically located in the centre among Asia, Africa, and Europe, Saudi Arabia lies close to the Suez Canal and has access to both the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf (see Fig. II). [Rashid and Shaheen, 1995:1]

Saudi Arabia is divided into five major geographical regions, namely Central (Najid), Eastern (Al-Ahsa), Western (Al-Hijaz), Northern and Southern (Asir). These geographical regions do not represent administrative divisions of the country. However, for administrative purposes the country is now divided into thirteen provinces (Emirates). The thirteen Emirates are: Al-Riyadh, Meccah Al-Mukarama, Al-Madinah Al-Monwarah, Asir, Al-Baha, Hail, Al-Hodud Al-Shamaliah, Al-Jawf, Jizan, Nijran, Al-Qasim, Al-Sharqiah and Tabuk.[Ministry of Interior, 1993].

**Figure II**

Image has been removed for copyright reasons



Source: Nasser I. Rasheed & E. I. Shaheen, 1995, All You  
Need to know about Saudi Arabia, International  
Institute of Technology, Inc. Joplin, Missouri,  
USA. pp. 4A.

“The climate of the country is generally hot or very hot. Along the coastlines, it is also very humid. The interior, being especially dry, makes the heat somewhat tolerable. Along the coastline, high humidity makes the weather uncomfortable. In spring and fall, the weather is mostly pleasant”. Desert areas have cool nights and sunny, balmy days. The Central and Northern areas experience temperatures which fall below freezing sometimes. “The Shamal Wind is famous for the sand storms it brings from the northern desert. It comes in February, March and again in the early summer, it can blow for days at speeds reaching 30 miles per hour. The mountains of Asir could experience an average of 20 inches of rain per year. Rain in this region is affected by monsoons of the Indian Ocean which affect the Southern fringes of the Arabian Peninsula and the Sudan depression” (Rashid and Shaheen: 1995: 6).

### **3.3 The Demographic Profile of the Country**

Recognising the need for population statistics for socio-economic planning, the government of Saudi Arabia had carried out the third population census in 1992. The 1992 census provides for the first time detailed information on demographic, socio-economic characteristics and housing conditions of the population. The 1992 census covered the Saudis and non-Saudis in all the provinces of the Kingdom. According to the preliminary findings of the 1992 census shown in Table (3.1), the population of Saudi Arabia is about 16,948,388, of whom 12,310,053 were Saudis (72.6%) and 4,638,335 were non-Saudis (27.4%). The

percentage distribution of Saudi population by sex (Table 3.1), shows slight increase of males compared to their counterpart; the percentages being 50.5 and 49.5 for males and females respectively.

Table (3.2) shows the percentage distribution of the population of Saudi Arabia in 1992 by provinces and sex. Meccah Al-Mukarama, Riyadh and Eastern provinces show higher proportions of the total population compared to the remaining ten provinces; the percentages being 26.3, 22.6 and 15.2 respectively. On the other hand the smallest proportions of population are noticed for Najran, Al-Jawf and Al-Hodud Al-Shamaliah; the percentages being 1.8, 1.6 and 1.4 respectively.

**Table (3.1)**

**The percentage distribution of the population  
of Saudi Arabia by sex and nationality. (1992 Population Census)**

Nationality	Saudis		Non-Saudis		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Males	6215793	50.5	3264180	70.4	9479973	55.9
Females	6094260	49.5	1374155	29.6	7468415	44.1
Total	12310053	100.0	4638335	100.0	16948388	100.0

**Source:** Department of Statistics, 1994, Preliminary Findings of the 1992  
Population Census, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Table (3.2)**

**The percentage distribution of the population of Saudi Arabia  
by provinces (administrative area) and sex.**

**(1992 Population Census)**

Sex	Males		Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Riyadh	2223503	23.5	1611483	21.6	3834986	22.6
Meccah	2497723	26.3	1969947	26.4	4467670	26.3
Jizan	443764	4.7	422197	5.7	865961	5.1
Eastern Province	1503424	15.9	1072396	14.3	2575820	15.2
Asir	712485	7.5	627683	8.4	1340168	7.9
Al-Qasim	415135	4.4	335844	4.5	750979	4.4
Hail	220205	2.3	191079	2.6	411284	2.4
Al-Madinah	588445	6.2	496502	6.6	1084947	6.4
Al-Baha	167879	1.8	164278	2.2	332157	2.0
Al-Hodud Al-Shamaliah	126244	1.3	102816	1.4	229060	1.4
Tabuk	273139	2.9	212995	2.8	486134	2.9
Najran	161925	1.7	139069	1.9	300994	1.8
Al-Jawf	146102	1.5	122126	1.6	268228	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>9479973</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7468415</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16948388</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Department of Statistics, 1994, Preliminary Findings of the 1992 Population Census, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

During the second half of the present century, the urban population in Saudi Arabia has increased significantly as a result of the socio-economic development witnessed in most of provincial capitals and major towns in the Kingdom.

The definition of Urban and rural areas in Saudi Arabia is based mainly on administrative and population size criteria. The Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs has classified the Urban centres into the following categories according to administration function as well as to population size. (a) Big Urban centres, namely Riyadh, Jeddah, Meccah Al-Mukarrameh, Al-Madinah Al-Monawarh, Taif and Dammam. (b) Large size cities (Class "A"), namely Abha, Hasa, Al-Baha, Beraidh, Tabuk, Hail . (c) Class "B" Medium size cities "Class B". (15, cities), (d) Towns, "Class C" (45 towns). (e) Small towns Class "D" (30 towns) (Ministry of Municipality and Rural Affairs: 1992).

The data in Table (3.3) shows that the proportion of urban population in Saudi Arabia has increased from 66.7% in 1980 to 77.3% in 1990. Although the recent period since 1970 has witnessed a demographic shift to urban population in Saudi Arabia, nomadic and semi-nomadic populations still exist, specially in the Northern and Central regions of the country.



**Table (3.3)**

**The percentage distribution of the population of Saudi Arabia by Urban-Rural residence during 1980 - 1990**

Year	Urban		Rural	
	No. of population	%	No. of population	%
1980	6265000	66.7%	3107000	33.3%
1985	8464000	73.0%	3132000	27.0%
1990	10928000	77.3%	3206000	22.7%

**Source:** United Nations, 1990, World Population Prospects, Estimates and Projections, UN Publications, New York.

### **3.4 The Government**

According to the Basic System of government (Al Nizam Al Assasy), The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an Arab Islamic State of total sovereignty. Islam is its religion and its constitution is the Holy Book of God (The Qoran) and the Sunna of His prophet Mohammed, peace be

upon him, its language is the Arabic language and its capital is Riyadh.<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has its roots in actions of its founder King Abdul Aziz (1880-1953), who over a period of 30 years united the Kingdom's various regions by mixed process of wars of conquest and voluntary absorption. This process was completed in 1932 (Aba-Namay: 1993: 296).

The system of government in Saudi Arabia is a monarchy, with all executive, legislative and judicial powers concentrated in the central government. The central government is made up of Al-Saud monarchy and the King appoints ministers who comprise the council of ministers. The council of ministers assists the King in formulating and executing his policies. The King is also commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. The ministers and all government agencies are, in the final analysis responsible to the top authority, namely the King. However, there is also a religious council that, although not directly involved in secular affairs, has some influence on decisions of the King and council of ministers.

There are two levels of government apparatus below the central governments, namely the provincial governments and the local governments. There are thirteen provincial governments headed by a governor (Amir). Each province is divided into a number of governorates, and the governorate is headed by governor. Furthermore, each governorate is sub-divided into districts headed by a district

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1. Basic System of Rules, Article 1.

commissioner. At both levels of governments, policy and decision making power is prescribed by the council of ministers. These local governments enforce central government policies and decisions which affect their own jurisdictions. The local governments are responsible for the provision of services to the people of cities, towns, villages and other rural areas of the country.

### **3.4.1 The Basic System of Government**

This system defines the structure of the constitution, selection of the country's rulers, its sovereignty, national and foreign policy. This system emphasised that Qoran and Sunna as the sources of rules in the Kingdom, and the rules will define the structure of the supreme council of Ulama (religious scholars), and the department of religious research. The system defined three authorities of the government, namely (1) the judicial authority (2) the executive authority, the King and the council of ministers (3) organising authority which is responsible for issuing rules and regulations that guarantee the common interests, and in accordance with Sharia.<sup>2</sup>

### **3.4.2 Council of Ministers**

According to the 1992 constitutional and legislative reform, the

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2. Basic System of Rules, Article 1.

King issued a number of laws governing the council of ministers. The laws specified a duration of not more than four years, during which or at the end of it, the council of ministers will be reformulated again. However, there is a possibility of extending the term of the ministers for another two years. The King, who is also the Prime Minister, steers the general policy of the Kingdom, guarantees coordination and cooperation between various government agencies and ensures coherence, consistence and unity in the work of the council of ministers. He also supervises and controls the cabinet, the ministers, and government bodies observe the implementation of rules, regulations and decisions. There are 32 articles covering these basic rules and regulations, including: general provisions, formation of the council of ministers organisational affairs, executive affairs financial affairs, cabinet presidency and administrative structure of the council of ministers, as the direct executive authority, will have full control of executive affairs, as well as administrative and financial affairs.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.4.3 The establishment of the Consultative Council**

In 1993 King Fahad announced the establishment of a consultative council (Majlis al Shura) of 60 members, who are Saudi citizens, not less than 30 years of age and of good character. All the members are appointed by the King for a term of 4 years, renewable for another term.

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3. Basic System of Rules, Article 1.

The consultative council is based in Riyadh city, the capital of the Kingdom. The function of the council is to debate government policies to propose draft regulations to the King. Article 15 of the consultative council states as follows: "The council's mandate is to express opinions on the general policy of the state, which will be referred to it by the council of ministers".<sup>4</sup> The functions of the consultative council can be summarised as follows (1) Discuss the general plan of economic and social development. (2) Study international laws, charters, treaties and agreements and concessions and make appropriate suggestions regarding them (Article 15). However, they are issued and amended by Royal decree after being studied by the consultative council (Article 18). (3) Interpret the regulations. (4) Discuss annual reports submitted by ministries and other government bodies, and make appropriate suggestions regarding them (Article 15). (5) The consultative council has the right to question ministers and other government officials (Article 22).

The rules governing the consultative council will replace the system of the Shoura Council formed earlier. All the regulations, instructions and resolutions valid until the implementation of this system would continue until they are accordingly amended. Selected members must be of good reputation, well educated, and well qualified of Saudi national by origin and birth.

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4 Constitution of the Consultative Council.

On the fifth of July of 1997, the King issued a Royal decree No. A/62 raising the members <sup>5</sup> of the consultative council from 60 to 90 and 30 of the members appointed earlier in 1993 had been replaced by new members. Although the consultative council (Majlis Al Shura) is newly established, yet it has issued several decrees, and it has approved a number of developmental projects. In addition many decisions have been taken for the benefit of the country and the well-being of the citizens. The records of the consultative council shows that the council and its several committees have held 430 meetings during its first two years. The council discussed 106 topics, which referred to it by the specialised committees, during the first two years. In addition these committees had submitted about 91 reports to the council for discussion and approval (Al-Zahrani, 1999: 545).

Within the consultative role of the council, the researcher thinks that it has achieved its goals and continued its role in achieving targeted objectives. According to the council records none of the council's sessions nor any of its various committees were postponed due to lack of *quorum*. The researcher believes that this may be considered an indication to the members' awareness of their role and the trust given to them by the custodian of the two holy mosques (the King).

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5. Al-Riyadh News paper 6<sup>th</sup> of July 1997.

### 3.4.4 The Provincial Council System

According to the Royal decree issued in March 1992, a provincial council was established in each of the thirteen provinces of the Kingdom, as part of the new provincial system, which aims at raising the level of the administrative function and development in the provinces of the Kingdom, and to keep security and ensure citizens' rights and liberties within the framework of the Islamic law. According to the new provincial system, each province shall administratively consist of a number of governorates, districts and localities. Each province shall have governor, and deputy to help him with his tasks and act for him in his absence. The governor and his deputy shall be appointed and removed by a Royal Order upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior<sup>(6)</sup>.

The first article of the provincial system governing the provinces of various regions of the Kingdom specifies the goals to raise the standard for administrative work and development of all parts of the Kingdom. It calls for safeguarding law and order and for the protection of citizens' rights and their freedoms within Islamic Laws.

The members of the councils in the thirteen provinces include governors, their deputies, head of government agencies in the provinces, and at least ten natives who are learned, experienced and competent.

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<sup>(6)</sup> The Ministry of Interior, The department of Provincial Council, Riyadh, 1992.

Each provincial council has fifteen members, except for Riyadh, Mecca and Medina, where the member of provincial councils are increased to reach twenty members (see Table 3.4). The members of the councils are appointed by an order by the prime minister upon nomination by the provincial governor and approval by the minister of interior. More details about the functions, duties of the provincial councils, will be presented in Chapter V.

**Table (3.4)**

**The number of provincial council members appointed in each of the thirteen provinces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Name of the Province	Capital of Province	Number of members of Provincial Councils
Riyadh	Riyadh	20
Meccah Al-Mukrama	Meccah Al-Mukrama	20
Al Medinah Al-Monawarah	Al-Medinah	20
Al-Qasim	Buraydah	15
Eastern Province	Dammam	15
Asir	Abha	15
Tabuk	Tabuk	15
Hail	Hail	15
Al-Hodud Al-Shamalia	Ar ar	15
Jizan	Jizan	15
Najran	Najran	15
Al-Baha	Al-Baha	15
Jawf	Skaka	15

Source: Ministry of Interior, Department of Provincial Councils, The New Provincial Systems. Riyadh, 1992.



### **3.4.5 The Judicial System.**

“The administration and application of the judicial system of Saudi Arabia illustrates the importance of the Ulama”(Samman: 1982: 27-30). The role of the Ulama in Saudi Arabia is known, after the first alliance between Muhammed Ibn Saud and Imam Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and the continued success of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab religious movement through the years, reflects the important role played by the Ulama in Saudi Arabia. The first alliance was both political and religious in nature and clearly emphasised the true notion of the state in Islam; which shows that state and religion are inseparable. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an example of an Islamic state governed by the Holy Quran. This fact reflects the important role of the Ulama.

### **3.4.6 Departments and Functions of the Ministry of Interior**

The Ministry of Interior, established in 1932 (1352 H) is responsible for the administration of all the provinces of the Kingdom, and for observing internal security, enforcing laws, keeping order in local regions and protecting life and property of the people. The Ministry of Interior is organised in a pyramid-like structure with approximately twenty departments. One of the important departments is the one which is responsible for the provincial affairs.

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“The administration and application of the judicial system of Saudi Arabia illustrates the importance of the Ulama”(Samman: 1982: 27-30). The role of the Ulama in Saudi Arabia is known, after the first alliance between Muhammed Ibn Saud and Imam Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, and the continued success of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab religious movement through the years, reflects the important role played by the Ulama in Saudi Arabia. The first alliance was both political and religious in nature and clearly emphasised the true notion of the state in Islam; which shows that state and religion are inseparable. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an example of an Islamic state governed by the Holy Quran. This fact reflects the important role of the Ulama.

### **3.4.6 Departments and Functions of the Ministry of Interior**

The Ministry of Interior, established in 1932 (1352 H) is responsible for the administration of all the provinces of the Kingdom, and for observing internal security, enforcing laws, keeping order in local regions and protecting life and property of the people. The Ministry of Interior is organised in a pyramid-like structure with approximately twenty departments. One of the important departments is the one which is responsible for the provincial affairs.

Recently, in 1990, the Higher committee of administrative reform

has suggested an organising structure for the department of provincial affairs. The recommendations have been approved by a Royal Decree No.1110/M dated 20/3/1990. The Royal decree stated that all the provinces (previously called Emirates) are administratively responsible to the Ministry of Interior. The governor of the province (Amir), is nominated by the Minister of Interior and approved by King. The governor of each province reports directly to the Minister of interior or to his deputy. The department of provincial Affairs deals with provincial affairs, provincial council, tribal disputes, distribution of reformed land. This department is further chartered to supervise all matters related to the implementation of regulations governing the provinces. The department of provincial Affairs reviews and make recommendations on those responsibilities to the Minister of Interior. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the departments of provincial affairs conducts on-going studies regarding disputes, distribution of land, and present their findings to the top level officials of the Ministry of Interior.

The General Department of Administrative reform is one of the important departments in the Ministry of Interior. This department includes five units, namely, (i) Planning unit (ii) Manpower unit (iii) Budgeting unit (iv) Statistical unit (v) Organisation and Management unit. The Planning unit assists the Ministry of Interior and its various departments in establishing development goals and objectives, subsequently drawing up a plan of action for achieving these goals and objectives. The planning unit acts on instructions received from the

Ministry of Planning, after its assurance that the projects under preparation of the Ministry of Interior are within the guidelines set by the Ministry of Planning. The planning unit carries its various activities by proper coordination and cooperation with many units in the Ministry of Interior, such as Organisation and Management unit, Manpower unit, Budgeting unit and Statistical unit. In addition the planning unit is responsible for training of employees working for the different departments of the Ministry of Interior, and other officials representing the ministry in the various provinces of the Kingdom. The training includes on-the-job training, as well as external training. The planning unit is considered as one of the most important organisation in the Ministry of Interior, and it is run by a well qualified Saudi personnel.

### **3.5 Social structure of the Country**

The people of Saudi Arabia share four fundamental characteristics, namely: (a) religion (all Saudis are Muslims), (b) Arabic language (all the people speak Arabic language) (c) Saudi people have basic cultural traits and (d) the centrality of the family in the social structure of the tribe, the village and the town (Al-Ammaj: 1993: 52).

Before the unification of the country by late King Abdul Aziz, Saudi society mostly consisted of tribesmen and few urban dwellers, with each tribe having its own territory and form of government; the earlier population estimates show that more than 80% of Saudi

populations live in rural or nomadic settings. However, the second population census of 1974 indicates that about 38.2% of the people in Saudi Arabia reside in the sixteen cities (Department of Statistics: 1974). King Abdul Aziz designed a plan for establishing settlements for the Bedouins. King Abdul Aziz thought settlements of the nomadic population should help in keeping peace and security, and in improving the socio-economic standards of the people. As a result of King Abdul Aziz plan, many "Hijars"<sup>7</sup> were built and many people inhabited them. These people previously nomadic, became assimilated and accustomed somewhat to modern way of life. The inhabitants of the Hijars were taught basic methods of agriculture and were given seeds for cultivation (Rashid & Shaheen: 1995: 35).

In spite of the significant transformation of Saudi society since the discovery of oil, the social life in Saudi Arabia will continue to pervade all aspects of life. Members of the family are quite attached to one another and each one feels deep sense of responsibility for the family. The Saudi family is still large, (specially among the rural and the nomadic populations), consisting of parents, their children and grandchildren, extending to uncles, aunts and cousins. This type of extended family traces its descent through the paternal line.

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7 Hijars are residential settlement for nomads which have been established by late King Abdul Aziz.

According to Samman (1982: 27):

Tribes as independent units are governed by Shaikh, who is the primary decision-maker, assisted by the tribal community leaders, the most religious men of the tribe who are generally the heads of large families within the tribe. Both the Shaikh and the community leaders are highly respected by the tribe as well as by the Saudi government.

The government recognises the position of the Shaikhs and does its best not to interfere with their functions. The Saudi society is a homogenous one, since all the people speak one language, believe in one religion, and composed of one ethnic group. This homogeneity comes from the strong adherence to the teachings of Islam. The people of the country can be divided into three classes, as Samman stated:

The upper class is represented by the Saudi Royal family, religious and tribal leaders, and wealthy merchants and landlords. The middle class includes manager, administrators, technicians, teachers and merchants. The lower class consists of nomadic Bedouins and unskilled or semi-skilled workers, (Samman: 1982: 27).

### **3.6 The Economy of the Country**

Before the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia, the economy of the country was characterised by very limited resources depending mainly on traditional small scale agriculture and on revenues from pilgrimage coming to the Holy city of Meccah from different countries of the Islamic world. Revenue from pilgrims was one of the major sources of income for Saudi Arabia at that time. The highest annual revenue from pilgrimage was estimated at £5,000,000 (five million sterling pounds) during 1926-1929 (Al-Ammaj: 1993: 58). The Saudi economy was also depending on minor trade, fishing and nomadic herding. “Nomadic tribes tended their herds; farmers and artisans lived and worked in a society of medieval simplicity; and there was no industrialisation, nor any efforts towards it.” (Samman: 1982: 31).

The economic situation in Saudi Arabia had changed significantly after the discovery of oil in the early 1930's and after the production of oil for commercial purposes in 1938. Saudi Arabia has the largest oil reserves in the world. The data in Table (3.5) shows that the oil reserves in Saudi Arabia have increased significantly from 169.20 billion barrels in 1985 to 261.37 billion barrels in 1995. The Saudi oil reserves constitutes about 25% of the world oil reserves. Saudi Arabia is also has a huge reserves of natural gas. It is estimated at 121 trillion cubic feet in 1994. The production of oil increased significantly from 20,000 barrels per day in 1944, reaching a peak of 10 million barrels per day in



1980. The early eighties witnessed a sharp drop in oil production not only for Saudi Arabia, but for all oil producing countries, as a result of ceiling production policy adopted by Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). However, the data in Table (3.6) shows a continuous increase of oil production for Saudi Arabia from 3,174,800 barrels per day in 1985 to 8 million barrels per day in 1995. "Saudi Arabia has a vast refining capacities and a number of large refineries which does not only satisfy domestic needs, but export overseas as well. Oil continues to be the backbone of the Saudi economy and a major source of fuelling development and progress in the Kingdom" (Rashid and Shaheen:1995: 136).

To make the best investment of its oil and minerals revenues the government of Saudi Arabia has completed twenty-five years of comprehensive development planning from 1970 to 1995. However, the true impact of this process of planning can be gauged not merely through chronological scale but more essentially through considering the magnitude of work, effort and build up that had been mobilised to bring about important transformation which encompassed all aspects of the socio-economic life in the Kingdom.

The development plans have, therefore, managed to launch many projects and programmes in all social-economic sectors, which government taking the lead in terms of support, follow-up and supervision, as it sought to bolster the activity of the private to mobilise

its efforts expertise and financial resources with an aim to participate in the development process in order to manage and maintain the gains thus achieved.

One of the main objectives of the current sixth development plan (1995 - 2000) is to concentrate on improving the economic and productive standards of services, utilities and products which the government provides for the citizens. The resulting growth and structural change in all sectors of the economy, as proposed by the six development plans have led to a unique mix of material and social progress, whose fruits have spread to all regions of the Kingdom.

**Table (3.5)**

**Oil Reserves in Billion Barrels for Saudi Arabia  
during 1985 - 1995**

Year	Oil Reserves Billions Barrels
1985	169.20
1986	169.60
1987	170.00
1988	252.40
1989	254.90
1990	260.00
1991	260.90
1992	260.34
1993	261.20
1994	261.37
1995	261.37

**Source:** Council of GCC countries, Economic Bulletin, Vol. XI, p. 97,  
Riyadh, 1996.

**Table (3.6)**

**Oil production for Saudi Arabia during 1985 - 1995**

Year	Oil Production in Million Barrels
1985	3174.8
1986	4784.2
1987	4124.0
1988	5200.0
1989	5100.0
1990	6400.0
1991	8100.0
1992	8332.0
1993	8047.0
1994	8049.0
1995	8000.0

**Source:** Council of GCC countries, Economic Bulletin, Vol. XI, p. 96,  
Riyadh, 1996.

**Table (3.7)**

Expenditure of Development Sectors in the five Development Plans, 1970 - 1975 to 1990 - 1995

[In Millions S.R.]

Plan	First Plan		Second Plan		Third Plan		Fourth Plan		Fifth Plan	
	Development sector	Expenditure in mil. (S.R.)	%	Expenditure in mil. (S.R.)	%	Expenditure in mil. (S.R.)	%	Expenditure in mil. (S.R.)	%	Expenditure in mil. (S.R.)
Economic Resources	9649	27.7	97279	28.0	192185	30.7	71193	20.4	34700	10.6
Human Resources	7034	20.6	51035	14.7	115007	18.4	115133	33.0	155000	47.3
Health & Social Resources	3515	10.3	27600	7.9	61237	9.8	61882	17.7	63300	19.3
Infrastructure	14116	41.4	171298	49.3	256795	41.1	100738	28.9	74800	22.8
Total	34134	100.0	347212	100.0	625224	100.0	348946	100.0	327800	100.00

Source: Ministry of Planning, Sixth Development Plan 1995 - 2000, pp. 46 - 65, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1995.

Note: The value of the Saudi Riyal is not constant through the period 1970 - 1995.

In the economic field, there was an early determination by the Saudi government to build a national physical infrastructure of best quality (particularly with respect to industry, agriculture, ports, roads, electricity . . . etc.) and to start the industrialization efforts with large public investment basic industries, while extending to agriculture a comprehensive system of support. The data in Table (3.11) shows that during the first three five-years development plans the expenditures on infrastructure constitute more than 41% of the budget for all the sectors of development. However, during the recent development plans, the government has concentrated on development of human resources, to train the Saudi manpower to replace the expatriates working in both public and private sectors. The share of the sector of human resources from the budget of the fifth development plan (1990 - 1995) constitute 47.3%. Table (3.7) reveals that the share of the sector of health and social resources from the budget of the development plans has increased significantly from 7.9% of the second development plan to 19.3% for the fifth development plan. In social field all the development plans have emphasized free education, promoting training skills of citizens, provide free health and social welfare services, giving protection to the old and disabled and those with limited income.

It is worth noting here that the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and the subsequent outbreak of the Gulf War have placed a heavy burden on the Saudi economy, specially during the early years of the fifth development plan (1990-1995). According to the statistics of the Ministry of

Planning, the expenditures during the first three years of the fifth development plan exceeded revenues, thereby creating a financial burden on the state budget. The budgetary situation was aggravated by a decline in crude oil prices in 1994/1995 to a level more than 30 percent below the OPEC target price (Ministry of Planning: 1995). The non-oil revenues also showed a downward trend in the early years of the fifth development plan, as the draw-down in reserves reduced the flow of investment and income from abroad.

The sixth development plan (1995-2000) aims to continue enhancing and broadening the main objectives of the previous development plans, in order to meet the Kingdom's development needs. The plan's objectives are to: (a) Maximise the private sector's contribution in the provision of jobs, (b) Diversify the economy to lessen its dependence on oil revenues, (c) To build new physical infrastructure to meet the needs of growing population, (d) Achieve a growth rate that is commensurate with the expansion of job opportunities for the Saudi labour force, (e) Improve social services, such as education, health, (f) Raise per capita income, and (g) Maintain a balanced budget over the plan period.

The sixth development plan places special emphasis on improving economic efficiency by raising labour productivity through training, by using the latest technology. A key focus of the sixth development plan is on privatisation and other initiatives for the private sector to provide

some facilities and services that have traditionally been supplied by the government. Thus, the private sector is expected to play an increasing role in financing, building and operating key facilities in the fields of basic infrastructure, economic and social services, thereby reducing the financial burden of the government. The government encourages the private sector to expand in domestic and international markets, specially in the GCC countries and other trade areas. Another important focus of the sixth development plan is the replacement of non-Saudi manpower by Saudis (referred to as “Saudisation”). This objective will be achieved by the provision of appropriate training programs to improve the skills and capabilities of Saudis in various occupations, and by appropriate steps to implement the related policies.



### **3.7 Summary**

The social structure of Saudi Arabia has changed from a tribal and semi-tribal system based on pastoralism, to settled population in villages, towns and urban centres with various facilities of modernisation. In spite of this significant social transformation of Saudi society, the members of the tribes and the family are still quite attached to one another, and each member feels deep sense of responsibility for the family.

The population size of Saudi Arabia has increased significantly during the second half of the 20th century due to the high rate of population growth, which is considered as one of the highest among developing countries. The economic situation in Saudi Arabia has changed significantly after the discovery of oil in the early 1930's and after the production of oil for commercial purposes in 1938. To make the best investment of its oil and mineral revenues the government of Saudi Arabia has completed twenty-five years of comprehensive development planning from 1970 to 1995. These development plans have launched many socio-economic projects and programmes in the various parts of the country.

The rapid socio-economic transformation witnessed by Saudi Arabia during the second half of the 20th century requires an administrative reforms at the central, regional and local governments.

These administrative reforms include the Omara System, the Regional System and the Provincial System, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

# **Part II**

## **The Various Administrative System in Saudi Arabia**

- **The Administrative System Before The Unification**
- **Omara System**
- **Nizam Al-Mokataat**
- **The New Provincial System.**

# **CHAPTER IV**

## **The Evolution of Local Administrative Systems in Saudi Arabia**

### **4-1 Introduction:**

We cannot discuss the local administrative systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, without giving a brief idea about the formation of the Kingdom and the circumstances that led to its emergence, because the stages of administrative development is closely related to those circumstances. It would be difficult for the reader to comprehend the particular characteristics of the Saudi Administrative system without being acquainted with its historical background. It is unlikely for the administrative system in the Kingdom, as well as in other countries, to avoid being exposed to the influence of political, economic and cultural factors which shape the institutions and formulate its administrative practices. Through the ages, the Arabian Peninsula has been a global cultural centre and commercial connecting link between the continents from where Islam spread to the East and the West. Millions of Muslims visit the holy lands annually to perform Haj, Umrah and visit the two Holy Mosques in Meccah and Madinah. This unique texture from historical and spiritual perspective, besides the discovery of massive oil reserves have made the Arabian Peninsula an

important area in the region. The Arabian Peninsula has not been unified throughout the historical episodes except at early days of Islam. Soon after it started in dismember and brokedown into different states and small sheikhdoms, driven into conflicts with each other, by foreign intervention (Tawail and others, 1995: 3).

It is historically well-known that the Saudi reigning family attempted to establish its monarchy, before the formation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through two states namely: The first Saudi State which was established in 1745 (1158H) and which collapsed in 1817 (1233H). The second Saudi State which emerged in 1824 (1240H) and withered away in 1891 (1309H). Finally it succeeded in founding the present Saudi State which came to existence in 1902 (1319H) [ Ibn Bishr, 1402 H:13].

The first Saudi State emerged as a result of the prevailing conditions in the Arabian Peninsula at that time. Najid Region was governed by small tribal governorates scattering around. The Ottomans, through their local allies, were dominating over the rest of the region. It was a situation characterised by lack of security and political chaos. Under these circumstances, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud (1109-1179H) / (1695-1765), the founder of the first Saudi State attempted to expand his governorate in AL-Dariah to encompass the middle of the Arabian Peninsula. This rise of ambitions co-existed with the emergence of the religious movement pioneered by Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Abdul Wahab

(1115 - 1703) (1206 - 1789) to purify the Islamic beliefs from the mal-practices that do not comply with the Islamic teachings. He wanted the Muslims to revert back to the Qoranic teachings and to Prophet sayings. These two movements allied together so as to exert all possible efforts which could lead to the unification of the Arabian Peninsula. This move sparked off the first shot towards the formation of the first Saudi State.

Sheikh Abdul Wahab's movement was able to dominate over Najid district in the Middle of the Arabian Peninsula and to extend its authority over Al-Ahssa in the Arabian Gulf region in 1793 (1208 H). The expansion continued up to the Southern Region of the Arabian Peninsula in 1800 (1215 H). The expansion of the new state, however, was an impending danger to the Ottoman empire which dominated over the Eastern part of the Arab world at that time. Therefore, it was decided to subdue the emerging state in order to preclude the emergence of an opponent state. Instructions were issued to the viceroy in Egypt to crush this state. Mohammad Ali sent out a huge army commanded by his son Ibrahim Mohammad Ali, who was able, after severe resistance to destroy the new state, annihilated, Al-Dariah 1813 (1233 H), the capital of the new state and captured Imam Abdullah Bin Saud who died in 1818 (1234 H) and by so he extirpated the first Saudi State (Bin Bisher, 1403: 214).

Whereas the attempts to resurrect the second Saudi state had started in 1824 (1240 H), when the Imam Turkey Bin Abdullah succeeded to expect the Egyptian Garrison, (which was controlled by the Ottoman governor in Egypt) out from Riyadh in 1824(1240 H) (Bin

Bisher, 1402:35). By the return of Imam Faisal Bin Turkey from his exile in Egypt, and the expulsion of the Egyptian forces, the ally of the Ottomans, from the Arabian Peninsula in 1839 (1256 H) the state had become firmly established. Imam Turkey succeeded to recapture most of the territories which were previously controlled by the first Saudi State. This state had reigned until 1891 (1309 H) when it was over run by AL-Rasheed who drove Al-Saud finally outside the region.

During the first and the second Saudi states, administration was known in the Arabian Peninsula, "as personal administration", where the Imam was personally administering all the state affairs with the assistance of his aides. There was no concern to develop the state administrative institutions during the reign of the first and second Saudi states. This lack of concern, could be attributed to: "The personal involvement and supervision of the leaders in most military campaigns and the management battles spared them no time to spend on the administrative affairs of the state [Al-Zirikley, 1985: 83]. In 1902 (1319H) King Abdul Aziz Bin Saud, the founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, succeeded to capture Riyadh and to kill the governor who was appointed by AL-Rasheed government, which was ruling in the middle of Arabia at that time after the vanishing of the second Saudi State. Then, King Abdul Aziz moved to recapture the areas that were under the rule of his grandfathers. He regained the middle of Najid Region in 1904 (1322 H), Al Qaseem Region in 1908 (1326 H). Then he captured Al-Ahssa, which was, until that time, ruled by the Ottomans. Eventually, he seized Hail, the capital of Al-Arrasheed in

1921 (1340 H) and destroyed their state.

In the next year he defeated Ibn Aiyid in Asser Region, South West of the Kingdom and annexed this region to his territory. Eventually he managed to annex AL-Hijaz region which was dominated by AL-Hussain Bin Ali Sherif of Makkah after a fierce fight which continued from 1919 (1338 H) until 1925 (1344 H). He also annihilated the state of AL-Adarissa in the Southern part of the Kingdom at the Yemeni border and finally annexed it in 1932 (1351 H) (Al-Zirikley, 1985: 85).

During the process of state formation King Abdul Aziz had adopted two strategies one internal and the other external. Regarding his internal strategy he was concerned about the following:

First, he continued the policy of the first and second Saudi state, which considered the religious call, led by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdul Wahab as a basis for establishing the third Saudi State by:

- a) Employment of the religious scholars from Al-Al Sheikh family particularly and the religious scholars of Najid region in general to assume Judicial affairs and religious call.
- b) He formed a Bedewin army called "the brothers" (Al-Zirikly, 1985: 363).

Secondly, he used force as a means for expanding the state and maintain peace and stability.

Regarding, external strategy, King Abdul Aziz, however, adopted a policy of non-confrontation with the international powers



which colonised the region at that time, namely the Ottoman empire and Britain, and tried to maintain some sort of balance in international relations. Through his diplomatic tacts and political manoeuvres King Abdul Aziz managed to avoid direct alliance or confrontation with the said powers. This policy allowed him to be more flexible and to move according to the prevailing international circumstances which serve his interests.

#### **4-2 The Historical Evolution of Local Administration in Saudi Arabia:**

The remaining part of the present chapter will shed some light on the local administration and its role in administrative decision making, as well as its role in the development, in order to know the development phases it experienced prior and within the unification. In addition, the analysis of the present chapter will include the Omara System and Nizam AL-Mokataat (Regional System) so that the reader can be well aware of the historical development of local administration. It is very important, however, to follow these developments, in-order to know whether the country was really developing by implementing these systems in one hand and compare them with the current New Provincial System on the other. This study is approaching local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by following the history of local administration itself. Therefore, it is very important to review the previous administrative systems, concerning the decision making process and the development aspects of the previous administrative systems. The

present analysis will also review the social and historical circumstances that led to the provincial system afterwards.

#### **4.2.1 The Administrative System prior to the unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**

It is difficult to visualise any highly organised administrative set up prior to the unification of the Kingdom because the government bodies and their functions varied from one region to another depending on the historical background and the conditions of each region. For example, in Hijaz region, certain simple departments such as pilgrimage endowment and quarantine departments were in existence. National Councils were formed in Meccah AL-Mukarramah, Medinah AL-Munawarah, and Jeddah. These consisted of notables and dignitaries who supervised local affairs in such cities. In other regions such as Najid, AL-Hassa and Asir, the system was a tribal and clannish one, made up of Omaras of each region and heads of tribes aided by judges for the execution of Islamic Law.

During this period a state of disorder and unrest was dominant. These conditions lasted until the late King Abdul Aziz, known in the West as Ibn Saud, who managed to subject these regions to his power; and consequently unification of these regions took place in 1932 forming one country named "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia".

#### **4.2.2 Administrative Machinery in Najid, AL- Hassa and Asir**

### **Regions:**

Prince Saud Bin Abdul Aziz AL Saud took over Najid region in 1932 and reported directly to the King. He was the administrative ruler of the region and the first person to be responsible for running the administrative functions of the region. The judiciary and treasury departments also reported to him. The Emirate had a bureau that received and delivered all incoming and outgoing correspondence including that of the governor.

According to Sadiq:

"In the rest of the cities Amir had a small bureau that received all applications addressed to the Amir and directed them to the concerned department. Correspondence relating to court were referred to the judge to consider them and give his judgment; and those relating to the financial affairs were referred to the financial officer. The Amir, being the administrative ruler of the city, was responsible for the execution of local judgements and enforcement of laws and directives issued to him. He was also helping the financial officer in collecting the state's legal levies. In a city and village, having no judge, the Amir had to resolve the litigations subject to the agreement of litigating parties. Each Amir submits periodic reports to the regional governor including the conditions in the city or village along with the recommendations he thought useful for improving such conditions" (Sadiq, 1965: 24).

An analysis of administrative practices during that period indicates that Najid administration was a personal type of administration. Also, through reviewing available official documents we

have not found anything indicating the existence of departments with specialised functions in the regions. It is noted that Sadiq did not tackle such period in detail, but he contented himself with the relation of the administration facts without highlighting the administrative decentralisation aspect therein and the conditions necessitating the same.

Al Hasa region remained under the Turkish authorities for about forty years. However, the society maintained its customs and traditions. The tribal system was the basic element that influenced the administration form. In general, the administrative system in Al Hasa did not vary from that in Najid. Upon eviction of the Turks, King Abdul Aziz appointed Prince Abdullah Bin Jalawi as Governor for Al-Hasa region. Other Omaras in this region reported to Prince Abdullah Bin Jalawi, who was assisted by judges and financial officers.

"Prior to 1953, the administration of Saudi Arabia could be described as a fragmented machinery whose structure, method and authority varied from one situation to another, according to variations in regional historical background which the new political reality did not profoundly alter. (Al-Awaji, 1971: 34) " AL-Awaji added that "the administration of Al-Hasa has led to the creation of new organisation. The system of administration there was not different from that of Najid. The province of Al-Hasa was under Turkish authorities more than forty years, but the people of Al-Hasa preserve their traditions and customs, and did not adapt their institutions to the changing circumstances". (Al-Awaji: 1971: 44). Al-Awaji described the administration of Asir as follows: "Despite the Turkish influence, Asir had continued to follow

the traditional tribal system. However, new settings consisting of governors, judges, and financial officers were gradually introduced to the region's main districts. The purpose of their establishment, however, was the enforcement of laws and directives issued by the King. They were also meant to symbolise the new political order". (Al-Awaji: 1971:45).

In our analysis of what is visualised by Al-Awaji concerning such period before the unification of the Kingdom, we can see that he has dealt in detail with the administrative situations in Hijaz, Najid, Al Hasa and Asir. He found the existence of personal administration in Najid, Al Hasa and Asir, and deconcentration in Al Hijaz region. Al-Awaji was objective when he attributed the state's less concern of the local administration issues compared to the necessities of completing the political formation, and unification of the Kingdom regions. Al-Awaji did not focus on the decentralisation issues and its developmental role. Since the administrative system during this period had tended more and more towards personal administration, this would have probably made Al-Awaji devote little attention to this point. It could be concluded from the above that King Abdul Aziz had adopted a personal administrative system in Najid, Al-Hasa and Asir to maintain peace and stability at the beginning. This is consistent with AL-Tamawy's argument which states that, the administrative system which the state follows is related to its political and economic set-up. In the modern state which replaced the feudal system, centralisation of the state policy has become a practical necessity so as to prevent the comeback of feudalism and to ensure the

rule of law in a state which has recently been united. Central administration enhances the authority of the central state to consolidate national unity and prevent separatism trends and to ensure maintaining law and order. When the state is stable, and law and order are maintained and all dangers have disappeared, then the state will adopt the administrative system that allows for citizens' participation in the public affairs to satisfy their local needs; allowing the central government to concentrate on important issues which concern the state as a whole like defense, security, and foreign affairs etc. (Al-Tamawy, 1961: 8). Due to this tentative balance Al-Tamawy is of the opinion that the combination between centralisation and decentralisation is considered to be one of the most delicate tasks which the legislator has to tackle in dealing with the administrative systems. Most often, the legislator may modify the administrative system that he adopts in the light of practical experience. (Al-Tamawy, 1961: 8).

From what has been mentioned in this chapter, we can distinguish between centralisation in the traditional system and centralisation advocated by latecomer theorists of modernisation.

#### **4.2.3 Administrative Rule in Hijaz Region:**

Hijaz Region had special social and economic conditions and circumstances which made it different from Najid, Al-Hasa and Asir. That is why King Abdul Aziz kept the administrative setting in Hijaz intact. Accordingly, some departments such as health, municipality, endowment, justice and national councils continue to undertake their

powers and authorities by themselves. This system continued to exist in Hijaz until Prince Faisal was appointed as a general viceroy representing the King (Khashogji, 1993: 4).

The administrative machinery in Hijaz region required an administrative set up different from that in Najid, Al-Hasa and Asir. This is because Hijaz includes Holy places like Meccah Al Mukkaramah and Medinah which are visited by pilgrims from all over the world. Owing to this, administration in Hijaz had to handle more formidable administrative responsibilities and render different services than those in Najid, Al Hasa and Asir. Moreover, the administration in Hijaz was influenced by conditions in Egypt and Turkey when Hijaz was under the Turkish authorities. The administrative system in Hijaz consisted of several departments such as health, municipality, courts and water which were all under the supervision and control of the National Council located in Meccah.

When King Abdul Aziz took over Meccah in 1924, no changes were made in the functioning of the existing governmental departments; he preferred to concentrate his efforts on the military side. The national Council of Meccah Al-Mukarramah was also established. The situation continued until Prince Faisal controlled all the administrative affairs in Hijaz when he was appointed by the King Abdul Aziz as his viceroy in Hijaz.

King Abdul Aziz tried to get Meccah's people involved in running their regional affairs. He requested its scientists, dignitaries and traders to select representatives for themselves, from whom a national

council would be formed to run the regional affairs and which would also hold periodic meetings to take care of people's problems. King Abdul Aziz was the only authority to which the council would refer. Various representatives for different categories were elected and the first council consisted of a chairman and fifteen members (Umul Qura: No. 7:23/1/1924).

In forming the national council, the main objectives of King Abdul Aziz were to get people involved in the administration of their region. Six months after the formation of the council, he found that the National Council did not represent the majority of the people in the region. As a result of this, the council had been dissolved and a new council was formed to include representatives from all parts of Meccah region (Umul Qura: No. 7:23/1/1925). In the inaugural session of the new council, a chairman and vice chairman and secretary were elected by secret ballot. The council defined its authorities as follows: First, to organise municipality affairs, lay down proper regulations to enable it to perform its duties and tasks to serve the region preparation of the budget, as well as dealing with sanitary issues; Secondly, to implement the legal system by setting up the courts to ensures the speedy execution of judgements; Thirdly, to revise endowment issues and consider legal disbursement outlets; Forthly, to maintain law and order in the region by making necessary police arrangement; Fifthly, to promulgate religious science in this holy city and endeavour to spread literacy, and to facilitate commercial activity and develop telecommunication and postal services; Finally, to form permanent committees for solving



problems and disputes in keeping with the principles of Islamic Law (Umul Qura: No. 50: 22/10/1925).

The national council was considered to be the first administrative organisational body formed by King Abdul Aziz after entering Hijaz. The national council was the core of the Consultative council formed later on. It had wider authorities and played a great role in the government throughout thirty years until the first cabinet in the country was formed. When King Abdul Aziz took over Jeddah city in 1925, he appointed a national committee of fourteen members to supervise the internal affairs (Umul Qura: No. 52:27/12 1925).

In 1925 King Abdul Aziz formed an advisory constituent organisation made up of eight members elected by secret ballot. Then King Abdul Aziz added five other members and appointed a president to this organisation which was assigned the task of formulating policies for the country (Khashogji,1993:6). Upon the approval of the recommendations of the advisory organisation by King Abdul Aziz in 1926, these policies formed the Fundamental Instructions for the government to achieve the state's political and administrative integration.

It is worth mentioning here that King Abdul Aziz had issued a communique in which he called for the election of advisory councils. The communique ordered the formation of advisory councils in Meccah, Medinah, Jeddah, Yanbu and Taif. These councils were set up to resolve the local issues. Meccah's council was made up of ten members, Medinah's council of six members and Yanbu's and Taif's councils of

four members each. The government was authorised to a chairman for each council. However, the communique limited the right to candidacy to scientists, traders, dignitaries, and heads of trade unions. The government stipulated that the candidate should be able to read and write well and have good conduct and character (Sadiq: 1965: 30).

In addition to the cities' advisory councils, the communique addressed the formation of a general council called the "Consultative Council" made up of thirteen members, four members from Meccah, two from Medinah, two from Jeddah, one from Yanbu, and one from Taif and three members from clans' heads elected by the advisory councils' members. It can be concluded that King Abdul Aziz was the supreme authority in the country who was guided by the provisions of the Islamic law and Mohamad's Sunna. Some specialised executive directorates were formed later on, such as the directorates of military affairs, finance, banks, pilgrimage, public security and endowment. The establishment of some of the important bodies of prime nature such as Accounts Bureau, Officers' Bureau, and Inspectorate General took place. And finally the local agencies like the Emirates, municipalities, and municipal and administrative councils were established.

According to the provisions of the Fundamental Instructions, a consultative council in Meccah was formed. A Viceroy General, his advisors and six competent persons were appointed by King Abdul Aziz to head the operations of the council for one year. The council session was being held under the chairmanship of the Viceroy General or one of his advisors once a week, and more if necessary, to consider issues

referred to it by the Public Vice-Presidency. The council took its decisions in this regard with the absolute majority. The heads of departments used to attend the council's sessions by a formal invitation from the Public Vice-Presidency. The Council discusses matters relating to the respective departments and its decisions were effective only after being approved by the King.

Administrative councils were formed in Jeddah and Medinah. These councils consisted of the deputy and his assistant, chief officers and four competent and eligible persons appointed by the King for one year. Moreover, the administrative council held a meeting under the chairmanship of the deputy once a week to consider issues submitted to it and take decisions concerning them with the absolute majority. They were then submitted to the Viceroy General for his approval. After being approved these decisions were reported to the Public vice-Presidency to direct the respective departments to implement them.

Area councils consisted of the Area Commissioner, his assistant, chief officers and appointed nationals. The Area council used to be held under the chairmanship of its chairman once a week to consider matters referred to it by the Area Commissioner. It takes decisions in keeping with the interests of the public, and then submits them to the deputy of the concerned regions. The deputy, after putting his remarks, submits them to the Viceroy General who in turn sought the King's approval. Upon approval the decisions are reported to the Public Vice-Presidency to direct the concerned authority to implement them.

In every village or among important tribes a council was formed

of a head, a religious scholar and appointed nationals. The council runs the affairs of the village or tribe within the framework of the regulations thereof. The village and the tribe councils which were established by King Abdul Aziz are similar to the ones known early in countries which considered tribes to be the basic unit which constitute the underlying structure of the human society. The system of local councils which represent a group of villages were known early in India. This was even before the emergence of local councils in many European countries (Harris, 1948: 10).

About one year after the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Representative Council System was issued. As a result of this, the administrative system underwent some change (see Appendix V). The Representative Council System was cancelled by the Public Vice-presidency which was further replaced by Ministry of Interior. The Ministry of Interior then became a reference for the governmental departments that were formerly reporting to the Public Vice-Presidency: such as the Directorates of Health, Education, Telegram, Post, Police, legal courts and municipalities. The Representative Council was made up of the undersecretary of state, deputy minister of finance and the consultative council deputy under the chairmanship of the Viceroy General.

The analysis in the above section of Chapter IV has shown that advancements in administrative practices such as the formation of the consultative Council and the Representative Council (in Hijaz) became a part of the Kingdom administrative organs. This is because of the fact

that Hijaz inherited advanced administrative practices which had its' impact on the rest of the regions of the Kingdom. It has been noted that the Consultative Council did not possess much executive power, and that its members were appointed by Royal Decree and were reporting to executive administrative governor of Hijaz region. Its functions were limited to consideration of issues assigned to it by the executive authority and its recommendations were subject to the approval of the King. Hijaz Administrative practices were more advanced than other regions because of the fact that it is visited by pilgrims from all over the world. It had an international seaport and big international trade centres. The Fundamental Instructions guided the Hijaz administration with regard to the services provided to the pilgrims and controlling international agencies in the areas.

The Fundamental Instructions laid down general guidelines for running the administration, however, they lacked many technical aspects and cannot be described as constitution. For example, the Fundamental Instructions did not mention the source of the central authority and judicial authorities and their nature, nor did they address the human right issues and values to raise the social standard of people. The Fundamental Instructions underwent several amendments and changes. Many of the articles were cancelled because of their conflicting nature with the executive authority while some articles were deleted due to the emergence of new governmental departments. Finally, when Hijaz joined the central government in keeping with the national unity in 1932, the effective role of the Fundamental Instructions came to an end.

This is because of the fact that central government possessed all the provision contained in the Fundamental Instructions. Since there was no organisational reference for the central government at that time, the Fundamental Instructions remained in force until the issuance of the Cabinet's system in 1953.

Councils such as the (a) National Council, (b) Consultative Council, (c) Administrative Council, (d) Area Councils, (e) Villages' and (f) Tribes' Council and (g) Representative Council at that time, were created to handle the administrative and organisational affairs of the country. Since the state was pre-occupied with issues of security, order and unification of the country, King Abdul Aziz deliberately empowered these councils to look after interests of the public.

In terms of administrative characteristics, this stage of the Kingdom's history (prior to unification) can be classified into two forms. The first was practised in the central, eastern and southern region. The local departments in these regions were based on the judiciary and financial fields. The second form had broader and more organised administrative characteristics and was in force in the Western region which, in addition to security agencies, includes departments such as justice, municipality, endowments etc.

It is evident from our earlier analysis that the consultative council witnessed many changes and reformation. This may reflect the desire by the central government to maintain power and influence on the council. Although most of these councils were inefficient, yet the consultative council played a considerable role in establishing the social

and economic strategies, such as state budget, state expenditures economic projects etc. It is worth noting here that the special status of Hijaz region had compelled King Abdul Aziz to deal with region according to its' spritual, historical and economic conditions. Nevertheless, King Abdul Aziz has kept the central authority in his hands. This is because there was no organised systems for delegating power and authorities. In this regard, Hafiz Wahba one of the closest people to King Abdul Aziz is reported as saying "while many important problems were referred to the council, other of greater consequences were not". King Abdul Aziz appointed potent and strong personality persons who directly report to him. John Philby, a close consultant to King Abdul Aziz, said about the Minister of Finance, one the closest minister to the King, maintains a semi-regal state comparable to that of the King and the royal princes. And he enjoys a measure of administrative independence with even the Naib (Vice presidents) do not aspire to. (Philby, 1952: 229)

In spite of the formation of the national councils, which were supposed to have achieved decentralisation and decision-making and power sharing in Hijaz, yet one would observe that most of the authorities were centrally exercised by King Abdul Aziz, with no authority for any one either his brothers, sons, ministers or Amirs in the regions to exercise any power or take any decision regarding either internal or external affairs before bringing up the matter to him either by telegraph, through telephone, meetings or in writing.

It is apparent that delegation of power does not exist in most

parts of the country. The administrative system prior to unification is not based on any philosophy, as the province governors were personally and directly associated with King Abdul Aziz. This situation is an indication of centralised personal nature of administration at that time. However, it is observed that in Hijaz, prior to unification there was some sort of social participation in developmental administrative decision-making through process elected councils. Nevertheless, those elected councils were later turned into appointed ones with less powers and authorities.

On the other hand King Abdul Aziz had maintained most of his appointed officials in different positions until his death. This practice also testifies to the centralised nature of local administrative system and falls under Al Derfer classification as the traditional model which is characterised by its political simplicity centralised nature which is based on the traditional tribal community with complex social structure and lack of delegation of authority (ALderfer,1964:14). This administrative situation has lasted until the promulgation of the Omara system and administrative councils in 1359 (1939) which was considered to be the first attempt in legalising the organisational process in the administration of local areas, after the unification of the country.

When the country was unified and security was maintained, the administrative structure of the country became more centralised. But over the years, as the population increased, development programmes started, which gave rise to many sorts of services. At that time, it had



become necessary for the state to improve local administration in order to expedite decision-making process.

### **4.3 Omara System:**

After the unification of Saudi Arabia in 1932, the state started to tackle the administrative, social, economic and developmental issues. Economic resources at that time were very scarce and effective communications were lacking, the state was not able to adopt a centralised policy in administrating the various regions of the country. Hence there was an urgent necessity on the part of the Saudi Government to establish effective communication system to control various provinces of the Kingdom.

Consequently the state issued the System of Omara (governors) and Administrative Councils in 1939, which defined the authorities, responsibilities and duties of each provincial Amir, the relationship of the Amir with central government and with various directorates etc. in the province were also defined. The system consisted of 76 articles and divided into two sections: Section I dealt with the Omara responsibilities (Articles 1-27); and Section II was concerned with the administrative councils and is subdivided into the following two subsections: (a) The basic section included articles from 28 to 34 and articles 35-50 regarding administrative council's authorities; (b) The second section addressed the internal affairs and included articles from 51 to 76 (Samman: 1982:87). (For complete text, see appendix IV).

The Omara (governors) System vested in the governors broader authorities within the province such as protection of individual rights and their possessions, maintaining security and order, collection of state revenues of the province, monitoring employees' performance, and consulting them in developmental issues.

"The ordinance obligated the governors to execute the Islamic Shari'a and follow the governmental rules and regulations. The ordinance limited the governor's jurisdiction within his regional borders, but it did not specifically define those borders. The legislator divided the general legal responsibilities and duties: Judicial cases should be turned over to the regional courts and cases that have a technical aspect should be turned over the appropriate governmental department in the region with the guarantee that the governmental rules and regulations would be applied accurately in those cases". (Khashogji, 1970: 46)

The responsibilities of the governor as laid down by the Saudi legislator included development of his province economically, culturally, educationally and environmentally and guiding the concerned authorities to collect "Zakat" and that the governor reported to the Minister of Interior. However, he would not interfere with the affairs of the various departments reporting to the central ministries. But he is encouraged to coordinate and consult senior departmental officials in the region when needed.

Al Mutairi and his colleagues pointed out that the Omara System recommended the division of the Kingdom into eight Emirates, each of

which was headed by Amir (governor) with a rank of minister. These Emirates include the following: Riyadh, Meccah Al Mukarramah, Eastern Province, Medinah Al Munawara, Hail, Northern Borders, Qasseem and Asir. The Omara System has given the directors of governmental departments more freedom to act in applying and implementing their ministry's project and programmes without interference from their regional administrations. The Omara System encouraged the different departmental directors to consult and cooperate with the regional governor in various mutual interests. Besides the province governor, the Omara System, stated that a deputy governor with managerial experience is appointed to assist the governor in running the region's affairs. In 1939 the Omara System set-up a regional council of eight residential members, elected every four years, to be under the chairmanship of the provincial governor. (Al-Mutairi, 1989: 32).

"In order to facilitate greater adaptation to these new functions and responsibilities a clearer and more precise ordinance of regions was issued in 1963 (1383 H). It gave the regional administration additional and substantial powers with an eye towards more decentralised system of governance " (Khashogji, 1979: 48).

It seems to me that the "Omara System" in general is vague since the responsibilities of "Amir" were not clearly defined. And also the regulation did not mention who is responsible for appointing governors. Moreover, there is confusion on the use of some words that referred to the same thing and which had different meanings in Arabic, for

example, "Mulhakat" in article 3 and "Jihat" in articles 5. It is worth noting here that Articles 35 to 50 did not use a clear-cut, definite term for many of the responsibilities of the administrative councils. For example, the word "consideration" was repeated in 10 articles and is used to refer to serious responsibilities like consideration of all tenders, contracting and salaries for government, municipalities, endowment etc. However, the word "consideration" does not determine the nature of the council's job whether it is executive, legislative or consultative. The System of Omara stipulated that in each province an administrative council is formed consisting of four to eight members, elected for two years. This Council is headed by the Amir. The responsibilities of the council included the supervision of local affairs. However, the power of these councils diminished after establishing the council of ministers in 1953.

As the scope and responsibilities of the central governmental agencies increased, various branches were set up, and hence the importance of the administrative councils decreased. Their functions were confined, in most cases, to the consideration of matters related to the selection of the heads and deputies of the clans and supervision over their election. According to the Omara System, the legislator delegated power to the regional administrator. Those administrators were independent of the governor in planning their programmes and executing the projects.

After reviewing the Omara system, the researcher noted the following: (a) The legislator has mentioned in several places the terms

"special instructions" and "systems" in Article 14, without defining these terms. (b) There are some contradictions between certain articles in the Omara System. For example, clause seven of Article 5 does not allow the Amir to interfere in the affairs of governmental departments in his province. On the other hand article 27 reads; "governmental departments in the province should be under the Amir's direct supervision (c) In article 29 the system referred to the election of administrative council members, according to special instructions. However, the legislator did not determine these instructions. In addition, these councils were not legislative or executive. They were mainly consultative. It is worth noting here that election was limited to Hijaz region. (d) In article 33 the legislator does not clearly indicate who will elect the members of the administrative councils.

In conclusion the researcher believes that the Omara System is considered the base upon which the Saudi legislator formulated Nizam AL-Mokataat (Regional System), issued in 1963.

#### **4.4 Nizam Al-Mokataat:**

With the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia in 1936 and the resultant economic prosperity, there was a need to expand and streamline various governmental services. The central government started to establish railways, roads and schools, prioritised agriculture and set-up nationwide postal and telecommunication services, and reorganised defense system. As a result, all the ministries had to be

streamlined and their functions redefined. This socio-economic transformation affects administrative reforms in Saudi Arabia as in many developing countries.

Al-Hawatti defined Nizam Al-Mokataat (the Regional System) by saying that: "the reasons beyond the issue of that system included development and expansion in the economical and social development fields. It aims to delegate further power to regions so that they can run their own local affairs and people's needs without referring to the central government" (Al-Hawatti, 1986 : 67).

Nizam Al-Mokataat (regional system) was introduced by the Royal Decree No. 12 in 10 October 1963 replacing the Omara system. This system had become essential in order to cope with the increased activities brought about as a result of developments in economic and social fields of the Kingdom. (For complete text, see Appendix V).

According to Nizam Al-Mokataat (Regional System) the country is divided into several "Mokataat". These "Mokataat", "regions," as they were called used to be considered as "juristic person" were represented by the Amir who used to be the chairman of the regional council. These "Mokataat" were attached to the Ministry of Interior; and each one consisted of "Manatik" (districts). The Mantikah included one or more towns and a number of villages. Each "Mantikah" was further divided into "Marakez" (localities) which included a single town or small group of villages. This form of division is recommended by the Ministry of Interior and approved by the Council of Ministers. According to the Regional System, in every "Mokataah" there is "Hakim" (Regional

governor), appointed by Royal Decree. He was the administrative head of that Mokataah. He is nominated by the Minister of Interior and approved by the Prime Minister.

The Saudi legislator mentioned several articles to Nizam Al-Mokataat (Regional System): Major elements of the Regional System comprised the followings: (i) The members of the Regional council were selected by the Council of Ministers upon nomination by the Minister of Interior, (ii) The selected member should be a resident of the region. The representatives of the Ministries should be members by virtue of their jobs, (iii) The number of Regional Council members were limited to thirty for each region, (iv) Membership period for the members of Regional Council is two years, renewable, for another two years, depending on the discretion of the Council of Ministers, (v) Selection of governors is made upon the nomination of the persons to be appointed by Minister of Interior. After the recommendation of the Council of Ministers it is submitted to the King for his approval. The King used to issue a Royal Decree regarding the appointment. The same procedure is followed in appointing the Regional Deputies, (vi) Financial resources, preparation of budget and its complementation were also drafted for each region, (vii) Relationship between the central government, regional governors and the council were also discussed including the supervisory role played by the central government over local agencies, (viii) The Regional councils authorities included the municipal affairs, agriculture, public utilities, social and cooperative affairs and health.

The council of the province is generally concerned with everything that interests the inhabitants of the region. The council shall particularly perform the following functions: (i) To co-operate with municipalities in the execution of their jurisdiction concerning the region, (ii) Propose what the council deems adequate for the improvement of the province in those matters that concern municipal affairs. The concerned authority is to consider these proposals in accordance with the interests of the region and within the limits of its capacities, (iii) The council of the region may help the municipalities in performing the services they are charged with, (iv) To propose new municipalities within the province or alter the places of existing municipalities.

Other than the jurisdictions determined for the Council of the Region by the provisions of this regulation, or any other regulations, the Governor and every minister may consult the council on any matters deemed necessary to gain the council's opinion. The council can forward to the Governor any suggestions related to public interest of the province - particularly in agricultural, industrial, commercial, labour, irrigation, communications, public security, health, and educational affairs. All such information must also go to the Minister of the Interior.

According to Nizam Al-Mokataat (Regional System) the council of the region can demand through the Ministry of Interior from the Ministries and governmental departments, the data and information related to activities included in the Council's jurisdiction. The Council



of the Region is entitled to the delegation for one of its experienced employees to help the council in a particular matter being discussed by the council, and to attend any other discussions of the council on that matter. These delegations may participate in the discussions but not in the actual decision-making. However, the council of the region should accomplish the task forwarded to them and give their opinion within a period of not more than three months from the date the matter is submitted to the council of the region. The Governor or the Minister can demand the opinion of the council on an urgent basis; in such a case the council should give their opinion within a period not exceeding one month from the date the matter was submitted to them. The council of the region can, when necessity deems so, ask the concerned authority to extend the period determined in this article. However, matters included in the jurisdiction of municipalities are excluded from the jurisdictions of the council of the region, excepting what is determined by Articles 18 and 19 of this regulation, and the council of the region should not discuss the military or political affairs of the state, internally or externally. It is worth noting here that the decisions of the council of the region are to be cancelled if the council exceeds the limits of their jurisdiction. The Minister of the Interior issues a decision of cancellation. The decisions made by the members of the council in the name of the council made in a place other than the regular meeting place of the council, or outside the place specified for their meetings, shall be cancelled automatically.

After reviewing Nizam Al-Mokataat, which is presented in

Appendix V, the researcher reaches the following important observations: When the Saudi legislator tied the Mokataat and the councils to the ministry of interior, they became totally dependent units. This contradicts with what is known in the literature of local administration, where local units are linked to the ministry of local government. Our point of view in this regard conforms with what Al-Tammawi mentioned regarding the governor position in the Arab Republic of Egypt, where the role of the provincial governor is not only administrative as was before. Governors in the new administrative system of Egypt became independent (by law) as soon as the presidency term is over (Al-Tammaiwi, 1961: 6). Hence we can say that, the more local administration units are legally recognised, the more they become independent of the central administration.

It is worth noting here that in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the legislator gives the legal personality at two levels, namely, Mokataat and Districts. As for the governorates, they were considered as administrative units serving the central authority fulfilling its objectives on the local level.

The legislator of Nizam Al-Mokataat has denied the people their right in electing the council members. Instead the council of ministers selects the council members upon recommendation by the Ministry of Interior. The researcher disagrees with the Saudi legislator of Nizam Al-Mokataat regarding Article 15 which limited the membership term by two years. This short period may not allow the council members to prove their capabilities. It is worth noting here that the new provincial

system has overcome this problem by increasing the term of office to four years. Moreover, the researcher noticed the double-role of the Amir, as a governor of the Mokataah on one hand and as a representative of the central government on the other hand. According to Nizam Al-Mokataat, the financial matters are highly centralised, as the system delegate very limited authorities to local administrative officials (see Article 18, Clause 6).

It is worth noting here that the personal administration at the time of King Abdul Aziz is considered as a traditional administrative system. This type of traditional centralisation seems qualitatively different from the centralisation in developed countries". This is because the Saudi society is based on tribal system. Sheikdom, as one of the oldest institutions of traditional leadership in Saudi Arabia, has enjoyed powers and prestige of the pre-unification. After the unification of the Kingdom the power, authority and functions of the Sheiks started to decline gradually. Although the powers, functions and status of the Sheiks have declined over a period of time, Sheikdom has not become a totally insignificant institution in the society and can play a role in the process of national development. Still the tribesmen in the rural areas in Saudi Arabia have considerable respect for their traditional leaders. The Sheiks could use this respect for educating, guiding, informing, and advising the people in their areas on matters contributing to tribal welfare and development. In spite of the establishment of councils and institutions within the Omara System and Nizam Al-Mokataat, the traditional leaders in Saudi Arabia remain to be effective for facilitating

the consultation process in formulation and implementation of public policies and development plans for rural development such as, opening new schools, building roads and establishing health centres .. etc. Tribal leaders in Saudi Arabia were useful in mobilising public opinion in various developmental activities. The tribal leaders are still helpful in settling disputes, pronounced on tribal customs and traditions, and ruled on matters concerning the tribes in consultation with their people.

#### **4.5 General Reflection:**

According to Khashogji, "few attempts to devolve powers to the local authorities seem to have been generally unsuccessful in eliminating centralisation" (Khashogji, 1979:128). For the case of Saudi Arabia this situation has been explained by several reasons such as: (a) powers transferred to the regional governors from the council of ministers or from the Ministry of Interior, changed only the balance of the overall work load between the capital and the regions, (b) the central government still seems very careful to tighten controls whenever money is involved, (c) the local administration in Saudi Arabia is still limited in power over routine personnel matters, like authorisation for leave or absence, supervising employee's office hours observing the employee's work conduct etc, (d) some of the local officials lack the courage to make decisions. They are afraid to face-up to the responsibilities and take a stand when a situation requires it (Bollis, 1967: 125-143).

The researcher believes that deconcentration was implemented in some regions to some extent. However, former Administrative Systems

contained articles which encouraged centralization by placing localities under the control of the central government. As a result, the regional governments could not exercise considerable amount of freedom in decision-making process with regard to their power in selection of council members and preparation of budget and other developmental plans. The regional government should refer in essential decisions to the central government and to the Ministry of Interior. This was contrary to what the systems advocate. Examples of these are outlined as follows: (a) The Amir is appointed by a Royal Decree upon suggestion by the Council of Ministers subject to recommendation by the Minister of Interior. The Amir does not have authority to appoint the regional deputy governor or locality commissioner as he was required to refer to the central government in such appointments. This meant that the central government appointed the Amir's (governor's) subordinate. (b) The former systems delegated the councils, consultative non-executive functions, leaving the legislative, executive and judiciary functions for the central government and for Ministry of Interior. This meant greater dependence of the regional government on central governments in handling local issues.

In this context the study by Al-Awagi revealed that 82% of the government officials assured the existence of centralised administration (Al-Awagi, 1971:34).

"It is not difficult to make a case for decentralisation based on the dysfunctional effects on performance of over-centralised structures and system. If power is concentrated at the centre too many minor decisions

have to be referred up the line for approval. This does not necessarily improve the quality of decisions but it almost certainly leads to bureaucratic delays which are costly and frustrating. Individuals and organisations at lower levels have too little discretion to do their jobs efficiently and are discouraged from taking initiatives" (Olowu, 1998:615). This type of centralised administrative system was prevailing in Saudi Arabia at the time of late King Abdul Aziz, where most of the administrative decisions are taken by him. After the establishment of the council of ministers, the centralised power has moved to the council which is headed by the King. One can conclude that the centralisation in Saudi Arabia is controlled by one institution, namely the council of ministers, while in other countries centralization is managed through several institutions, such as legislative, consultative and executive etc.

Rosebaum shows that the basic instinct of human society seems to be towards centralisation and the implementation of a "centralising impulse". This natural impulse has been further enhanced as a result of the emergence during the past 60 years both by the idea of and the development of complex techniques of "strategic planning" (Rosebaum, 1999: 7).

According to Rosebaum there are two factors which have played a significant role in encouraging centralisation, particularly in the past half century. "The first has been the result of most policy maker's desire to maintain the maximum feasible control over national economies and economic development. This is frequently used as an argument against decentralisation. The second, those politicians who are less than

dedicated and honorable normally find centralization a very handy strategy in the sense that it enables them to exploit more easily the resources of the society" (Rosebaum, 1999:7). Also, the study by Assaf indicated that the authorities entrusted by the legislator to local officials were very limited, and have led to release the pressure of responsibility on the central government (Assaf, 1982: 205).

The situation of centralised local administration shown by the previous administrative systems in Saudi Arabia agrees with Rondinelli's argument. Rondinelli and others believe that the developing countries are generally unified, centralised and composed of rules and regulations. Therefore, the political authorities consider centralisation as an ideal type whether in the political, economic or administrative fields, in most of the developing countries. The national governments "central authority" considered central economic planning, central intervention and central control as the most appropriate (Rondinelli and others, 1984: 9).

The following are some remarks concerning the former administrative systems: (i) The systems failed to define the regions and their divisions and the boundaries of regions; (ii) The systems failed to differentiate between the responsibilities of the "Amir" and the regional council; (iii) The system did not specify who would suggest the extension of the membership term of the regional council member, nor did it define the selection procedure for council members representing the ministries or their branches in the region and what the alternative would be in case of their absence or inability to attend; (iv) Articles 21,

22, 24 and 25 of Nizam Al-Mokataat (Regional System) attempted to spell out the working relationship between the Regional council and the Omara (governors) with the ministers, and the Council of Ministers. Among the questions which have not been addressed are: the line of communication, the decision making process and the actual nature of their coordination in operations; (v) Article 18 did not provide acceptable answer for problems related to the financial issues, particularly the status of the regional council budget, nor did it show whether it was a separate budget for the region or part of the budget of the Ministry of Interior; (vi) The system assigned equal number (30 members) for the Regional Council in all regions without taking into consideration the population size, number of governorates, localities and the like. (For complete text, see Appendix V).

It is worth noting here that the three former administrative systems; before the Unification of the Kingdom, Omara System and Nizam Al-Mokataat did not encourage public participation through regional and provincial councils. Most of the regions and the districts were administered by the central government. However, the new provincial system implemented in 1994 has introduced some changes in the state's institutions. This new administrative system, which will be discussed in Chapter V and VI, intends to promote the quality of performance in government organs, and to encourage citizen's participation through the members of the provincial councils.



# CHAPTER V

## OBJECTIVES AND ROLES OF THE NEW PROVINCIAL SYSTEM

### 5.1 Introduction:

In the previous chapter, we examined the earlier Administrative Systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia such as the Administrative System prior to the unification of the Kingdom, The Omara System and "Nizam AL-Mokataat". In the present chapter the analysis will focus on the new Provincial System, its objectives and how this new administrative system differs from the earlier ones discussed in chapter IV. The present chapter will include the following sections: (a) The structure of the new Provincial System, (b) The role of the new provincial system in the decision-making process, (c) The role of the new provincial system in provision of services, (d) The role of the new provincial system in promoting local development.

The continuous expansion of developmental projects in both public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia during the past 30 years, requires efficient governmental organs to promote decentralised policies that lead to comprehensive development in all the provinces of the Kingdom. In March 1992, the King announced a package of administrative reforms which introduced major changes in the state's organic institutions. The aim of the reorganisation of the new provincial system is to realise the

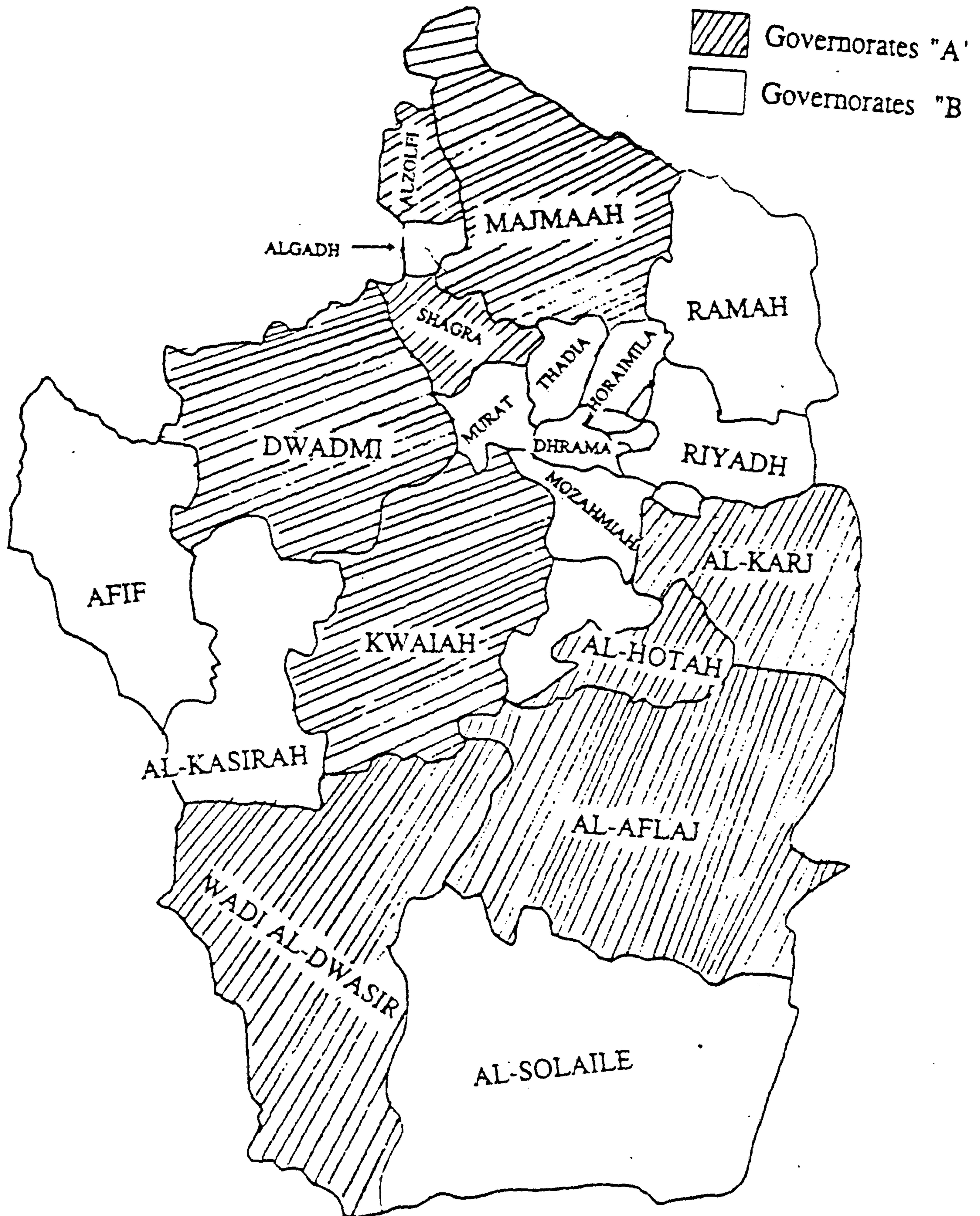
objectives of the state to improve and promote the quality of performance in government organs in various provinces. The developments in different fields have called for establishing a general administrative system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To meet this need, the situation of the provinces allows more organised action through an appropriate administrative development, and to raise the level of administrative role in the provinces of the Kingdom.<sup>(1)</sup>

The new Provincial System, as it reads, aims at raising the level of the administrative functions and at increasing developmental projects in the provinces of the Kingdom. In addition, the new administrative system aims at keeping security and order, and ensuring citizens' rights and liberties within the framework of Islamic laws.<sup>(2)</sup> In this new administrative system, the provinces and the headquarter of each province are organised by a Royal decree upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior.<sup>(3)</sup> Each province consists of a number of governorates "A" and governorate "B", and districts "A" and districts "B". This categorisation is based on many factors, such as demographic, geographical, security, environmental conditions and transportation facilities. (Please refer to Figure III which shows, the distribution of the governorates of Riyadh province according to their classification.

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- (1) King Fahd's speech to the nation about the constitution, March 12, 1992.
  - (2) The Provincial System, Article 1.
  - (3) The Provincial System, Article 2.

**Figure III**

Map showing the distribution of governorate in Riyadh Province



Source: Ministry of Interior, Dicumintation Unit ,  
Riyadh Saudi Arabia.

The provincial council, formed in each province, consists of the followings: (i) Provincial governor as chairman, (ii) Deputy provincial governor as vice-chairman, (iii) Commissioner of the province, (iv) Heads of the governmental departments in the province, who are appointed through a decision by the Prime Minister upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior, (v) At least ten indigenous persons who are learned, experienced and competent, appointed by an order by the Prime Minister upon nomination by the provincial governor and by approval from the Minister of Interior. Their membership term is four years, and can be renewed for another four years. <sup>(4)</sup>

## **5.2 The Provincial System:**

It has been previously mentioned that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had issued its latest administrative legislations, known as The Provincial System, in 1992 according to the Royal decree number A/92. It is worth noting here that the base of this system emanated from the highest legislative and organisational level in the Saudi government.

The governor will be the contact point between governorates and districts, and governorates are linked to the provinces through the provincial governor. The relationships between the governorates and the provinces are organised by a Royal decree based on recommendation made by the Minister of Interior. On the other hand the districts are

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(4) The Provincial System, Article 16.

organised by a decision from the Minister of Interior based on a recommendation made by the provincial governor. The system defined the responsibilities of the provincial Amir (governor), and the provincial commissioner, according to the government general policy and according to the provincial system legislations. [For further details see Appendix VI].

The Provincial System also stipulates that each province should have a council called "Provincial Council" to be situated at the provincial capital. In addition the new Provincial System stipulated that all members of Provincial Council should be nominated by a decision from the Prime Minister based on a recommendation made by the Amir (governor) of the province and the approval of the Minister of Interior.

The Provincial Council is made up as follows: (a) The Provincial Governor - Council President. (b) The Provincial Deputy Governor-Deputy Council President. (c) Provincial Commissioner. (d) Heads of governmental bodies in the province. (e) At least ten appointed persons from the province.

This process of nominating members for the provincial council leaves no room for public participation through the process of election, which is practiced in many neighbouring Arab countries, such as Kuwait, Egypt, and Jordan. In Saudi Arabia the level of civic awareness and organisation skill is very limited.

Although the researcher believes that the election of members is effective in many countries, the appointment of provincial council's

members in Saudi Arabia is influenced by the prevailing socio-economic and political circumstances. Humes and Martin who believe in the similarities among local government systems in countries which share the impact of many factors, such as historical, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental (Humes and Martin, 1961: 37).

The Provincial System also defined the authorities of the provincial councils depending on fields of specialisation. This was obvious because the Provincial System stipulates that the provincial council is authorised to consider what ever could possibly promote development and provision of services in the province and raise the efficiency of administrative performance at the provinces, governorates and districts levels.

The council's mission is made to determine the province needs according to priority and to allocate funds to projects according to development plans. Further, the council is invested with the responsibility of studying organisational plans for towns and cities and following up the implementation of development plans. This will be discussed in details in Chapter VI.

The researcher has noticed that the legislator of the new provincial system has fallen into the same mistake encountered in Nizam AL-Mokataat where duality of role was prevailing. In both systems the governor is, on one hand, playing a central role in his capacity representing the central government at provincial level, and on the other hand, he is playing a local role as a head of the Provincial Council.

The new Provincial System does not empower the local government, but rather regulates their conduct and impose duties and functions. For example, the local governments are answerable to the Minister of Interior. The Minister of Interior determines (under the supervision of the Council of Ministers) the scope of authority of each province. This delegated authority must be exercised within the limits prescribed in the Provincial System. The Council of Ministers still retains power to override any decision proposed by the local governor or the members of the Provincial Council. The administration of the province, therefore, reflects a combination of bureaucratic needs of the province and political demands of the centre (Aba - Namay, 1993: 88).

According to the new Provincial System there should be: (i) Direct contacts between the provincial governors, the ministries and governmental departments located in various provinces, (ii) All Provincial affairs are referred to the respective provincial councils. As a director of the Development Planning Unit, the researcher came across many requests and complaints, which have been returned by the Ministry of Interior to the Provincial Council for detailed investigation. The researcher has noticed a number of cases which show a move towards decentralised policies in decision making process. The following are some examples from real life experiences: first, when the Amir (governor) of Jizan province submitted a request for a new hospital, the Ministry of Interior returned the request to the Provincial

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Council for budget review.<sup>(5)</sup> Secondly, the Ministry of Education requested Tabuk Provincial Council to suggest the distribution and the locations of the new schools approved for the province. This is because the Provincial Council is able to allocated the new schools according to the actual needs of the people. Thirdly, when the governorate of AL-Olla (in Madinah Al-Monoraah Province), asked for more primary health centers, the Ministry of Health has requested the Provincial Council, to study the proposal, and submit the required budget, together with their recommendations for final approval. (For more examples see Chapter VI, section 6.4).

One can conclude from the above three examples that the new Provincial System has taken as step forward towards decentralised policies regarding decision-making process, specially when compared with the earlier administrative systems in Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, the researcher has noticed that the new Provincial System do not impower financial autonomy. For example, when the Provincial Council of Riyadh has approved the construction of roads for Majmah, Al-Soliale and Aflaj, the financial approval from the concerned authority remains to be an obstacle for implementing these projects.<sup>(6)</sup> This is because the Provincial Councils have no financial authorisation to speed up the development process in the various provinces.

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(5) Development Planning Unit, Ministry of of Interior, 1995.Regional system, article V.

(6) Department Planning Unit, Ministry of Interior, 1995.

All of this leads to the conclusion that decentralisation is not a "quick fix" to solve administrative, political or economic problems, of developing countries. Decentralisation is likely to be effective if there is a skilled personnel, stability, financial capacities and growing pressures to decentralise from the society as a whole. Central government in some cases adopt decentralisation because of the inadequacy of highly centralised system, or the desire and demands of local organisations or increasing ethnic tension: Sometimes because of physical and intellectual pressures, Rondinelli et al, has stated that; "Decentralisation is likely to be more effective in countries where governments have been in office for some time and where regions are not faced with imminent social or economic crises (Rondinelli and others, 1984: 71). Sudan may be considered as an example for this situation, where the country faces civil war and political instability for more than 40 years. Rondinelli and others, argue that "decentralisation is not usually suitable for countries in deep crises; it can not be recommended as a last ditch effort to avoid catastrophe. A common sense conclusion is that governments survive the worst phases of crises by centralising, but that they try to avoid potentially deeper crises later by decentralising" (Rondenilli and others, 1984: 71).

However, the researcher believes that effective decentralisation should be based on citizens' participation regarding decision-making process. Also decentralisation will be effective with adequate technical and managerial skills, together with adequate financial resources.

The new Provincial System differs from Nizam AL-Mokataat in regards to the fact that Nizam AL-Mokataat specified for each region a council of not more than thirty members, including representatives of the various governmental departments, whereas according to the Provincial System, the number of citizens chosen depends on the population size of the province, governorate and district. There may be variations in the number of citizens selected as council members depending upon population size, the complexity of services and economic conditions of the province. Table 5.1 shows the distribution of the members of the provincial councils in each of the thirteen provinces of the Kingdom.

Under this new administrative system it is observed that the role played by the council of Ministers is limited to the approval of the recommendations of the Ministry of Interior. This is attributed to the fact that the Ministry of Interior will be looking after the financial and administrative affairs of all the provinces.

**TABLE (5.1)**

The appointed members of the Provincial Council in each of the thirteen provinces of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Name of the Province	Capital of Province	Appointed members of the Provincial Councils
Riyadh	Riyadh	20
Mecca AL-Mukrama	Mecca AL-Mukrama	20
Al Medina Al-Munawara	Al-Madina	20
Al-Qasim	Buraydah	15
Eastern Province	Dammam	15
Asir	Abha	15
Tabuk	Tabuk	15
Hail	Hail	15
Al-Hodud Al-Shamalia	Ar'ar	15
Jizan	Jizan	15
Najran	Najran	15
Al-Baha	Al-Baha	15
Jawf	Sakaka	15

**Source:** Ministry of Interior, Department of Provincial Councils, The New Provincial Systems. Riyadh, 1992.

### **5.3 The Role of the New Provincial System in decision-making Process:**

Before the introduction of the new Provincial System, all provinces and districts have to refer in all their affairs to the Minister of Interior. The Minister of Interior then writes to the concerned authorities, such as ministries and governmental departments. These authorities contact the Minister of Interior, who in turn, consult the various provinces. After having passed through several and unnecessary channels, the matter is finally referred to the Council of Ministers. These processes delay the decision making process.

The introduction of the New Provincial System brought about some changes in the decision making-process. The legislator of the New Provincial System delegated administrative and consultative authority to the provinces with respect to provincial development. The council discusses all the matters concerning the developmental projects and services in the province under the supervision of the provincial Amir and his Deputy during the four annual sessions. After the discussions and the studies made by the various committees of the council, a number of recommendations are approved. In one of its regular meetings, Riyadh Provincial Council reviewed the summary introduced by the council's secretary for the importance of forming a committee from the council members to review the features and objectives of the sixth development plan (1995-2000), particularly, the part concerning Riyadh province. For example, the council approved the establishment of a

laboratory in Riyadh for testing building materials. The council has also approved construction of branches for some ministries in some governorates of the province, such as Majmah, AL-Soliale and AL-Aflaj.<sup>(7)</sup>

These recommendations are sent to the concerned authorities and governmental departments, and the concerned ministry sends a message to the Provincial Council showing whether it can fulfill the council's requirement or not. The Provincial Council receives the direct replies of the ministries and governmental departments. In case the Provincial Council is convinced with such replies, the decision cycle will be short. If the Provincial Council become unconvinced with the replies of the concerned ministry, the Minister of Interior would be contacted to get him informed of what has happened between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministry. The Ministry of Interior handles the matter from its own point of view either by convincing the Provincial Council that the concerned ministry's opinion is logical and feasible, and it should accept the decision, or by persuading the ministry, regarding the Provincial Council's opinion and the justification of its point of view. Failing to convince the concerned ministry by the opinion of the Minister of Interior who backs the provincial council's opinion and decision, this matter will be submitted to a higher body, the council of ministers, that takes the final decision and gives directives to the concerned ministry or to take the necessary action.

It is worth noting here that the New Provincial System, however is

(7) Development Planning Unit. Ministry of Interior, 1995.

silent on what the council should do if the Ministry of Interior ignores the recommendations made by the Provincial Council.

Based on the above discussion the decision making cycle shows that it starts from the Provincial Council and the concerned ministry, through the Ministry of Interior and finally to the council of ministers. It is clear that the administrative decision making process gets decentralised to some extent.

#### **5.4 The New Provincial System and its Impact on the Provision of Services:**

The sharing of responsibilities and duties between the various provinces, governorates and districts as specified by the new Provincial System, helps to make provision of services more quickly and efficiently than before. The legislator of the Provincial System incorporated the responsibilities of provision of services as one of the duties of the Amir in order to make him the highest authority responsible for the provision and development of the public services in the province. Since the Amir (governor) is entrusted with the task of provision of services, he has the right to request the central government for any help he needs in this regard. It is his responsibility to make necessary administrative and financial arrangements to accomplish this goal. The new Provincial System has also vested in the Amir the authority to make direct contact with ministries and governmental departments to discuss the provincial affairs; mostly services rendered to citizens. The new provincial system

shows that each ministry or governmental department, having services within the province, must appoint a head for their departments in the province to coordinate with the provincial Amir in this respect. The policy of Riyadh Provincial Council is to emphasise the team-work strategy. For example, the council has approved the formation of a committee from the Ministries of Municipality, Agriculture, Department of Sanitary Sewage and Water Departments, for co-ordination regarding environmental correction. Riyadh Provincial Council has approved the co-ordination with Ministry of Education and the Ministry of health for promoting health awareness among mothers.

(8)

In the case of education, all educational directors in the various provinces of the Kingdom, are asked to study the requirements of educational services in each area based on the rules and regulations given to them by the Ministry of Education, and on the required conditions and standards. All requests of applicable conditions shall be forwarded to the general director of education in the province, who submits all the requests to the provincial council for reviewal and final approval.

The new Provincial System as it reads, has adopted the Provincial Councils to handle the local services effectively for the benefit of the people. The delegation of authorities regarding developmental projects to the Provincial Councils is considered a step forward towards administrative development, which in turns lifted the burden from the

(8) Development Planning Unit, Ministry of Interior, 1995.



central government. The New Provincial System has divided the provision of services equally between the central and the provincial governments. This may speed the provision of services, and make them more appropriate, which is contrary to the situation before the implementation of the new Provincial System.

According to the new Provincial System, the provincial government is responsible for delivering and improving the general services. The system has entitled the governor to coordinate with the ministers and governmental departments regarding the improvement of the services. Moreover, the legislator stated that the governor is required to submit an annual report to the Minister of Interior about the sufficiency and the efficiency of the provision of services in his province. There is also an annual meeting for the provincial governors under the chairmanship of the minister of interior, to discuss the problems and the needs for the various provinces.

## **5.5 The Role of the New Provincial System in Promoting Local Development:**

The importance of the new administrative system with respect to the local development, is clearly shown in the functions and tasks of the Provincial Council as shown in Article XXIII <sup>(9)</sup>. The new Provincial System attempts to increase local production through encouraging the establishment of industrial and agricultural projects by the private sector

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(9) Provincial System Article, XXIII.

and suggests measures to exploit the economic opportunities of the province.

The move made by the new Provincial System for the achievement of local development is confirmed by the establishment of the Deputy Ministry of Interior for Provincial Affairs located at the Ministry of Interior headquarters and affiliated to the Deputy Minister of Interior. It, in turn, includes a department concerned with development, called the "Provincial Development Plans Department." The main functions of this department are to coordinate with concerned governmental departments in considering requests relating to the developmental services as may be submitted to the Minister of Interior by the Provincial Councils and follow up the decision; to follow up the issues referred to the Minister of Interior by the provincial councils with regards to the determination of the provincial requirements, projects and organisational layouts of its cities and villages. In addition, this department helps the provinces, governorates and districts in planning for the achievement of their objectives regarding the development of the localities. Finally this department contacts the Ministries and the Provinces for exchange of information and cooperation in the development programmes.

As shown earlier in Chapter III, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has witnessed a considerable progress in socio-economic development. The new Provincial System has been introduced to increase the rate of economic development at the local level through an efficient

administrative system. The new Provincial System is expected: to encourage the citizens to increase their participation in economic activity of rural and urban areas of the province, to create job opportunities, to set up of industrial projects with joint efforts of various provinces is being given priority, to introduce profitable projects in various fields, to encourage local citizens to participate in local development programmes, and to provide infrastructural facilities like construction of roads, ports, schools and hospitals and setting up of telecommunication network which contribute effectively to economic development. The Provincial Councils are expected to play an important role in accelerating the economic activity of the province through increased participation in drawing national plans for overall national development.

It is worth noting here that the Provincial Council depends for its decisions on the reports prepared by the specialised committees. For example, Riyadh Council in its fourth session in November of 1995 has approved most of the recommendations submitted by the economic development committee regarding water projects, surveying the lands located south of AL-Kharj city and the construction of industrial zone for petroleum industry. Riyadh Provincial Council has approved the execution of some vital important roads in the region to be constructed, namely AL-Karj Road, and "Riyadh - Wadi - Al-Dwasir Road".<sup>(10)</sup>

The council members are expected to represent the wishes as well as grievances of the people and strive to work out viable solutions for

(10) Development Planning Unit, Ministry of Interior, 1995.

them. By providing infrastructural facilities and other form of services and floating viable projects in various provinces, the immigration of rural population to urban areas will be checked to some extent.

During its fourth session (in November of 1995), Riyadh Provincial Council has emphasised the necessity of giving more allocations to cleaning, maintenance contracts, asphaltting streets, leveling, of roads lowering surface water level and addressing the concerned official bodies to complete south-Riyadh two-ways road. The council has also approved the recommendations submitted by the educational and cultural committee regarding the financial allocations needed for educational projects suggested by the various educational organisations. These organisations include Ministry of Education, General Presidency for Girls Education, Public Education for Technical and Vocational Training, and General Presidency of Youth Welfare.

It is worth noting here that according to the new Provincial System the financial structure is more centralised, i.e. councils have no financial authority at all; the branches of the ministries and provinces are financially related to their respective ministries in the central government; and the disbursement, expenditure and budget affairs are handled by the central government only. In theory, if the branches of ministries and governmental departments in the provinces report to the provincial administration, then each province must have its own budget and financial income without referring to the central government, and also the local government. The researcher thinks that the new

administrative policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requires financial independence for all the provinces and to provide self-finance and self-sufficiency to local council units. It is known that one of the priorities of the local government world-wide is to be capable of financing itself. The more financial dependent on the central government, the weaker will be the provincial independence.

## **5.6 Discussion and Concluding Remarks:**

As mentioned earlier in Chapter III the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has witnessed socio-economic development in all aspects of life; the standard of living of the Saudi citizens has improved considerably. The number of population has increased from 7 million in 1974 to about 17 million in 1992, (Department of Statistics, 1992). The Saudi population constitutes about 72.7% of the total population in 1992. The experience and qualifications of Saudi administrators have improved through in-service training programmes for government official organised by the Institute of Public Administration. These socio-economic changes requires an effective system of local government. The New Provincial System issued in 1992 and implemented in 1994, as it reads, aims to raise the level of administrative functions and to increase developmental levels in the various provinces of the Kingdom.

The New Provincial System differs from the earlier administrative systems (discussed in Chapter IV), in many aspects. For example, the local administration prior to the unification of the Kingdom was mainly

a response to the political situation prevailing at that time, when King Abdul Aziz considered security as a top priority. The Amir (governor of the region) used to refer to the King in all matters concerning the region. On the other hand in The New Provincial System, the Amir (provincial governor) reports to the Minister of Interior. An important difference between The New Provincial System and Nizam Al-Mokataat is that, The Provincial System has been applied, while the other has not. However, the implementation of The New Provincial System has lifted the burden and responsibilities of administrative affairs from the central government. The planning for the provision of services became the responsibility of the provincial governments. As a result the approval and the implementation of developmental projects take less time compared with the situation prior to the New Provincial System.

According to the New Provincial System the chairman of the Provincial Council (provincial governor) is asked to submit regular reports to the Minister of Interior about the work of the council, the developmental projects, and the provision of services in the province. Moreover, the Minister of Interior held annual meetings with all the provincial governors to discuss problems and suggest recommendations. This method of follow-up for the work of the Provincial Councils by the Ministry of Interior may improve the administrative efficiency at local levels. The New Provincial System differs from the earlier administrative systems in regard to the coordination between the provincial governments and the governorates, through the regular

meetings between the Amir (provincial governor) and the governorate governors. According to article 9 of the new Provincial system, the governor of the province holds regular meetings with the governorate governors at least twice a year to discuss administrative issues and developmental projects in the various governorates of the province.

In conclusion the implementation of the New Provincial System led to direct contacts between the provincial governments and the various ministries at the national level. Before the implementation of the new administrative system, the provincial governors used to address the various ministries through the Ministry of Interior. Under the new administrative system the recommendations approved by the Provincial Council (after being studied by the specialised committees of the council), are sent to the concerned ministries and governmental departments, within a period not exceeding fifteen days, to be considered for implementation.

From the researcher's readings to this Provincial System and the minutes of Provincial Councils, it becomes clear that the Provincial System is still suffering from financial and administrative centralism. Provincial Councils are still consultative and most of their suggestions and recommendations wait for execution according to higher authority vision.

It is worth noting that most of the council members are from the city of Riyadh. Some of them are not acquainted with the problems of other governorates, which are part of Riyadh area. The researcher also

notes that The Provincial Council's recommendations and deliberations are not published in the mass media. They are attended only by members and some people specialised in certain areas, determined by the council, after the council chairman's approval. Most of the citizens' are not aware of what is happening during these meetings because the session are not covered by the mass media, and if something is written in the daily papers, it's not more than determining the date of the meeting and the most important issues that were discussed by the Provincial Council.

The researcher recommends the establishment of councils at the governorate and district levels to enable these geographical units to play their developmental role. These new councils will help the present Provincial Councils in submitting the needs of the governorates and districts to the Ministry of Interior or any concerned ministry responsible for the developmental issues.

However, the role of the Provincial Council remains to be a consultative one, and a lot of improvements need to be introduced in the New Provincial System. For example, elections for the members of the councils have to be introduced gradually, in order to insure real citizen's participation. It is worth noting here that the New Provincial System does not empower financial autonomy. The researcher believes that the Provincial Councils have to be given legislative role, as well as administrative and financial authorisation, to speed up the level of local development.



# CHAPTER VI

## THE STRUCTURE AND THE FUNCTIONS OF RIYADH PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

### 6.1 Introduction:

It is noticed that the local councils in most of the countries of the world are formed according to the political and the prevailing local administrative system. In democratic countries for example, the local councils are formed by election, and these councils perform their functions in a democratic way. Hence the decisions become decentralised. As a result, the local development and popular participation can be accomplished, as the case for most of the developed countries, such as United States, Britain and France.

However, in non-democratic countries, local councils are formed according to the prevailing political system. Here, local councils are formed by partial nomination, in which some of the members of the councils are appointed and the rest are elected, as the case in many developing countries. In other countries councils are formed by appointment as in Saudi Arabia. In this regard, Badran stated that: "Most of the countries administer local governments by elected or appointed council's members" (Badran, 1986: 100).

AL-Jarf (1962) stated that the central government delegates some of the local authorities to local councils whether their members are elected or appointed. However, this limited delegation is not considered an adoption to decentralisation. This is because decentralisation is basically based on the distribution of responsibilities between the central and the local governments elected by the people.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss various aspects pertaining to the structure and the functions of Riyadh Provincial Council. This chapter will discuss the functions of the specialised committees and their roles in the decision-making process. The present chapter is divided into five main sections as follows: (a) The composition and the structure of the Provincial Council, (b) The duties and the responsibilities of the Provincial Council, (c) The specialised committees and their functions, (d) The council's activities, (e) General reflection.

## **6.2 The Composition and The Structure of the Provincial Council:**

The Provincial Council consists of the following members: Provincial Governor as Chairman, Provincial Deputy Governor as Vice-Chairman, Provincial Commissioner, Heads of the Governmental Departments who are appointed by the Prime Minister upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior. Also a minimum number of ten persons, who are educated and competent are nominated by the provincial Amir and approved by the Minister of Interior. Their

membership term is four years which is renewable for another four years<sup>(1)</sup> .

In addition, the Provincial Councils include representatives of the following ministries and governmental departments. (1) Ministry of Education, (2) Ministry of Agriculture and Water, (3) Ministry of Commerce, (4) Ministry of Post, Telegram and Telephone, (5) Ministry of Communications, (6) Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, (7) Ministry of Industry and Electricity, (8) Ministry of Health, (9) Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, (10) Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowment, Call and Guidance, (11) General Presidency of Youth Welfare, (12) General Presidency of Female Education, (13) Ministry of Pilgrimage. It is worth mentioning that the representatives of the Ministry of Pilgrimage are appointed only for the Councils of Meccah and Al-Madinah Al-Monurah (14) A representative for the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources is appointed for the Provincial Council in the Eastern province (Al-Tawil, 1995: 138-139. [see Figure IV].

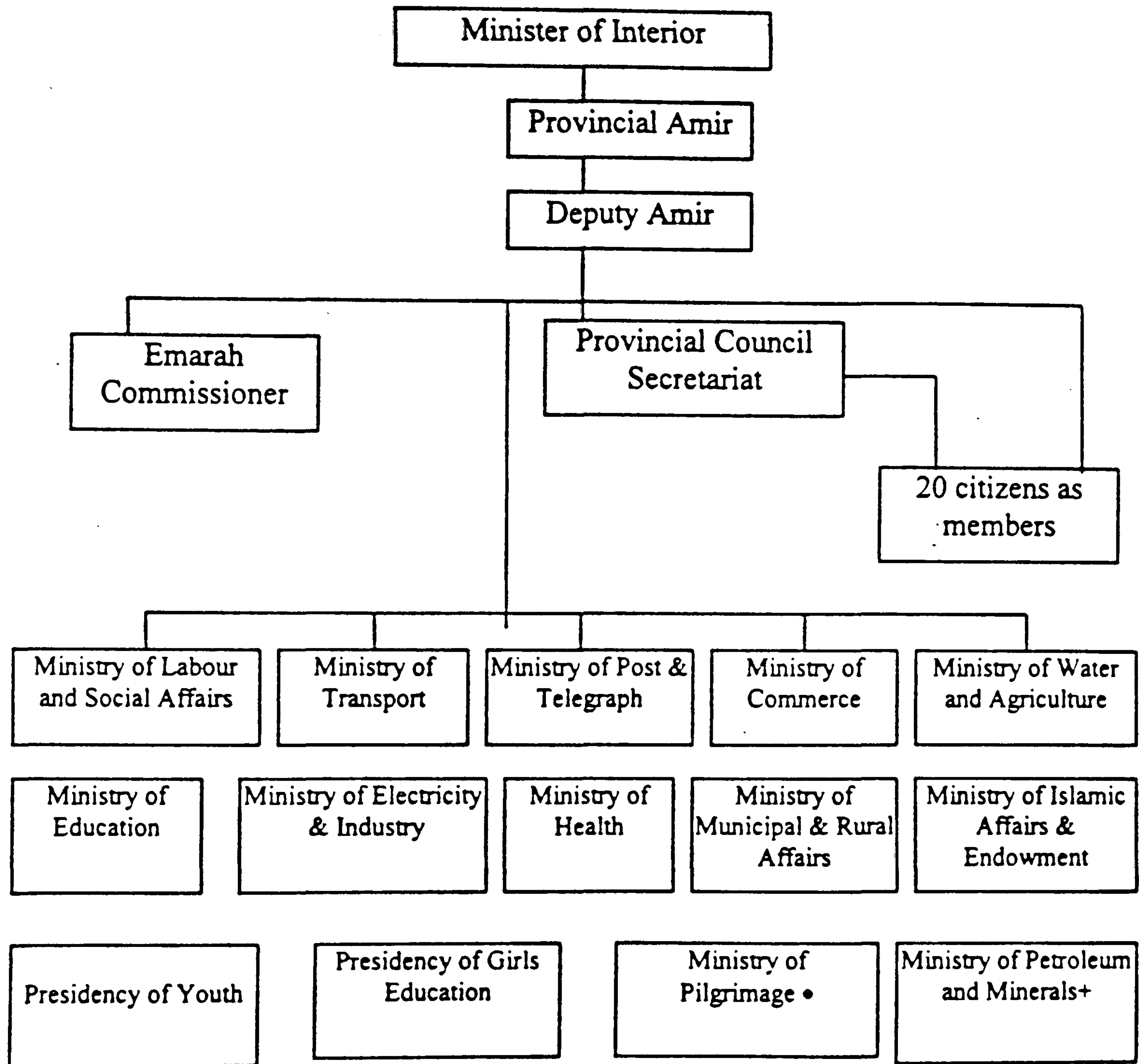
The representatives of ministries such as the Directors of Education, Transportation and Electricity and so on, who are twelve in number in Riyadh province, are appointed in their formal capacity as permanent members as long as they hold the government positions. Apart from these, another twenty members are appointed in Riyadh province from citizens for a term of four years which can be renewed for another term

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(1) Provincial System, Article XVI.

**Figure IV**

**Organisational Structure of Riyadh Provincial Council**



\* Ministry of Pilgrimage only in the Provincial Councils of Meccah and Medinah.

\* Ministry of Petroleum and Minerals only in Provincial Council of Eastern Province.

Presence of two thirds of the members is required for the councils meetings to be legal, and the decisions will be made by absolute majority of the members of the council. In case the two sides get equal votes, the side with which the Chairman has voted will prevail. As and when needed, the council can set up special committees to study any matter that requires special attention. The council can invite any person/ persons competent enough to undertake the special assignment or give advice to the council. The person (persons) can attend the meetings of the council and participate in the discussions although he is denied of any voting rights. Furthermore, the Minister of Interior has the right to convene the council meetings under his chairmanship at any place he decides, and he can chair any meeting attended by him.<sup>(2)</sup> The Provincial Council shall not be dissolved except through an order by the Prime Minister upon suggestion by the Minister of Interior, provided that the members shall be nominated within three months from the date of dissolution. The Provincial Council has a secretariat in its premises. The secretariat will look after the daily activities of the provincial council, like preparation of agenda, addressing of convocations when needed, recording the discussions conducted during the meetings, counting of votes, preparation of minutes, controlling the council meetings (meetings) and recording decisions and other related affairs of the Provincial Council.<sup>(3)</sup>

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(2) The Provincial System, Article XXIX.

(3) The Provincial System, Article XXXIX.

The term of office for the members of the Provincial Council is four years. This period is sufficient for the member to prove his capabilities in making positive contribution to the council. Renewal of the member's term may lead to monopoly of the positions by few persons. It may produce undesirable effects on the working of the council. Hence keeping in view these facts, the system has restricted that the number of members whose membership is to be renewed shall not exceed two fifths of the total members and that the renewal shall not exceed two fifths of the total members and that the renewal shall be for one term only. Such a restriction may encourage wider participation of other persons. Former members of the Provincial Council shall not be nominated if his term was renewed as mentioned in paragraph C of Article XV of the Executive Regulations except after at least four years from the expiry date of his former membership and once only. <sup>(4)</sup> If the appointed member submits his resignation, his membership continues to exist until he is notified by the approval of the Prime Minister. <sup>(5)</sup> Should the appointed member fail to attend two successive sessions without reasonable excuse or if it is observed that he is not properly being deprived of any of following the membership conditions during his term, his membership would be suspended right away and the Minister of Interior would request the Prime Minister to terminate his membership. <sup>(6)</sup>

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(4) Article XV Para. D of the Executive Regulation of the Provincial System.

(5) Article XVII - 1 of the Executive Regulation of hte Provincial System.

(6) Article XVII, 1 of the Executive Regulation.

### **6.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Provincial Council:**

Aiming at achieving continuous socio-economic growth and sustaining the developmental process, the government distributed the complex and diverse functions of the government among the central and the local agencies, so that it can focus more on important issues of national significance.

The Provincial Council seeks to raise the level of services in the province with particular reference to the following points:<sup>(7)</sup> (i) defining the provincial requirements as proposed in the state development plan, (ii) describing the useful projects in order of priority and their inclusion in the state annual budget, (iii) assessing the organisational plans of the cities and the villages of the province and their execution upon approval, and (iv) co-ordinating the implementation of development plan and allocation of budget for the province.

The Provincial Council holds an ordinary session every three months upon a convocation by its Chairman. The Chairman has the right to convene an extraordinary session of the council, if he finds it necessary. However, the session may include one sitting or more in a single convocation.

During the session the council takes note of the content of the general budget of the projects endorsed therein for the province and discusses measures for their optimal performance in order of priority.

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(7) The Provincial Council, Article 23, 24 and 25.

Furthermore the council keeps track of the performance of what has been endorsed in the budget for the province and to see to what extent it is consistent with the comprehensive development plan. In addition the council defines the provincial needs for projects, suggest their endorsement in the state budget for the following year, and to include them in the comprehensive development plan and follow up the execution of the endorsed projects. Finally, the council holds a session for the Provincial Council prior to the announcement of the general budget of the state to make overall evaluation of what has been performed during the fiscal year and discuss ways and means to improve the councils performance.<sup>(8)</sup>

The functions of the provincial governor (Amir), can be described as being both consultative and executive. On the one hand, he represents the central authority at the provincial level and runs the province on behalf of the central authorities. On the other hand, he plays a practical role as Chairman of the Provincial Council. The provincial Amir (Chairman of the Council) shall submit copies of the decisions of the Provincial Council to the Minister of Interior for the purpose of follow up. From the above, the researcher concludes that the Provincial Council is not an executive council, nor it has the financial power to take decisions. It is merely a consultative authority, its power is confined to the expressions: define, consider, follow up and coordinate. This situation does not grant the council any administrative or financial

(8) The Provincial Council Executive Regulations, Article XXII.



authority and makes its decisions subject to the approval by various ministries.

The legislator of the New Provincial System holds the Provincial Council responsible for encouraging citizens participation in suggesting activities of public interest.<sup>(9)</sup> This is a call for encouraging citizens' social participation and contribution, but the System does not explain how to channels such contribution and its methodology. For example, the council does not have high level information or press committee to keep the citizens informed about the council's activities nor does it make use of mass media like the TV and the press. Hence, the researcher believes that there must be a high level information committee to keep the citizens informed about the councils activities and any progress made with regard to solution of people's problems.

### **6.3.1 The Committees:**

In addition to the Provincial Council there are specialised committees such as Educational and Cultural Committee, Health & Social Committee, Committee of Economic Affairs and Committee for Provision of Services. The numbers of committees differ from one province to province depending upon the needs and circumstances of each province. Riyadh province consists of four specialised committees: (a) Educational and Cultural Committee: this committee studies and makes plans related to education, social awareness and youth affairs; (b) Social and Health Committee: This committee discusses the affairs

(9) Provincial Council, Article XXIV.

related to mosques, health of the citizens and social affairs; (c) Economic Development Committee: this committee discusses the developmental projects, for endorsement and approval. These economic projects are related to industrial and agricultural development of the province; (d) Services and Utilities Committee: This committee discusses services such as, electricity, post, waste disposal and water etc. and makes plans for introduction and improvement of services. These committees help the Provincial Councils in deriving benefit from experts and specialists, in various fields of specializations. These committees gives the council flexibility in its functions and help it make use of the available human capital. These committes also demonstrates that the council encourages participation of all sincere, useful citizens who are devoted to local developmental work.

According to Al Ruwaished (a member of Riyadh Provincial Council) who was interviewed by the researcher, the members of the specialised committees discuss the important issues to be studied by the council. Article V of Executive Regulations stipulate that the Amir of the province is authorised to formulate committees in the province to study the problems and issues related to the province within its jurisdiction. These committees are required to submit recommendations to the Provincial Council. <sup>(10)</sup>

The main purpose of the committees of the Provincial Council is to make an in-depth analysis of important issues and prioritise them in terms of importance. The members of the committees of the council

(10) The Provincial System (Executive Regulation) Article V, paragraph 4-B.

recommend the issues to be discussed on priority basis. The members express their own views on a particular issue taking into account various factors like administrative, developmental and economical conditions of the particular province. These suggestions and views are further discussed in the council and are sent to the respective ministries in the form of recommendations and not as decisions to be implemented.

### **6.3.2 Council Meetings and Deliberations:**

The Mass media plays a vital role in disseminating information. Through the mass media the general public will come to know about the issues discussed by the members of the Provincial Council. However, representative of the mass media are not allowed to attend the sessions of the Provincial Council, and the deliberations are not televised. The researcher feels that the mass media is a very important link between the general public and the council, since it creates an awareness of the nature of the problems and issues related to the general public. It is advisable that interested Saudi citizens should have the opportunity to attend councils meetings after having permission of the general secretary. By doing so, council's opinion can be moulded in the direction which may be of particular importance to the public. The researcher further believes that important issues should be published in the press. This will enable the council to make objective analysis of public feelings and their reaction towards a particular issue which will in the long run lead to valuable ideas and practical suggestions being

adopted for the welfare of the people and the country. Without such deep involvement of the mass media and the public, the objectives of the Provincial Council cannot be achieved.

Riyadh Provincial Council has discussed about 170 major issues regarding provision of services and economic development during its meetings during 1994 - 1995 (1414H - 1415H) and the first half of 1996 (1416H). These issues were tabulated and classified in Tables (6.1) and (6.2) according to the type of committees and the type of issues. Such kind of classification will help in identifying the types of problems and difficulties facing the governorates and the districts in the province.

**Table (6.1)**

**Classification of issues discussed during the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council by type of Committee during 1414-1416H. (1994-1996)**

Type of Committee	1414H* (1994)		1415H (1995)		1416H** (1996)		Total (For period 1414-1416H)	
	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%
Educational & Cultural Committee	10	23.25%	23	28.39%	8	17.78%	41	24.26%
Health & Social Committee	8	18.60%	15	18.52%	11	24.44%	34	20.12%
Committee for Provision of Services	21	48.85%	25	30.86%	13	28.89%	59	34.91%
Economic Development Committee	4	9.30%	18	22.23%	13	28.89%	35	20.71
Total	43	100.0%	81	100.0%	45	100.0%	169	100.0%

\* The first meeting for Riyadh Provincial Council was held in the 28/7/1414H (1994). It was ceremonial meeting and the second meeting was held on the 7/8/1414H (1994) to formulate the different committees of the council and to approve the procedure of the meetings. The third meeting for 1414H (1994) was held on the 12/11/1414H.

\* Two meetings were processed.

Source: The data is compiled from the minutes of the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council during 1414 H and 1416H (1994-1996).

Table (6.1) shows the classification of issues discussed during the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council by the various committees during 1994-1996 (1414 - 1416 H). The percentages shown in the last column of Table (6.1) indicate that the majority of the issues discussed in the meetings concern the provision of services; the percentage being 34.9%. On the other hand, the corresponding percentages for health and economic issues are the lowest; being 20.1% and 20.7% respectively. The remaining percentage of about 24.26% constitutes the number of educational and cultural issues discussed by the council during 1994-1996. Although Table (6.1) shows significant variations in the type of issues discussed during the councils meetings between the three different periods, the issues concerning provision of services still constitute the larger proportion of the councils time.

Table (6.2)

**Classification of the issues discussed during the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council during 1414H(1994), 1415H(1995) and 1416H(1996).**

Type of Issues	1414H* (1994)		1415H (1995)		1416H** (1996)		Total (For period 1414-1416H)	
	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%	Number of Issues	%
Points for discussion	15	21.43%	8	8.70%	6	7.23%	29	11.84%
Suggestions for approval	22	31.43%	29	31.52%	32	38.55%	83	33.88%
Decisions	5	7.14%	12	13.04%	7	8.44%	24	9.79%
Follow-up for previous decisions	—	0.00%	6	6.52%	4	4.82%	10	4.08%
Matters referred to the concerned Ministries & governmental departments	28	40.00%	37	40.22%	34	40.96%	99	40.41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: The data is compiled from the minutes of the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council during 1414 and 1416 H (1994-1996).

\* Only two meetings were processed.

Table 6.2 shows the classification of issues discussed at the meetings of Riyadh's Provincial Council during the period 1994-1996 (1414-1416H). About 40.41% of the issues discussed during the 3 years period are referred to the concerned ministries and governmental departments. The second larger percentage (33.88%) is related to suggestions raised by the various committees of the council for approval. It seems that the council is prepared by the aforementioned committees, which determine the needs of the people of the province, and the useful projects according to a certain priority and propose their inclusion in the annual budget of the country. The data in Table 6.2 shows that only 11.8% of the total issues discussed by the council during the three years period, are points for discussion. An even smaller percentage (4%) of the issues discussed by the council is mainly follow-up for the previous decisions of the council. It can be seen from Table 6.2 that in 1994 (1414H) there were no issues of follow-up. This is because of two factors: (a) first, the 1994 is the first year for the meetings of council and secondly, the Secretariat of the council have very limited manpower at that time.

#### **6.4 The Council's Activities:**

In this section the researcher will review some of the minutes and recommendations approved during the meetings of Riyadh Provincial Council, in an attempt to show how the new administrative system addresses the issues of local development, and how the new government

machinery meets the needs of the people. During the first three years of its establishment (1994-1996), Riyadh Provincial Council has held twelve meetings, with an average of four meetings per year. The followings are some of the most important issues and recommendations approved by the council after being discussed by the specialised committees of the council.

#### **6.4.1 Provision of Services:**

Regarding municipality services for the various parts of Riyadh province, the council recommended the followings. First, the council emphasised the necessity to reinforce budget allocations for maintenance and operations for schools, health centres in remote areas, such as Al-Saeh and Dalam district in Riyadh province. Secondly, the council emphasised the necessity to reinforce initial asphaltting project allocations for Olaya and Oraja in Riyadh city, for the purpose of executing and pending requests which are continuously increasing and for meeting the requirements of urban growth and residential buildings in these areas. Thirdly, giving priority to flood projects particularly in some localities of the province, such as Dariah governorate and Irgah district, in order to be funded totally or partially within the coming budget. Fourthly, giving priority for executing sewage projects in the new industrial area in Riyadh city, after allocating the exact budget needed for implentation.

Fifthly, in reference to the recommendations being submitted in



the third session of the council, regarding the insufficiency of mobile telephones assigned to Riyadh province, the council supported the request to increase the project capacity from two thousand lines to 15,000 for Riyadh Province. The council has supported the request of the Department of Communication urging for more qualified staff and equipment, which are needed to meet the continuous expansion in communication projects in Riyadh Province. The council approved the construction of 13 new post offices in Riyadh province during 1995-1996. The council approved the participation of the private sector in constructing post office boxes in Riyadh province. The private sector is allowed to benefit partly from the annual subscriptions of the people. The council agreed to implement the plan for communication projects along the coming 5-years to provide post services through letter delivery to the houses, and more efforts to be carried out for providing necessary requirements in Riyadh Province.

The council has approved the allocations needed for executing projects of supplying electricity to districts around Wadi-Al-Dwasir governorate the various districts of Riyadh province with electricity. The council has urged for the immediate implementation of these projects, to avoid the decrease in power supply in the near future. The council has supported the exerted efforts of Unified Saudi Company for Electricity in Riyadh province, to obtain the necessary funds needed from the Ministry of Finance for constructing the eighth and the ninth stations in Riyadh city with a total estimated costs of 850 and 5013

million Saudi Riyals respectively.

Riyadh Provincial Council is more concerned about raising the efficiency of services provided to the various parts of the region. In its first meeting of the second session for the year 1995, the council has greatly appreciated the report prepared by the service committee and asked the council secretary to follow-up the recommendations stated in such report, and to inform the council about the practical steps being taken for each recommendation. The council has emphasised the need for establishing departments for maintenance to observe all the projects regarding the provision of services in Riyadh province. The council approved the unification of computer system used for provision of services in Riyadh province, and to be similar to the one used by High commission for developing Riyadh city, and to be connected through it to exchange information.

The council has approved setting standard specifications for stations for road-ways in Riyadh Province and enforcing investors to comply with these specifications. However, the setting of such kinds of codes, has to be approved by the Ministry of Communication before they can be observed by the municipalities. The council also approved an additional budget to encourage road security services in Riyadh Province. Such budget can be used to recruit additional security men to check drivers relevant documents in terms of adherence to speed limit, weight limit. Any driver who violates such laws will be fined and they will be subject to severe penalty.

#### **6.4.2. Educational and Cultural Projects:**

The provision of educational services to the various provinces of the Kingdom is still centralised, where the Ministry of Education and the Presidency of Girls Education have the upper hand in running and financing the schools. The Provincial Council, through their specialised educational and cultural committees approves recommendations regarding opening of new schools, according to their priorities in Riyadh province. However, the implementation of these recommendations are subject to the final approval of the Ministry of Education and the Presidency of Girls Education. Below are some examples of the recommendations approved by Riyadh Provincial Council during the last three-years, regarding educational and cultural projects.

First, Riyadh Provincial Council has approved the training and educational project schedules, submitted by the General Directorate of Boys and Girls Education, and the Department of Technical and Vocational Training. The council has recommended the inclusion of 20 schools in the budget of the concerned ministries for the fiscal year 1415/1416 H (1995/1996). Secondly, the council has recommended the expansion of opening more Holy Quranic Memorisation (ten Schools), since the students of such schools have distinct behaviour and good conduct. Thirdly, the council has supported the projects of General Presidency for Youth Welfare related to the Riyadh province and the council asked the Ministry of Finance, to include the budget for these

projects in the 1415/1416 fiscal year.

The council has recommended that the private sector should be given more chance to participate in private education in Riyadh Province. According to the sixth economic plan (1995-2000), Riyadh Provincial Council has asked the Ministry of Education and the Presidency of Girls Education to submit their contracting projects for opening new schools, in Riyadh Province in order to be reviewed by the council. The members of Riyadh Provincial Council has discussed the negative behaviour and attitude noticed among some students (particularly in large cities of the province), and recommended a formation of special committee for investigating this matter, from an educational point of view. The committee is formed from the Ministry of Education, Public Presidency for Girls Education, Social Sciences Research Centres, Presidency for Youth Welfare and Drug Control Department. The council asked the committee to submit its reports to the council for discussion and recommendations. After reviewing the final report of the above committee the council has approved the followings. First, the use of university premises during the summer vacation for educational programme for leisure time to students of general education, according to certain guidelines. Secondly, Riyadh Provincial Council has approved students work during summer holidays in private and public sectors under the direction of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. Thirdly, the council supported the role of Riyadh literary club to enhance citizen's intellectual skills, and ask the

public Presidency for Youth Welfare to enhance the clubs role through making competitions and programme in educational field, to enrich local community. Fourthly, the council approved the idea of establishing public libraries in some cities of the province. Fifthly, the council had supported the idea of establishing computer clubs. The council has asked the Chamber of Commerce, computer agents, and the Saudi Computer Society to assist in establishing such clubs, in order to achieve their intended objectives. It seems that the specialised committees played some role in Preparing, organising the issues concerning people's needs to be discussed by the members of the council, for its final approval.

The Provincial Council has issued a plan which includes moral and behaviour guidelines that may play a vital role in the positive effect of such type of identification, that has to be introduced in the schools, houses and society at large. The Chairman of Riyadh Provincial Council stated that the plan has to stem its elements from our glory Sharia, good habits, traditions and culture of honesty, truthfulness, dignity, mercy, etc. The identification fields as specified in the plan started from the house, schools, mosque and the club. Hence, Ministry of Education, Girls Education, General Presidency of Youth Welfare, Islamic Affairs, Ministry of Information are all requested to set fourth programmes for conveying this identification to the house and society. The council has asked specialised companies in the field of mass communication to design and highlight the educated programmes to the family and the society in an efficent way. This material may be presented in written, in

an audible form or in video form. The most important aspect of the plan concentrate on rationalising the consumption of electricity and water. The plan urged the authorities of schools to educate the student about the importance of rational consumption of electricity and water. The Departments of Electricity and Water can ask student assistance for putting stickers on public water closets, and mosque's entrances.

The third aspect of the plan which has been approved by Riyadh Provincial Council, stated health education for the people and their environment. In this respect the plan concentrates on improving of the quality of the environment. Hence, attention is greatly paid to health education in Riyadh province for the purpose of allowing society to identify the exerted efforts aiming at achieving the highest benefits. Such benefits may not be achieved unless health education is greatly concentrated upon in the society. The plan has indicated that its objectives can be achieved through complete participation of all concerned parties, in promoting health education, particularly educational institutions, information media, mosques and club, information about health education.

Furthermore, Riyadh Provincial Council, recommended that attention should be given to health units and environmental health departments in the various governorates of the province. The council has also recommended a cooperation to be maintained among the Ministry of Health and the General Directorate of Health in Riyadh province, regarding improvement of environmental health, promotion

of environmental health and promotion of health education in the various governments and districts of Riyadh province.

From what has been mentioned regarding the services and projects recommended by the educational and cultural committee, we can recognise the vital and technical role of such committees. The committee discussed other issues and studies such as environment awareness and other issues of concern to the citizens.

### **6.4.3 Social and Health Programmes:**

The social and health committee has submitted about fifteen reports during its meetings of 1414 - 1416 (1994-1996) to Riyadh Provincial Council. The following are some of the most important recommendations approved by the council. First, the council has approved the request for opening new health centres, as raised by Al-Solaile and Afif governorates in Riyadh province. Secondly, the council has supported the suggestion regarding the constructions of two hospitals in the eastern and northern parts of Riyadh city, with a capacity of two hundreds beds for each hospital. Thirdly, the council has approved the request of Wadi Al-Dawaser, Al Qwyayah, Hutat Sadair to raise the capacity of their hospitals from about 50 beds to 300 beds, 200 beds, and 100 beds respectively. Fourthly, Riyadh Provincial Council has supported the exerted efforts for applying health insurance law for foreign workers residing in Riyadh Province.

The council has urged Riyadh's Municipality and Sanitary Sewage

and Water Department to execute what has been agreed upon, regarding the establishment of dumping areas for sewage via tankers, and constructing small stations in Riyadh industrial area, within their fund allocation. The council asked for coordination between the municipalities, Public Directorate for Health Affairs and Sanitary Sewage and Water Department regarding the supervision of outflow wells in Riyadh. The council asked for intensive control of sewage tanker to prevent leakages. The council urged all the concerned departments for co-ordination regarding environmental correction in towns, villages and small localities in Riyadh province. The council asked all governorates of Riyadh province to form an environmental correction committees to assist the concerned governmental departments in settings recommendations and in implementing environmental plans.

Regarding the safety and the quality of the environment correctness, the social and health committee has received the efforts of the environmental correction committees for evaluation and for suggestions. Riyadh Provincial Council asked the members of the environmental correction committees for evaluation and for suggestions. Riyadh Provincial Council asked the members of the environmental correction committees to participate effectively in the process of decision making regarding setting programmes and implementation regarding environmental control in Al-Karj governorate.

The council has approved all the projects proposed by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Endowment for Riyadh province. These



projects include: (a) Renovation of some existing mosques, and (b) Approving the budget for cleaning and maintenance of 300 mosques. Riyadh Provincial Council has also supported the following projects of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the Riyadh province: (a) Expansion of elderly houses and those in need of nursing services, and (b) Construction of additional centres for the disabled people.

It may be revealed from above that the new administrative system tries to meet the community needs through the Provincial Councils. The Provincial Council subjects all the requests of local government to careful study and detailed discussion by its specialised committees. The reports and recommendations prepared by these committees are subjected to further discussions and evaluation before final approval.

#### **6.4.4 Economic and Developmental Projects:**

Riyadh Provincial Council has reviewed about 16 reports prepared by the economic and development committee during (1994-1996), and the following are some of the important recommendations approved by the council: First, the council has supported the request raised by the Ministry of Agriculture for financial allocation for drinking water projects in cities and small villages according to the budget proposal for the year 1415/1416H. The council has also supported the necessary funds for constructing water distillation plants, in each of Hutat Bani Tamim, Al-Ghat, Nessah, Ramah, and Quayah. Since dams projects seem to be important in maintaining water supply

resources and development, the council has supported the request of the Ministry of Agriculture for allocating the necessary funds for such dams.

Due to excessive cost facing the farmers and due to the increasing bank installments, and due to unavoidable circumstances facing the farmers in Riyadh province since the early nineties, the council has recommended re-scheduling farm loans for twenty years. The farmers in Saudi Arabia complain from imports of agricultural products which compete with their production. In response to the farmers complaints Riyadh Provincial Council asked the chamber of commerce to conduct a comprehensive study regarding rules and regulations to protect local agricultural products (Riyadh Provincial Council, 1995). The council is urging the chamber of commerce in Riyadh to study the means of promoting the marketing of agricultural products in the province. The council asked the concerned ministries and governmental departments to assist in establishing a company for marketing agricultural product, according to the findings of the feasibility study of the chamber of commerce.

Riyadh Provincial Council after meeting with members of the agricultural committee of Riyadh chamber of commerce, agreed to reorganise the schedule of wheat and barely delivery from the farms to the mills. In this regard the council recommended the formation of a committee composed of representatives form Ministry of Agriculture, Public Organisation for Grains and Flour Mills, Riyadh's Emirate, to

receive the subject, and to take the necessary actions for conducting inventory for the actual production of the farmers, which is supposed to be delivered to the mills according to specific schedule.

Riyadh Provincial Council has approved the establishment of new industrial zones around Riyadh city, which is considered as one of the big industrial region in the Kingdom. These industrial zones will include the 140 new factories which were licensed by the Ministry of Industry. In this regard the council urged the Ministry of Municipality to finalize the ownership process of the new industrial zones around Riyadh city, specially at Al-Hayer, south of Riyadh city. However, the new industrial zone which is designated mainly for manufacturing industry, should consider environmental problems created by the new factories. Riyadh Provincial Council recommends that the proposed manufacturing industries should be based on agricultural products. The council does appreciate the campaigns being conducted by the concerned departments of the Ministry of Interior for capturing illegal migrants working in the private sector. The council has encouraged the continuation of these campaigns, since illegal workders had severe economic, social and security problems for the country.

Secondly, the Riyadh Provincial Council has supported the request raised by the Ministry of Commerce regarding the construction of a building to be used as a standard quality laboratory in the city of Riyadh, for testing building material and valuable stones. Thirdly, the council has urged the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs to take

immediate action in designing the suggested location for industrial zones south of Al-Kharj city and south of Orajah (in the western part of Riyadh city), for light industries and handicraft activities. The council approved the plans for industrial development in Riyadh province as an essential aspect of economic development. The council notices that the industrial projects in Riyadh's province are facing various difficulties such as non-availability of lands for industrial zones, and insufficiency of electricity, water, telephones and other kinds of services. Thirdly, the council has urged the Chamber of Commerce of Riyadh, to study the ways of marketing the agricultural products of Riyadh province. Mechanism which enables it to follow up its recommendation; this is because of the non-existence of follow-up department. Without the existence of a follow-up committee, there is no justification to blame the shortcomings or the failure of the particular ministry or governmental department. Therefore, the researcher believes that a follow-up committee must be set up to follow-up the recommendations approved by the Provincial Council.

A careful review for the minutes, during the period 1994-1996 by the researcher has shown that about 40 percent of the cases raised by the local governments have been accepted by higher level authority. The cases which have been listened to by higher level authorities are summarised as follows: (a) Riyadh Provincial Council emphasised the necessity to reinforce budget allocation for maintenance and operations for schools, health centres in remote areas, such as Al-Saleh and Dalam

district in Riyadh province. (b) Riyadh Provincial Council has supported the request of the Department of Communication urging for more qualified staff and equipments, which are needed to meet the continuous expansion in communication projects in Riyadh province (c) Considerable budget has been allocated by the council for executing projects of supplying electricity to districts in Wadi-AL-Dwasir governorate. (d) Riyadh Provincial Council has approved setting standard specifications for stations for high-ways in Riyadh province and enforcing investors to comply with these specifications. (e) The council has also approved an additional budget to encourage road security.

Although some proportions of cases suggested by local governments have been listened to by higher level authorities, yet there are other cases which have not been approved by higher level authorities. The followings are just a few examples, which were approved by Riyadh Provincial Council, but not accepted by higher level authorities:

- The construction of 13 new post offices in Riyadh province during 1995 - 1996.
- Provision of post services through letter delivery to the houses in Riyadh province.
- The unification of computer systems used for provision of services in Riyadh province.
- Provision of Riyadh literary clubs to enhance citizen's intellectual

skills.

- Establishing public libraries in other cities of Riyadh province.
- Failing to provide enough loans for the farmers.
- The establishment of 140 new factories around Riyadh city, specially at AL-Hayer, south of Riyadh city.
- The establishment of standard quality laboratory in the city of Riyadh.

It can be revealed from the argument in the present chapter that the Saudi citizens have very limited effect on the decision-making process. The developmental issues are discussed by specialised committees of the Provincial Councils, and passed to the Provincial Councils for final approval. The Saudi citizens have no channels by which they can participate or interact with the discussions of the council's members. It is worth noting here that most of the council's decisions are formulated in a paternalistic way, irrespective of the needs of the disadvantaged groups. The decisions are made by higher level authorities, with no consideration to the people at the grass-roots level; i.e. there is no input from below.

Fadlalla stated that, "taking a public choice perspective, decentralisation means creation of multiple organisations at the grass-roots level to provide governmental functions or render the essential services to the citizens at the local level. These multiple organisations or government units are important decisions cells as stated by Vincent Ostrom" (Fadlalla, 2000: 87).

The researcher believes that the decisions at the local governments (districts and governorates) should intend to widen the citizen's participation. One of the central features of local government reform, especially in transitional society like Saudi Arabia is to fill the power gap created by ousting the traditional power symbols (Fadlalla, 2000: 19).

In Saudi Arabia the Provincial System and the Provincial Councils have to provide meaningful experience based on full realisation of the human potentials of the local people in the decentralised unit. This can be carried out by citizen's participation, through democracy, election and involvement of the mass-media. These kinds of steps will increase citizen's capacity for action, providing access to power resources, promoting individual initiatives, and self awareness.

The researcher believes that if smaller units at the grass-roots level are targeted for development, other larger units will follow through the spread or spin-over effect. Development of lower order units will lead to parallel development at higher units because higher order units are summations of lower order units.

## **6.5 General Reflection:**

A close look at the New Provincial System, shows that the Saudi legislator has considered the Provincial Councils as the backbone of the new administrative system. These councils discuss and approve the provincial developmental projects. Moreover, the New Provincial System has made some administrative achievements, and the most important ones are as follows: (a) The establishment of the provincial councils to carry-out the responsibilities assigned by the new administrative system. (b) The establishment of the Agency for provincial affairs is part of the Ministry of Interior, and it deals with the council's affairs in the various provinces of the Kingdom. (c) The formation of specialised committees has facilitated the work of the Provincial Councils and has speeded to some extent the decision-making process regarding the various agenda of the Provincial Council.

On the other hand, the researcher has noticed some deficiencies in the new administrative system, which may be summarised as follows: (a) The Saudi legislator did not delegate enough authorities to the Provincial Councils, to enable them achieve effective administrative role and to implement developmental projects. (b) The Provincial Councils exercise only consultative role and not legislative or executive ones. The role of the Provincial Councils is confined to co-ordination, suggestions, recommendations and follow-up for their decision. (c) The provincial councils have no financial power to allocated budget for the various developmental projects in the various provinces. (d) Some of the



important ministries which are concerned with economic development, such as the Ministry of Finance and national economy and Ministry of Planning are not represented in the Provincial Councils. It is worth noting here that representatives of these two ministries make the Provincial Councils aware about the available financial resources for provincial development.

The researcher noticed that the Provincial Councils have no mechanism by which the councils determine the citizen's needs and requirements. Furthermore, the discussions during the council's sessions are not broad-casted or televised to the public, and this make the citizens less aware of the discussions by the council's members concerning their provinces. In addition, the New Provincial System did not include any article which entitles the public to attend the council's meetings.

The Saudi legislator has adopted the method of appointment for selecting the council's members. However, the researcher believes that this method of appointment may restrict citizen's participation in expressing their viewpoints through their representatives in the Provincial Councils. If the citizens are allowed to participate in selecting the council's members, one may expect an effective role for the Provincial Councils. The researcher also noticed that the representatives of governmental departments in the Provincial Councils, try to find excuses and justifications to the failures of their departments in carrying out their responsibilities. In this regard, the researcher refers to the contradiction in Article "VII" of the Provincial System, which

reads (Clause H) : "The governor (Prince), who is the Chairman of the Provincial Council, has supervisory responsibility over all the governmental departments in his province". At the same time, according to the New Provincial System, the heads of the governmental departments are asked to refer to their respective ministries at the central government, and not to the provincial governor.

The researcher also noticed that the New Provincial System does not define the exact duties and responsibilities of the district commissioners, and their roles in administering and developing their local units. It is worth noting here that these districts are the basic local units, which should be looked after in order to develop local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The researcher had a chance to attend some of the meetings of Riyadh's Provincial Council. From these meetings the researcher has noticed that the process of the decision making takes a long cycle. After being reviewed and approved by the Provincial Council the agenda are passed to the specialised committees for detailed investigations and discussions. The specialised committees then come-up with the appropriate suggestions and recommendations. These suggestions are then raised to the relevant ministries and governmental departments after being approved by the Provincial Council. This process shows that the role of the Provincial Councils is limited mainly to approving suggestions and recommendations formulated by its specialised committees regarding all the provincial affairs.

Although the New Provincial System, stated that the members of the Provincial Council should be selected from the various governorates of the province, yet most of the members are permanent residents of Riyadh city. The lack of representation for most of the governorates of the Riyadh's province defeats the issue of public participation raised by the new administrative system.

The role of the Provincial Councils is mainly to raise recommendations regarding developmental issues and provision of services in their respective provinces, to the Ministry of Interior, which in turn submits these recommendations to the concerned ministries and governmental departments. Moreover, the local administrative units have no independent resources to impelment its projects. The researcher believes that the authorities given to the provincial governor and the Provincial Council under the New Provincial System, are not more than additional managerial responsibilities with no real delegation of power, because the final decision will be taken by higher authorities, such as the concerned ministries or the council of ministers.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NEW PROVINCIAL SYSTEM AS PERCEIVED BY THE CITIZENS

#### 7.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier in Chapter I, the main objectives of the present study is to examine the various administrative systems in Saudi Arabia, and to show how they differ from the New Provincial System. Furthermore the present study examines the role of the New Provincial System in promoting and enhancing local development, speeding decision making process. Finally, this research examines the extent of co-ordination between the Provincial Councils and the various ministries and governmental departments, in providing, promoting and developing public services for the citizens.

To address these questions three types of populations were interviewed by a carefully designed questionnaire, namely citizens residing in Riyadh province, government officials working in governorates and districts and members of Riyadh Provincial Council. The present chapter analyses the views of the citizens residing in Riyadh province, regarding decentralisation, decision making process and issues of local development. In addition, the citizens were asked about the sufficiency of the services available, and about citizen's satisfaction to such services.

The present chapter falls into the following six sections: (i) general characteristics of the sample, (ii) the role of the New Provincial System in promoting decentralisation and in speeding the process of decision making, (iii) the role of the New Provincial System in promoting local

development, (iv) citizen's views about the sufficiency and quality of services provided to their localities, (v) citizen's views about coordination and cooperation between the local governments and Riyadh Provincial Council, and (vi) citizen's views about the New Provincial System, Provincial Council, and Local Governments.

## **7.2 - General characteristics of the sample**

Table 7.1 shows the percentage distribution of the respondents according to some socio-demographic characteristics. The respondents residing in Al-Karj governorate constitute about 37.1% of the total population. The lowest percentage is observed for Dariah, 7.0%. The remaining percentages of 23.6%, 22.2% and 10.1% are noticed for Ramah, Thadiq and Dormah respectively. It is worth noting here that these percentages roughly reflect the distribution of the population residing in these governorates, because the total sample size of 360 is distributed among the five governorates according to the method of proportional allocation, using the preliminary findings of the 1992 population census.

The percentage distribution of the sample according to marital status is shown in the second panel of Table 7.1. The data shows that the majority of the respondents were married at the time of the survey; the percentage being 69.7%, compared to only 19.4% for the single population. The high proportion of married people can be attributed to the fact that Saudis are characterised by early age at marriage, specially in governorates dominated by rural settings, such as Ramah, Thadiq, Dormah and Al Karj. Moreover, the restriction of the sample to those aged 20 years and over may increase the proportion married. The percentage of the population who lost their wives by divorce and death are 6.2% and 3.9% respectively.

**Table (7.1)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizen's,  
according to some socio-demographic variables.**

Socio-demographic variables	Number of Cases	%
<u>Governorates:-</u>		
- Ramah	84	23.6
- Thadiq	79	22.2
- Darmah	36	10.1
- Al Karj	132	37.1
- Dariah	25	7.0
<u>Marital Status:-</u>		
- Married	248	69.7
- Single	69	19.4
- Divorced	22	6.2
- Widowed	14	3.9
- Unknown	3	0.8
<u>Childhood Place of Residence:-</u>		
- Urban	194	54.5
- Rural	80	22.5
- Nomadic	62	17.4
- Other	16	5.1
- Unknown	2	0.6
<u>Educational Level:-</u>		
- Illiterate	17	4.8
- Read & write	14	3.9
- Elementary	26	7.3
- Intermediate	41	11.5
- Secondary	119	33.4
- University	127	35.7
- Above university	11	3.1
- Unknown	1	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Survey data 1997.

It is known that the place in which people spend their early childhood will have its influence on people's behaviour and attitudes. Respondents were asked about their childhood place of residence. It can be noticed from the data in table (7.1), that the majority of the respondents were raised in urban areas (54.5%), and that 22.5% of the respondents were raised in rural settings. The remaining percentages of 17.4% and 5.1% were raised in nomadic areas and in other places (namely outside the country) respectively.

The last panel of Table (7.1) shows the percentage distribution of the respondents, according to their educational attainment. It is evident from the percentages in Table (7.1) that more than two-thirds of the sample have completed either secondary education (33.4%) or university education (35.7%). The low percentages of illiterate population (4.8%), and those who could "read & write" (3.9%), can be attributed to the significant expansion in educational services in Saudi Arabia during the second half of this century. The number of enrollment in general education has almost doubled during 1982-1993. The number of students has increased from 1,618,585 to 2,934,032 during the above mentioned period. On the other hand the enrollment of students in universities and higher institutes has increased significantly from 75,110 in 1983 to 144,336 in 1994. (Ministry of Planning, 1996).

Table (7.2) shows the means (in years) and standard deviations of current age of respondents for different categories of socio-demographic variables. The mean age of the total sample of the population is about 33 years, with standard deviation of 8.68 years. The higher values for the

mean age of respondent's is attributed to the fact that the sample is restricted to male population aged 20 years and over.

The mean age of respondents varies from 30.7 years for Al-Karj governorate to 36.3 years for Dariah governorate. The difference in mean age among the five governorates is statistically significant at .0002 level, (F-value = 5.82). These differences may be explained by the fact that Dariah and Ramah are very close to Riyadh city, where the youth in these two areas prefer to live in. For the case of Dormah and AL-Karj the researcher noticed that the youth population are less likely to move to the Riyadh city, which is relatively far from their residence, compared to Dariah and Ramah. Panel two of Table (7.2) shows the mean age of respondents for the four categories of childhood place of residence. Except for people raised in nomadic settings, the mean age for other modes of living are not quite different. The F-test shows that the differences in mean age among the different categories of childhood place of residence is not statistically significant at 0.05 level, (P=0.2017).

The variations in mean age of respondents are noticed for the different categories of marital status; the mean age ranges from 28.4 years for "singles" to 34.4 years for 'currently married'. These differences are statistically significant at 0.000 level (F=11.5). The fact that the sample of the citizens is restricted to those aged 20 years and over has excluded many young people, who are usually single. This restriction may explain the differences in mean age between the currently married and the single. The last panel in Table (7.2) shows a considerable difference in mean age of respondents for different educational levels. These differences are statistically significant at .0001 level (F=4.69).



The high mean age for the illiterate people compared the literate people, may be explained by the fact that Saudi youth have better chance for education compared to the older generation. This is because the education in Saudi Arabia has expanded greatly during the last three decades.

**Table (7.2)**

**Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for age of citizens by some socio-demographic variables.**

Socio-demographic Variables	Mean Age in Years	Standard Deviation of Age	Number of Cases	
<u>Governorates:-</u>				
- Ramah	35.1	11.1	82	F=5.82 sig. level .0002
- Thadiq	34.6	10.1	75	
- Dormah	31.1	4.5	36	
- Al-Karj	30.7	6.1	132	
- Dariah	36.3	7.4	25	
<u>Childhood place of residence:-</u>				
- Urban	32.6	7.3	191	F=1.54 sig. level .2017
- Rural	32.7	9.7	78	
- Nomadic	35.0	11.1	61	
- Other	31.1	6.3	18	
<u>Marital Status:-</u>				
- Married	34.4	8.3	242	F=11.5 sig. level .000
- single	28.4	6.5	69	
- Divorced	30.8	6.5	22	
- Widowed	31.4	5.0	14	
<u>Educational Level:-</u>				
- Illiterate	39.6	16.5	17	F=4.69 sig. level .0001
- Read & write	34.4	7.5	14	
- Completed Elementary	32.7	13.6	25	
-Completed Intermediate	35.8	9.5	41	
- completed Secondary	32.6	7.1	119	
- University	31.0	6.0	123	
- Above university	39.4	8.3	10	
	33.03	8.68	349	

Source: Survey data 1997.

### **7.3 The role of the New Provincial System in promoting decentralisation and in facilitating the process of decision-making:**

As described earlier in chapter V, prior to the introduction of the new Provincial System, the administrative procedures were highly centralised. For example, all provinces and districts had to refer in all their affairs to the Ministry of Interior, who in turn, writes to the concerned ministries and governmental departments regarding the requests and the needs of the governorates and the districts. After having passed through the repeated and unneeded channels, the matter was finally referred to the Council of Ministers. This procedure delays the decision-making process, and its outcome. As mentioned in chapter V, the legislator of the New Provincial System delegated some administrative and consultative authority to the provinces, specially for issues concerning local development. It has been shown that the cycle of decision-making process starts from the committees to the Provincial Council, and to the concerned ministries through the Ministry of Interior and finally to the Council of Ministers.

Table (7.3) shows the percentage distribution of the sample of the citizens according to their opinions about the extent of positive change in decision making process caused by the new Provincial System in running the affairs of the provinces for each category of citizen's educational level. It can be revealed from the data in Table (7.3) that only 10% of the respondents believe that the new Provincial System will cause greater positive change. However, the majority of the respondents believe that the extent of the change is limited about 46.7. Moreover, 14.2% of the

respondents are not expecting any change from the implementation of the new Provincial System in the decision making process. This could be attributed to a number of factors. The most important ones are: (a) this administrative system is recently implemented, (b) this new administrative system is not exposed to the public through the various means of mass media, and (c) citizens are not allowed to attend the meetings of the Provincial Council as mentioned earlier in chapter VI. The percentages in Table 7.3 show little differences of opinions among the various categories of citizen's educational level. These little variations are supported by the low value of Chi-square (9.52), and its insignificant level of 0.391. The data in Table 7.3 shows that there is an inverse relationship between those who say the new Provincial System has a limited change on the decision making process, and the educational level of the respondents; the percentages decreases from 54.4% for those with elementary education to 41.6% for those with university education and above: This is because educated people are better off in their judgement about the positive change in decision making process brought about by the new Provincial System. This is because educated people are better informed compared to their counterparts.

It is obvious from the findings in Table 7.3 that most of the citizens believe that the application of the new Provincial System causes either limited (46.7%) or no change (14.2%) in the decision making process. This is because the Saudi citizens are not allowed to participate in the socio-economic and political decision-making process. Needless to say that decentralisation is a way of sharing administrative responsibilities between the centre and the provinces. According to Macrae and Pitt, local

government implies a system of decentralised decision making in which local authorities are subject to local democratic control in a way that local offices of government departments are not. ( Macrae and Pitts,1980: 73-74).

**Table (7.3)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens according to their perceptions of positive change in decision making caused by the new Provincial System.**

Citizens educational level		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University & above	Total
Citizen's opinion						
Greater positive change		12.3%	14.6%	9.3%	9.5%	10.5%
Positive change		17.5%	24.4%	32.2%	31.4%	28.6%
Limited positive change		54.4%	46.4%	49.2%	41.6%	46.7%
No positive change		15.8%	14.6%	9.3%	17.5%	14.2%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(57)	(41)	(118)	(137)	(353)

Chi-square = 9.52

Degrees of Freedom = 9

Sig. level = .391

Source: Survey data 1997.

The citizens' were asked about the role of the new Provincial System in serving their local communities compared to the role of the former local administrative systems. The responses to this question are cross classified by categories of childhood place of residence in Table 7.4. More than half of the total sample (51.7%), shows agreement to the above statement. These citizen's responses are not consistent with our earlier analysis in chapter V and chapter VI, where the local governments lack delegation of power and financial resources. The data in Table 7.4 show that only 7.7% and 15.6% of the total sample "strongly disagree" and "disagree" respectively. Table 7.4 indicates little variations in the citizens' opinions among the three different modes of living (urban, rural, nomadic); this weak association is evident from the insignificant level of chi-square shown at the end of Table 7.4. The relatively high rates of disagreement among the citizens residing in rural (19.0%) and nomadic (16.1%) setting compared to their counterparts in the Urban areas (13.5%), could be attributed to the limited services offered to the rural and nomadic settings compared to the urban setting. On the other hand the percentages of those respondents who agree strongly are 10.4%, 3.8% and 4.8% in the Urban, rural and nomadic settings respectively.

The relatively high percentage of respondents (51.7%) who agree with the above statement is consistent with what we have shown in chapter VI (council activities). The discussion in section 6.4 revealed that Riyadh Provincial Council has approved about 169 projects during 1994-1996, and many of these projects (educational, cultural, health etc.) have been

implemented in the various districts of Riyadh province after allocating their required budget by the central government.

**Table (7.4)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens according to their perceptions about the role of the new Provincial System in serving the people in local communities.**

Childhood place of residence		Urban	Rural	Nomadic	Other	Total
Citizens' opinion's						
Strongly agree		10.4%	3.8%	4.8%	0.0%	7.4%
Agree		44.6%	39.2%	48.4%	50.0%	44.3%
Do not know		24.4%	30.4%	19.4%	27.8%	25.0%
Disagree		13.5%	19.0%	16.1%	22.2%	15.6%
Strongly disagree		7.1%	7.6%	11.3%	0.0%	7.7%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(193)	(79)	(62)	(18)	(352)

Chi-square = 12.32

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.420

Source: Survey data 1997.

**Table (7.5)**

**The citizens' response to the statement: "The New Provincial System will raise the administrative capabilities".**

Educational Level		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University and above	Total
Extent of agreement						
Strongly agree		7.2%	22.0%	9.2%	11.7%	11.3%
Agree		53.6%	39.0%	63.0%	46.7%	52.4%
Do not know		21.4%	14.6%	14.4%	22.6%	18.7%
Disagree		8.9%	19.5%	10.9%	13.2%	12.5%
Strongly disagree		8.9%	4.9%	2.5%	5.8%	5.1%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(56)	(41)	(119)	(137)	(353)

Chi-square = 18.98

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.0889

Source: Survey data 1997.

Table 7.5 shows the percentage distribution of the citizens according to their agreement to the statement: "The New Provincial System will raise the administrative capabilities" by citizen's educational level. It can be revealed from the data in Table 7.5 that about two-thirds of the citizens show their agreement to the above statement; 11.3% and 52.4% show "strong agreement" and "agreement" respectively. The percentages of

“disagreement” and “strongly disagreement” are comparatively low; being 12.5% and 5.1% respectively. In addition, the citizen’s responses are consistent with Articles 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the New Provincial System. For example, Article 22 says that “The governors, district commissioners and locality chiefs shall undertake their tasks within the administrative framework of their bodies and within the limits of the authorities vested in them.”

Moreover, Article 23 says that “the governors have to monitor the functions of the district commissioners and locality chiefs belonging to them, ensure their efficiency in performing their duties, and submit periodical reports to the province governor Amir on the efficiency of the public services performance and the other affairs of the governorate in conformity with what is defined by the Executive Regulations of the System.” However, the researcher believes that the application of the new Provincial System still lacks administrative capabilities in the various governorates and districts. There is a limited chance of in-service training for the people working in local governments.

The issuance of the New Provincial System was initiated by the desire of the Saudi government to achieve the country’s objectives in raising the level of administrative performance in developing the governorates and districts in the various provinces in such manner as to be in line with the development achieved by the country. The citizens were asked to express their opinions regarding the statement: “The services provided to their localities are highly centralised”. Table (7.6) shows the extent of citizen’s agreement to the above statement cross classified by governorates of current residence. The percentage distributions shown in



the last column of Table (7.6) indicate that about one-third of the total sample either “agree” or “strongly agree” with the above statement. However, the majority of the total sample (51.7%), are not able to judge about the extent of centralisation of the services rendered to their local communities. On the other hand only 11.0% of the citizens believe that the services provided to their local communities are not highly centralised. The general conclusion from these responses is in agreement with our earlier analysis in chapters V and VI. The administrative power is still concentrated in the Ministry of Interior and the Council of Ministers. The role of the Provincial Council is to raise recommendations to the Ministry of Interior, which in turn submits the recommendations to the concerned ministries and governmental departments. The role of the Provincial Councils remain to be a consultative one.

**Table (7.6)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens' response to the statement: "The services provided to your locality are highly centralised"**

Governorate of current residence		Ramah	Thadiq	Dornah	Al-Karj	Dariah	Total
Extent of agreement							
Strongly agree		18.6%	10.8%	0.0%	12.5%	8.7%	8.7%
Agree		31.3%	40.5%	2.8%	45.8%	25.6%	25.6%
Do not know		20.0%	27.0%	94.4%	29.2%	51.7%	51.7%
Disagree		13.8%	14.9%	2.8%	4.2%	7.6%	7.6%
Strongly disagree		16.3%	6.8%	0.0%	8.3%	6.4%	6.4%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(80)	(74)	(36)	(130)	(24)	(344)

Chi-square = 133.69

Degrees of Freedom = 16

Sig. level = .0000

Source: Survey data 1997.

It is evident from Table (7.6), that the five governorates show considerable variations regarding their agreement to the above statement. While the agreement is very high for AL-Karj (58.3%), Thadiq (51.3%) and Ramah (49.8 %), and Dariah (34.3%). The percentage is extremely low for Dormah (2.8%). These considerable variations are also evident from the high value of chi-square (133.69), which is highly significant at 0.0000 level. According to the researcher's findings, the relatively high level of education for the citizens of Dariah, Thadiq, Ramah and AL-Karj compared to Dormah may explain the desire of their people for more decentralised policies. Moreover, the low level of education for the citizens of Dormah may explain their very limited knowledge about the extent of centralisation of services in their community. However, these findings are consistent with Caiden.<sup>(1)</sup> Educated people tend to prefer decentralised policies regarding local governments. The high percentage of the total sample (51.7%) of "do not know" could be attributed to the fact that are not familiar with the new Provincial System.

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(1) Caiden has pointed out that public agencies should not huddled together in one location but distributed across the country so that officials identify themselves more with people they serve (Caiden: 1982: 266). See p. 28.

**Table (7.7)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens' response to the statement:  
“Administrative decision making procedures in your localities are time  
consuming”**

Citizen's opinions	Childhood place of residence			Other	Total
	Urban	Rural	Nomadic		
Strongly agree	27.4%	25.0%	18.0%	0.0%	23.8%
Agree	54.2%	61.2%	54.1%	94.4%	57.9%
Do not know	7.4%	7.5%	18.0%	0.0%	8.9%
Disagree	4.7%	3.8%	6.6%	0.0%	4.6%
Strongly disagree	6.3%	2.5%	3.3%	5.6%	4.9%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(196)	(80)	(61)	(18)

Chi-square = 22.671

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.030

Source: Survey data 1997.

Table (7.7) shows the percentage distribution of the citizens according to their agreement to the statement: “Administrative decision making procedures are time consuming”, for each category of childhood

place of residence. The percentages shown in the last column of Table (7.7) reveal a very high agreement to the above statement; the percentage being 81.7%. On the other hand, the level of disagreement is very low; the percentages are 4.6% and 4.9% for "disagree" and "strongly disagree" respectively. The high percentages of citizens who agree with the above statement reflect the fact that the local governments in Saudi Arabia lack delegation of power and financial authorities. A number of studies of decentralisation programmes have documented the problems associated with mismatched financial authority and functional responsibility (Kulaba, 1989; Stern, 1989). Moreover Forero and Salazar argue that "several problems are associated with the centralised state organisation: (a) High concentration of public investment capacity in central government, leave the provincial and local governments relatively weak, and (b) Inefficiency in carrying out the social functions of the central state (education, health, community services among others) and a poor performance by the large central bodies set up to administer them" (Forero and Slazar, 1991: 121).

#### **7.4 The role of the New Provincial System in promoting local development**

As mentioned in Article VII of the New Provincial System, the province governor under this new administrative system has to perform the following tasks: (a) Develop the province socially and economically, (b) endeavour to develop public services in the province and raise the efficiency of administration in the localities of the province, (c) run governorates, districts and localities, monitor the functions of the governorate governors and district commissioners and locality chiefs and

make sure of their efficiency in performing their duties, and (d) make direct contact with ministers and heads of departments, discuss the province matters with them for the purpose of raising the efficiency of the governmental agencies related to them, and get the Minister of Interior informed.

In line with the above Article of the New Provincial System, Saudi citizens were asked about the role of the New Provincial System in broadening the base of public participation and in expressing views in developmental issues<sup>(2)</sup>. It can be revealed from the percentages in the last column of Table (7.8) that the majority of the respondents either “agree” (52.1%) or “strongly agree” (10.8%) with the above statement. On the other hand the percentages of those who “disagree” and “strongly disagree” are relatively low; the percentages being 12.5% and 8.5% respectively. The high level of agreement may be attributed to the fact that the Saudi citizens are comparing this new administrative system with the earlier ones, which shows little emphasis to citizen’s public participation. Moreover, the term "participation" is considered as a new concept in Saudi Arabia, as a non-democratic state. Article XXI of the New Provincial System reads “When needed, the Provincial Council shall have special committees to study any matters falling within its competence. It shall have the right to ask the assistance of any of the experienced and competent persons it finds suitable. It shall also have the right to convene persons it wishes to attend the meetings of the council and participate in the discussion without having any right to vote.” However, the researcher

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(2) Assaf emphasised the need for citizen's participation, increases productivity and boost confidence between the central and local government (Assaf; 1990 : 174).

believes that in respect to citizen's participation in socio-economic and political issues, the situation in Saudi Arabia is not entirely satisfactory. One of the mechanisms to facilitate the administration of services and the participation of the citizens in local affairs is the creation of local administrative committees. In Saudi Arabia there is no authority to community organisations and to user's associations to control and monitor the actions of public service institutions.

**Table (7.8)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizen's perceptions about the role of the New Provincial System in public participation**

		Citizen educational level				Total
		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University & above	
Citizen's opinion						
Strongly agree		12.3%	14.6%	11.0%	8.8%	10.8%
Agree		54.3%	61.0%	58.5%	43.1%	52.1%
Do not know		15.8%	9.8%	16.1%	18.2%	16.1%
Disagree		5.3%	9.8%	11.0%	17.5%	12.5%
Strongly disagree		12.3%	4.9%	3.4%	12.4%	8.5%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(57)	(41)	(118)	(137)	(353)

Chi-square = 39.54

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.00009

Source: Survey data 1997

The data in Table (7.8) shows a negative association between citizen's educational level and their agreement to the above statement; i.e. respondents with low educational level tend to have less agreement compared to their counterparts. This association is evident from the high value of chi-square (39.54%), and its high level of significance (P=0.00009). This negative association is attributed to the fact that educated people may have a better understanding for the concept of participation compared to their counterparts.

**Table (7.9)**  
**Percentage distribution of the citizen's agreement to the statement: "The New Provincial System will assist to promote local development and decentralisation of services"**

Extent of agreement		Educational Level				Total
		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University & above	
Strongly agree		15.8%	19.5%	13.4%	12.4%	14.1%
Agree		28.1%	26.8%	32.8%	40.9%	34.5%
Do not know		43.8%	41.5%	44.6%	27.0%	37.3%
Disagree		3.5%	9.8%	6.7%	13.9%	9.3%
Strongly disagree		8.8%	2.4%	2.5%	5.8%	4.8%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(57)	(41)	(119)	(137)	(354)

Chi-square = 20.71

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.05

Source: Survey data 1997



The respondents were also asked about their agreement to the statement: "The New Provincial System will promote local development through decentralisation of services and delegation of power".<sup>(3)</sup> The percentages in Table (7.9) show that nearly half of the Saudi citizens either "agree" (34.5%) or "strongly agree" (14.1%) with the above statement. In spite of this high level of agreement, there is a considerable proportion of respondents who have no definite opinions about the role of the new administrative system in promoting local development; the percentage of citizens who respond with "Don't know" is 37.3%. Finally, the percentages of citizens who "disagree" and "strongly disagree" are relatively low; 9.3% and 4.8% respectively. The high percentage of agreement to the above statement is consistent with our discussion in chapter VI (council activities), which reveals that the new Provincial System has approved several development projects for the districts of Riyadh province, in educational, cultural, social and health programmes. It can also be revealed from the data in Table (7.9), that the extent of agreement to the above statement differs significantly between the different categories of citizens by educational level. These differences are evident from the high value of chi-square (20.71) and its significant level of 0.05.

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(3) These findings are consistent with Dessler's argument. He has mentioned that such delegation of responsibilities is essential in order to achieve the desired goals (Dessler 1993: 286 - 287).

**Table (7.10)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizen's according to the statement: "The New Provincial System will lead to the citizen's participation in the political and economic issues"**

Childhood place of residence		Urban	Rural	Nomadic	Other	Total
Extent of agreement						
Strongly agree		11.6%	8.8%	11.5%	0.00%	10.3%
Agree		16.8%	20.3%	34.4%	22.0%	21.0%
Do not know		26.3%	34.2%	18.0%	27.8%	26.7%
Disagree		36.4%	26.6%	24.6%	50.0%	32.8%
Strongly disagree		8.9%	10.1%	11.5%	0.00%	9.2%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(191)	(79)	(61)	(18)	(348)

Chi-square = 19.23

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.08

Source: Survey data 1997

Table (7.10) shows the percentage distribution of respondents according to their agreement to the statement: "The New Provincial System will lead to the citizen's participation in the political and economic fields, for the different categories of respondent's childhood place of residence. The following important points can be revealed from the percentages shown in Table (7.10). (a) The percentages of those who "disagree" with the above statement are higher than their counter-parts; the percentages of those who "disagree" and "agree" are 32.8% and 21.0% respectively. (b) Slightly more than one quarter of the sampled population have not yet made-up their minds about the role of the New Provincial System in leading citizens to participate in political and economic matters. (c) Although there are differences among the different categories of respondent's childhood place of residence according to their agreement to the above statement ( $\chi^2=19.23$ ), these differences are only significant at 0.08 level.

The relatively low level of agreement of Saudi citizens to the above statement may be explained as follows. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been held together informally through an alliance between the Royal family and the traditional religious Ulama. The King governs the state with the help of the Council of Ministers, whose members are appointed by him. There is a Consultative Council which is also appointed by the King. There is no electoral system or any political parties or organised labour or professional unions, or any kind of civic clubs which would claim formal opposition to government policy [Aba-Namay: 1993]. AL-Tamawy indicated that, "eventually administrative decentralisation is a democratic necessity and it would be hollow system if it is not accompanied by

administrative decentralisation, because the citizen concern with the public is a part of his concern with the regional issues. When the people exercise supervision and control through the parliament they supervise at the same time their local interests" (AL-Tammay, 1973: 132-133). AL-Tammawy emphasised the need for elections for representatives of local governments. He argues that election is one of the pillars for local governments.

The Saudi citizens were asked to express their opinions about the statement: "The local authorities at the governorates and the districts level allow people to participate in defining the needs and in solving the problems facing their localities". The responses of the citizens are shown in Table (7.11), for the total sample and for each of the five governorates of Riyadh province. It is evident from the percentages in the last column of Table (7.11) that only 4.0% and 10.0% of the respondents think that people are "always" and "sometimes" allowed to participate in defining their needs respectively. The percentages of the citizens who responded to the above statement, with "rarely" and "never" are 50.9% and 35.1% respectively.

These low percentages of citizen's participation in defining their community needs can be attributed to the followings reasons: First, the Saudi citizens are not allowed to attend the Provincial Councils or to organise their own committees at the provincial or at the local level. It is worth noting here that, the working committees of the Provincial Councils are appointed by the governor of the province. Secondly, there are no channels of communications by which citizens can express their opinions regarding their community needs. Thirdly, the press is not allowed to

report about the deliberations of the provincial meetings and about the meetings of the specialised committees. The importance of citizen's participation is evident from Awadha's argument: "It has become clear that the central government with its limited scope and capabilities cannot attain desired success in the development process and that the participation of citizens in towns and villages is a necessary step to achieve these objectives. The participation of citizens at the local level is no longer confined to economic field, but has become a political necessity in reinforcing democratic values and ensuring social justice" (Awadha, 1983: 6).

The data in Table (7.11) shows considerable variations in respondent's agreement to the above statement among the different governorates. While the agreement is relatively high for Thadiq and Dariah governorates, it is extremely low for Dormah and Al-Karj; the percentages of responses "always" and "sometimes" are 0.0% and 8.4% respectively. These variations are evident from the very high value for chi-square of 117.52, which is highly significant ( $P$  value = 0.00000). These regional differences may be explained by the variations in educational attainment among the five governorates: The people of Thadiq and Dariah have relatively better educational attainment. Moreover, Dariah is known for its historical heritage as a capital of Saudi Arabia.

**Table (7.11)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizen's according to the statement: “The local authorities at the districts and the governorates allow the people to participate in defining the needs facing their localities”**

Citizen's opinion		Province of current residence					Total
		Ramah	Thadiq	Dornah	Al-Karj	Dariah	
Always		10.3%	3.8%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%	4.0%
Sometimes		5.1%	22.8%	0.0%	6.1%	20.0%	10.0%
Rarely		29.5%	25.3%	94.4%	72.7%	20.0%	50.9%
Never		55.1%	48.1%	5.6%	18.9%	60.0%	35.1%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(78)	(79)	(36)	(132)	(25)	(350)

Chi-square = 117.52

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.00000

Source: Survey data 1997

## **7.5 Citizen's perception about the sufficiency and quality of services provided to their localities**

It has been documented in several studies that Saudi Arabia has made rapid progress in socio-economic development during the second half of this century, as Rashid and Shaheen stated. <sup>(4)</sup> The increase of the oil prices from 4\$ in 1973 to about \$35 per barrel in 1980, has led to huge oil revenues, that have been invested in several aspects of development. Services such as health, education, roads and communication and others have received special attention from the Saudi government. For example, during the last two decades many hospitals, health centres and social welfare institutions have been established. The same period has witnessed huge investments in health programmes, improving sanitary and environmental health conditions, and in raising the standard of living. However, the distribution of services among different provinces, governorates and districts varies considerably, depending on population size, mode of living, geographical factors and social conditions.

The citizens were asked about the sufficiency of the various services available at their governorates and districts. Table (7.12) shows the percentage distribution of citizens views about the extent of sufficiency of educational services, health services, roads and cleaning services. Few respondents believe in the sufficiency of these services. The exception being, the road services, for which 58.1% of the respondents believe to be

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(4) See Chapter III section 3.4.7. These findings are consistent with Rashid and Shaheen, who stated that the Kingdom is one of the safest countries in the world and the atmosphere is thus very conducive to progress (Rashid and Shaheen: 1995: 77).

highly sufficient<sup>5</sup>. The majority of the respondents believe that the educational and health services are “sufficient to some extent”; the percentages being 63.3% and 55.9% respectively. The percentages of respondents believing in the “insufficiency” of the services at their localities are 48.0%, 30.6%, 22.4% and 13.8% for cleaning services, health services, educational services and road services respectively. On the other hand very small percentages of the respondents indicate the “unavailability” of these services in their localities; the percentages being 4.5%, 5.6%, 3.7% and 3.4% for educational, health, roads and cleaning services respectively. The “unavailability” of such services may be explained by the fact that some respondents are residing in remote areas, small villages and “Hajar”<sup>(6)</sup> People residing in such places are asked to share some of the services with neighbouring localities. The researcher believes that the high percentages of dissatisfaction of citizens from the services offered at the local level can be attributed to the centralised administrative policies and to the delay in decision making process (For more details see chapters V and VI). Moreover, government officials at the local level have little or no financial authorities. Governorate governors and district commissioners have to refer to the central government for financial approval for provision of services. Such centralised policy will delay the process of socio-economic development, which leads to citizen's dissatisfaction.

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<sup>(5)</sup> Caiden argues that the success of local governments depends on the ability of their organisations to meet people's needs (Caiden, 1982 : 19 - 20).

<sup>(6)</sup> Hajars are residential settlements for nomads, which have been established by late King Abdul Aziz.



**Table (7.12)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens according to their perception of the adequacy of the different services rendered in their localities**

Type of services		Educational Services	Health Services	Paved Roads	Cleaning Services
Sufficiency of services					
Sufficient		9.8%	6.8%	58.1%	16.9%
Sufficient to some extent		63.3%	55.9%	23.6%	29.2%
Insufficient		22.4%	30.6%	13.8%	48.0%
Not available		4.5%	5.6%	3.7%	3.4%
Not stated		0.0%	1.1%	0.8%	2.5%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	356	356	356	356

Source: Survey data 1997

The Saudi citizens were also asked about their satisfaction of the services provided to their communities; and their responses are shown in Table (7.13). The findings show low citizen's satisfaction for health and road services; the percentages of those "completely satisfied" and "satisfied" are 14.9% and 29% respectively. On the other hand the proportions of "dissatisfied" are relatively low. The percentages shown in Table (7.13) show considerable variations for the four different types of services; the percentages range from 15.2% for the health services to 4.8% for the cleaning services.

**Table (7.13)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens according to their satisfaction of the services provided to their localities**

Type of services		Educational Services	Health Services	Paved Roads	Cleaning Services
Sufficiency of services					
Completely satisfied		8.1%	5.9%	9.8%	11.2%
Satisfied		45.8%	9.0%	19.2%	23.0%
Satisfied to some extent		27.0%	56.2%	52.8%	53.1%
Dissatisfied		11.2%	12.6%	8.7%	6.5%
Completely dissatisfied		7.3%	15.2%	8.4%	4.8%
Not stated		0.6%	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	356	356	356	356

Source: Survey data 1997

## **7.6 Citizen's perception about the coordination and the co-operation between the local governments and Riyadh Provincial Council:**

Article XXIII of the New Provincial System emphasises the importance of coordination and cooperation between the local governments and Riyadh Provincial Council. "The Provincial Council shall have jurisdiction over the study of all that can raise the level of services in the province, and over the following in particular": "Follow-up the implementation of province's share of the development plan and budget, and make co-ordination in this regard". Furthermore, this coordination is clear from the regular meetings of the governorate's governors with the provincial Amir (The Chairman of the Provincial Council). Also Article VII emphasised the importance of co-ordination and co-operation between the Provincial Council and governorates, districts and other localities. <sup>(7)</sup>

However, the citizen's questionnaire included some questions to assess citizens views about the extent and nature of this co-ordination and cooperation. The most salient points raised by the citizens regarding this coordination and cooperation are summarised as follows: (i) Members of the Provincial Council should pay frequent visits to governorates and districts to listen to peoples complaints, identify their problems and assess their needs, (ii) The Provincial Council should pay special attention to supervision and execution of governorate's projects in coordination with the different governmental departments, (iii) Citizens think that some governorate governors and district commissioners are not good negotiators with the members of the council and governmental officials, (iv) Some citizens think that the central government, sometimes deprive the

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(7) See Appendix VI for more details.

governorates and districts the needed authority that allow them to plan and execute projects in their localities, and (v) Some citizens referred to the lack of cooperation and coordination between the Provincial Council, governorates and districts. In order to achieve this coordination, they recommended that governors of the governorates should be given the chance to attend some meetings of the Provincial Council. Some citizens have recommended the formation of local committees headed by one member of the Provincial Council. Such committees may strengthen the relationship between the Provincial Council and the local governments, (f) Some citizens refer to the lack of information centres in the provincial headquarters. Such kind of centres will supply planning departments and policy makers with the needed social, economic and demographic statistics. Moreover, general secretariat of the Provincial Council lacks capable manpower to perform its duties, and it lacks communication channels that exchange information between the Provincial Council and the local governments. These difficulties create problems of co-ordination and co-operation.

The low level of co-ordination between the Provincial Councils and governorates and districts is due to the centralised administrative policies prevailing in Saudi Arabia. In addition, the governmental departments in the provinces are linked to their respective ministries, and not to the Provincial Council. Also the governorate governors and the districts commissioners are not allowed to attend the meetings of the Provincial Councils. Moreover, there is no co-ordination between the municipalities (Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs), and the Provincial Councils (Ministry of Interior).

The citizens were asked about the response of their local governments to their requests and suggestions concerning the provision of services. The findings are shown in Table (7.14) for the five governorates. The percentages in the last column of Table (7.14), indicates that about two-thirds of the total sample believe that their local governments "sometimes" respond to their requests (65.5%). The percentages of "rare response" and "no response" are 14.0% and 8.8% respectively. The low percentages of the response of local governments to citizen's requests can be explained by the lack of co-ordination between the local governments and the municipalities. It is worth noting here that, in Saudi Arabia, the local governments reports to the provincial governor, while the municipalities reports to the Ministry of municipalities and Rural Affairs. According to Forero and Salazar, "the aimed reforms to strengthen municipal autonomy, modernise the juridical and administrative organisation of the regions and ensure citizen's participation in local life through the redefinition of the functions of the state at each of its administrative levels. Responsibility was gradually developed to municipal governments for the majority of basic services: water supply, roads, health and education infrastructure and welfare for children and the elderly, and planning and housing." (Forero and Salazar, 1991: 122). The data in Table (7.14) shows considerable variations among the five governorates regarding the response of local governments to citizen's requests. While the response rate is relatively high for Dormah and Al-Karj, it is low for Ramah and Dariah. These regional variations are evident from the high value of chi-square ( $\chi^2=76.04$ ), which is significant at 0.0000 level.

**Table (7.14)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizen's answers to the question: “Do your governorates and districts respond to your requests and concerning the provision of services in your locality?”**

Governorate of current residence		Ramah	Thadiq	Dornah	Al-Karj	Dariah	Total
Citizen's opinion							
Always respond		13.9%	17.7%	0.0%	6.8%	28.0%	11.7%
Sometimes respond		40.0%	59.5%	97.2%	80.3%	40.0%	65.5%
Rarely respond		22.8%	12.7%	0.0%	10.6%	28.0%	14.0%
Never respond		22.8%	10.1%	2.8%	2.3%	4.0%	8.8%
							(31 persons)
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	(79)	(79)	(36)	(132)	(25)	(351)

Chi-square = 76.04

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.00000

Source: Survey data 1997

The citizens who say that their local governments “never” respond to their requests (31 persons), were asked about the authority to which they submit their requests and complaints; and the findings are shown in Table (7.15). The majority of the respondents (41.9%), submit their requests and complaints to the governor of the province (Amir). Most of the Saudi people still believe that local government officials are unable to solve any of their problems. Saudis are used to attend the Amir’s traditional Majlis, which is usually held everyday to discuss the complaints and requests of all people residing in the province.

Table (7.15) shows that 22.6% of the citizens submit their complaints and requests to other government authorities, namely, the concerned ministries and senior government officials. Rashid supports the above findings on the value of communication channels between central and local governments. He argues that developing countries should adopt delegation of power and that effective communication is essential between the central and the local governments (Rashid, 1987: 230-233).

**Table (7.15)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens who say that the local authorities “Never respond” to their requests**

Governmental Authority	Number of Cases	Percentages
Ministry of Interior	1	3.2%
Governor of the Province	13	41.9%
Governor of the governorate	6	19.4%
Other governmental authority	7	22.6%
Not stated	4	12.9%
Total	31	100.0%

Source: Survey data 1997.

### **7.7 Citizens perception about the New Provincial System of Provincial Council and Local Governments**

As mentioned earlier in chapter VI, each Provincial Council has at least ten residents of the province (who are learned, experienced and competent), appointed through an order by the Prime Minister upon nomination by the province governor and approval by the Minister of

Interior. The citizens were asked about their agreement to the statement: “appointment of the members of the Provincial Council provides capable and qualified persons”, and their responses are shown in Table (7.16). The majority of the total sample either “agree” or “strongly agree”, with the above statement,<sup>(8)</sup> the percentages being 60.9% and 11.2% respectively. On the other hand the percentages of “disagree” and “strongly disagree” are very low, being 5.5% and 6.6% respectively. The researcher thinks that the high percentage of citizens who “agree” (60.9%), or “strongly agree” (11.2%) that appointment of the members of the Provincial Council provides capable and qualified members, could be attributed to the lack of political awareness in Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia there are no political parties, trade unions and democratic civil institutions. Some neighbouring Arab countries depend on election as a mechanism to set up local councils. This trend is consistent with the changes in many developing countries undertaking extensive state reforms which create pressure and potential, for new forms of local governments. The findings in Table (7.16) show a negative association between the extent of agreement to the above statement and citizen’s educational level; i.e. respondents with low educational level tend to have higher level of agreement compared to their counterparts. This conclusion is evident from the high value of chi-square and its significant level. The value of chi-square is about 37.73, with significant level of 0.00017.

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(8) Citizens responses about appointment of council's members is consistent with Kanungo argument, which says that in developing countries the socio-cultural values shape people's opinions, (Kanungo, 1990).



**Table (7.16)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens' according to the statement:  
"Appointment of the members of the Provincial Council provide  
capable and qualified persons"**

Citizen educational level		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University & above	Total
Extent of agreement						
Strongly agree		7.3%	5.0%	10.1%	15.7%	11.2%
Agree		70.9%	70.0%	73.9%	42.5%	60.9%
Do not know		12.7%	12.5%	7.6%	25.4%	15.8%
Disagree		1.8%	10.0%	3.4%	7.4%	5.5%
Strongly disagree		7.3%	2.5%	5.0%	9.0%	6.6%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	55	40	119	134	348

Chi-square = 37.73

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.00017

Source: Survey data 1997

**Table (7.17)**

**Percentage distribution of the citizens' attitudes to the statement: "The  
local governments have limited administrative & financial powers"**

Citizen educational level		Elementary & below	Intermediate	Secondary	University & above	Total
Extent of agreement						
Strongly agree		13.0%	12.5%	11.8%	18.5%	14.7%
Agree		70.3%	70.0%	70.5%	45.9%	60.9%
Do not know		7.4%	15.0%	7.6%	24.4%	14.9%
Disagree		5.6%	0.0%	6.7%	6.8%	5.8%
Strongly disagree		3.7%	2.5%	3.4%	4.4%	3.7%
Total	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	No. of Cases	54	40	119	135	348

Chi-square = 28.06

Degrees of Freedom = 12

Sig. level = 0.005

Source: Survey data 1997

The citizens were also asked to express their attitude to the statement: "The local governments have limited administrative and financial power that adversely affect the performance of their duties". The percentages in the last column of Table (7.17) show that more than three-quarters of the respondents express their agreement to the above statement. The percentages with "strong agreement" and "agreement" are 14.7% and 60.9% respectively, whereas, the percentages of disagreement are very low; 5.8% for "disagreement" and 3.7% for "strong disagreement". The success of decentralised policies depends mainly on giving financial power to local governments. According to McCarney, "local government has usually been the weak partner in the governing relationship within the developing world, lacking both political and financial power to act. In some cases, problems have been identified from early decentralisation efforts. For example, while authority to deliver services is often transferred from central to local levels of government, the financial autonomy, the power to act on newly acquired local functions remains weak" (McCarney, 1997: 9-10). As mentioned in chapter V, the new Provincial System does not empower financial autonomy. The Provincial Councils have no financial power to allocate budget for the developmental projects in the various provinces of the Kingdom (see chapter VI, section 6.5).

## **7.8 Summary:**

The responses of the citizens shown in the present chapter revealed the following important points: (a) most of the citizens are not familiar with the new administrative system and its objectives, and do not know how to make use of it in a way that can serve their general interests; (b) some of the governorate governors, district commissioners and locality chiefs have limited administrative capabilities; those are the ones who are

appointed on tribal basis; (c) some respondents complain from the lack of cooperation and coordination between the province authorities and the local governments; (d) some respondents refer to the tribal mentality in which government officials serve people who are related to their tribes, clans and families; (e) one of the major difficulties facing the implementation of the new administrative system, is the lack of qualified personnel, specially in governorates, districts and small localities; (f) some citizens believe that the members of the Provincial Council do not represent the different governorates of the province, most of them are selected from the city of Riyadh or from major towns of the province, (g) some citizens think that four annual meetings for the Provincial Council are not enough, especially for large provinces like Riyadh, with its many problems and various activities, and (h) some citizens prefer “election” to “appointment” for the members of the Provincial Council.<sup>(9)</sup>

The analysis in the present chapter revealed that only 10% of the respondents believe that the new Provincial System will cause greater change in running the various affairs of governorates and districts. On the other hand, 46.7% of the respondents believe that the extent of such change is limited. These findings will call for reconsideration of the new administrative reforms according to the socio-economic conditions in each of the various provinces of the Kingdom, and according to the changes of these conditions over time. Some provinces have better educational and economic opportunities, and that may help the people of these provinces to make the best benefit from the new Provincial System. The issuance of the

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(9) This finding is consistent with AL-Tammawy regarding the value of election. He defines the new local administrative system as an administrative decentralisation based on three pillars: (B) the interests are being assigned to elected organs (1961: 12).

new Provincial System was initiated by the desire of the Saudi government to achieve the country's objectives by raising the level of administrative performance, and by developing the governmental agencies in the various provinces to be in line with the development achieved by the country. However, many efforts have to be made in order to achieve decentralised policies. This should include delegation of power, broadening the role of the Provincial Councils to be legislative, as well as executive, giving financial power to the Provincial Councils and to the local governments, election and citizens' participation.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE NEW PROVINCIAL SYSTEM AS PERCEIVED BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

#### 8.1 Introduction:

In the previous chapter it was shown that the citizens believe that the new administrative system will help the local governments in formulating their needs and requirements regarding provisions of services. Having examined the views of the citizens on the new Provincial System in chapter VII, it is now necessary to examine the views of the governmental officials (working in governorates and districts) on the role of this new administrative system in promoting and facilitating the decision-making process, and in promoting local development. The opinions of the governmental officials working at local levels will be very useful in assessing the extent of implementation of this new administrative system. All the governorate governors are asked by the governors to submit periodical reports on the efficiency of the performance of public services and other affairs in the governorates. Needless to say that issues raised by these periodical reports may help in evaluating the new administrative system. The findings of the questionnaire of the governmental officials (Appendix I), are shown in the present chapter in the following order: (i) General characteristics of the sample, (ii) The role of the New Provincial System in promoting and in speeding the decision-making process, (iii) The role of the New Provincial System in promoting local development, and (iv) Official views about co-ordination and cooperation between the local governments and Riyadh Provincial Council.

## 8.2 - General characteristics of the sample.

As mentioned in chapter I, a sample of 150 officials working in governorates and districts were interviewed by well trained interviewers. The respondents were asked to express their views on the New Provincial System. Eight of the questionnaires were excluded from the present analysis due to incomplete and inaccurate information. The office editing shows inconsistently in the responses for eight of the officials working in the governorates and districts, and as a result these eight questionnaires were deleted from the analysis. This section of chapter VIII will describe briefly some socio-economic and demographic characteristics of officials working in governorates and districts, such as age, occupation, and duration of service and educational attainment.

Table (8.1) shows the percentage distribution of government officials according to some socio-economic and demographic characteristics. The percentages of respondents working in the five governorates varies considerably: they are 36.6 for Al-Karj, 9.2 for Dariah, and 11.3 for Dormah. Those for Ramah and Thadiq lie in the middle; they are 22.5 and 20.4 respectively. It is worth noting here that these percentages reflect the distribution of population residing in these governorates because the 142 respondents were distributed among the five governorates according to the population size in these governorates.

The age distribution of the population in Table (8.1) shows a gradual increase of the percentages from age group (20-29) (15.5%) to age (40-49) (33.1%). A low percentage is noticed for age group 60 and over (7.8%). This low percentage may be explained by the fact that many of government officials retire at age 60. The data in Table (8.2) show the means and standard deviations for the ages of the total sample and for different subgroups of the sample according to socio-demographic characteristics.

The mean age for the total sample is about 42.7 years with a standard deviation of 11.39 years.

**Table (8.1)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials working in governorates and districts according to their socio-demographic characteristics**

Socio-demographic characteristics	Percentages %	Number of cases
<u>Governorates:</u>		
Ramah	22.5%	32
Thadiq	20.4%	29
Dormah	11.3%	16
Al-Karj	36.6%	52
Dariah	9.2%	13
<u>Age:</u>		
20-29	15.5%	22
30-39	21.1%	30
40-49	33.1%	47
50-59	22.5%	32
60+	7.8%	11
<u>Occupation:</u>		
Administrators	32.5%	46
Supervisors	6.3%	9
Technical jobs	7.7%	11
Clerical jobs	53.5	76
<u>Duration of service:</u>		
0-9	26.8%	38
10-19	39.4%	56
20-29	16.2%	23
30-39	16.6%	15
40+	7.0%	10
<u>Educational level:</u>		
Below elementary	8.5%	12
Completed elementary	38.0%	54
Completed intermediate	26.8%	38
Completed secondary	16.8%	24
University & above	9.9%	14
Total	100.0%	142

Source: Survey data 1997.

Although the data in Table (8.2) shows little variations in mean age among the five governorates, a significant variation is evident for the various occupational categories. The mean age varies from 56.44 years for supervisory jobs to 39.72 years for technical jobs. These variations are statistically significant at 0.0004. The last panel of Table (8.2) shows a significant variation in the mean age among respondents with different educational levels. This ranges from 51.42 years for those with less than elementary education to 38.20 years for those with university education. Differences in the mean age for the five educational categories are statistically significant at 0.0000 level. When asked about the nature of their occupations, more than fifty percent of respondents (53.5%) were found to be doing clerical jobs. Moreover, about one third of the sample (32.5%) are working in administrative jobs. The percentages of those working in technical and supervisory jobs are very low; being 6.3% and 7.7% respectively. This could be explained by the fact that most of the jobs in the headquarters of the governorates and the districts are of administrative and clerical nature. Moreover, considerable number of expatriates in Saudi Arabia are involved in jobs of a technical nature. It is worth mentioning here that the researcher avoided asking a direct question on income for a number of reasons. The most important ones are as follows: (a) People in Saudi Arabia, as in many developing countries tend to deflate their income, (b) Statistics on monthly income for government officials are available from the pay roll, and (c) Occupational characteristics and educational attainment (shown in Table 8.1) can be considered as a proxy for people's income. However, official data show that the per capita income for Saudi Arabia is considered as one of the highest in most of the developing countries. The United Nations estimates



for the year 1992, show that the annual per capita income for Saudi Arabia is about 10,850 U.S. Dollars, compared to 9230 U.S. Dollars for Oman (U.N, 1994: 129-152).

**Table (8.2)**

**The arithmetic means and standard deviations for ages and duration of services for government officials according to some socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Age		Duration of Service	
	Mean (in years)	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
<u>Governorate:-</u>				
Ramah	44.12	11.05	17.16	9.06
Thadiq	43.31	10.91	13.64	9.84
Dormah	43.06	14.04	13.06	9.71
Al-Karj	40.62	10.39	18.22	19.31
Dariah	45.69	13.81	19.53	14.46
<u>Occupation:</u>				
Administrators	44.19	10.37	15.91	9.92
Supervisors	56.44	11.02	29.22	12.81
Technical	39.72	9.81	11.91	7.24
Clerical	40.59	11.13	16.18	17.16
<u>Educational level:</u>				
Below elementary	51.42	12.64	18.82	16.29
Completed elementary	47.17	10.31	18.82	10.85
Completed intermediate	38.08	10.64	15.16	16.15
Completed secondary	38.21	9.75	12.43	7.58
University and above	38.20	8.60	17.46	25.01
<b>Total</b>	<b>42.70</b>	<b>11.39</b>	<b>16.61</b>	<b>14.31</b>

Source: Survey data 1997.

The fourth panel of Table (8.1) shows the percentage distribution of the respondents according to their duration of service. The majority of the

respondents have relatively short duration of service; about two-thirds of the government officials working in the governorates and the districts have less than 20 years of service. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents with 30 years and more of service is less than 18%. The data in Table (8.2) shows the means and standard deviations for duration of the service for the total sample, and for sub-groups of respondents according to some socio-demographic characteristics. The mean duration of service for the total sample is about 16.61 years with standard deviation of 14.31 years. The respondents were also asked about their educational attainment, and the findings are shown in the last panel of Table (8.1). The majority of the respondents have completed elementary and intermediate schools; the percentages being 38.0% and 26.8% respectively. On the other extreme, the percentages of those with secondary and university education are 16.8% and 9.9% respectively. The relatively low percentages of respondents with higher educational attainment may be attributed to the fact that the majority of the respondents in the governorates and the districts are working in jobs of clerical nature, which may not require higher educational level. Moreover, most of these governorates and districts are of rural origin, where educational services were only recently expanded.

### **8.3 The Role of the New Provincial System in promoting and in facilitating the decision making process**

It is worth noting here that the responses of the government officials working in the various governorates and districts, presented in this chapter may not reflect the real problems facing the application of the new Provincial System. The researcher felt that most of the respondents were not frank in their answers. This is because they are serving in non-democratic system, and some think they may face problems if they criticise the new Provincial System.

The government officials were asked to show to what extent they are familiar with the New Provincial System, and their responses are shown in Table (8.3). The percentages of respondents who are familiar and those who are “familiar to some extent” are 28.9 and 28.8% respectively. On the other hand, higher percentage is observed for respondents who are not familiar with the New Provincial System; the percentage being 41.6%. This high percentage may be attributed to the low level of educational attainment for the majority of the respondents. It has been shown earlier in Table (8.1) that about 73% of the respondents have not completed secondary education. Most of the respondents have not received in-service training in the field of administration and local government, according to the researcher’s observations during data collection. Moreover, there is lack of concern about the public issues among some Saudi government officials. In addition, the provincial authorities did not inform the governmental officials, at the local level, about the objectives and the content of the new Provincial System.

**Table (8.3)**  
**The percentage distribution of government officials working in governorates and districts, according to their knowledge about the New Provincial System in Saudi Arabia**

Responses	Number of Cases	Percentages
Yes familiar	41	28.9%
Familiar to some extent	41	28.8%
Not familiar	59	41.6%
Not stated	1	0.7%
Total	142	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Table (8.4) shows the percentage distribution of the respondents who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their opinions about the role of the New Provincial System in motivating the government officials to solve citizen's problems. The majority of the respondents believe that the New Provincial System will play an important role in motivating the government officials to solve citizens' problems, the percentage being 46.3%, compared to only 15.9% and 1.2% for those who believe in "limited role" and "no role" respectively. The government officials may have based their responses on the objectives of the new Provincial System shown in Article VII, (Sections D, E and F). Section D of article VII reads that, the new Provincial System aims to develop the provinces, socially, economically and constructionally. Also section E of the same Article reads that, the new Provincial System endeavour to develop public services in the provinces.

It is worth noting here that the researcher believes that the problem of the new Provincial System lies in its application and not in its content.

During the interview the researcher has noticed some exaggerations in responses of the governmental official about the new Provincial System.

**Table 8.4**

**The percentage distribution of the government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their perceptions about the role of the system in motivating government officials to solve citizen's problems**

<b>Extent of the role</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
<b>Important role</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>46.3%</b>
<b>Average role</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35.4%</b>
<b>Limited role</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15.9%</b>
<b>No role</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Not stated</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source: survey Data 1997**

**Table (8.5)**

**The percentage distribution of the government according to their perceptions about the role of the system in motivating government officials to solve citizen's problems**

Extent of the role	Number of Cases	Percentages %
Important role	38	46.3%
Average role	29	35.4%
Limited role	13	15.9%
No role	1	1.2%
Not stated	1	1.2%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

As mentioned earlier, the issue of the New Provincial System was initiated by the desire of Saudi government to work for decentralised policies, to improve local governments.<sup>(1)</sup> The government officials were asked to express their opinions regarding the role of the New Administrative System in promoting decentralised policies. The findings are presented in Table (8.5). The majority of the respondents (about 55%) believe that the New Provincial System will play an important role in promoting decentralisation of policies. In addition, 29.3% of the respondents believe that the New Provincial System will play “an average role”. On the other hand, only 12.2% and 2.4% of the respondents believe in “limited role” and “no role” respectively. The researcher believes that these findings, are very encouraging, if the central and local government make proper implementation of the New Administrative System, which emerged to achieve the objectives and goals sought by the country with

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(1) Chandler and Plano stated that decentralisation involve reassigning decision making responsibilities on geographical basis, (Chandler and Plano, 1986: 165).

respect to raising the administrative performance level and to increase developmental rates. The implementation of the new administrative system in Saudi Arabia is faced with the lack of delegation of power to local government, and to the lack of financial resources at the local governments. Moreover, there is little interaction between the higher level authorities and the government officials at the governorates and the districts.

**Table (8.5)**

**The percentage distribution of the government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, officials according to their opinions about the role of the system in promoting decentralisation of policies**

Extent of the role	Number of cases	Percentage %
Important role	45	54.9%
Average role	24	29.3%
Limited role	10	12.2%
“No role”	2	2.4%
Not stated	1	1.2%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

As mentioned earlier, the issue of the New Provincial System was initiated by the desire of the Saudi government to work for decentralised policies, to improve local governments. <sup>(1)</sup> The government officials who are familiar with the New Provincial System, were asked to express their opinions regarding the role of the New Administrative System in promoting decentralised policies. The findings are presented in Table (8.5). The majority of the respondents (about 55%) believe that the New Provincial System will play an important role in promoting

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<sup>(1)</sup> Chandler and Plano stated that decentralisation involve reassigning decision making responsibilities on geographical basis, (Chandler and Plano, 1986: 165).

decentralisation of policies. In addition, 29.3% of the respondents believe that the New Provincial System will play “an average role”. On the other hand, only 12.2% and 2.4% of the respondents believe in “limited role” and “no role” respectively. The researcher believes that these findings are very encouraging, if the central and local government make proper implementation of the New Administrative System, which emerged to achieve the objectives and goals sought by the country with respect to raising the administrative performance level and to increase developmental rates. The implementation of the new administrative system in Saudi Arabia is faced with the lack of delegation of power to local government, and to the lack of financial resources at the local governments. Moreover, there is little interaction between the higher level authorities and the government officials at the governorates and the districts.

**Table (8.6)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials working in governorates and districts according to their responses to the question: Does your job require certain delegation of power to carry out your responsibilities?**

Responses	Number of Cases	Percentages %
Requires full delegation	39	27.5%
Requires some delegation	32	22.5%
Requires no delegation	71	50.0%
Total	142	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Needless to say that promoting decentralisation requires delegation of power to governors, district commissioners and head of local



governmental departments.<sup>(2)</sup> The government officials working in governorates and districts were asked, whether their jobs require delegation of power. The responses are shown in Table (8.6). It can be revealed from the data in Table (8.6) that half of the respondents say that their jobs do not require delegation of power to perform their duties. The remaining half of the respondents say that their current jobs require “delegation of power”; the percentages being 27.5% and 22.5% for “full delegation” and “some delegation” respectively. The high proportion of respondents who believe that their jobs do not require “delegation of power”, may be attributed to the fact that the majority of the sample are doing clerical jobs, as shown earlier in Table (8.2). It is worth noting that out of those who said that their jobs require such delegation of power, only 25.4% have sufficient power to perform their duties, and the remaining 74.6% either have some power (66.1%) or have no such power (8.5%) (see the Table 8.7). The fact that only one quarter of respondents, whose current jobs require delegation of power, have sufficient authority to perform their duties, may call for more delegation of power to governorate governors, district commissioners and heads of departments under the new administrative system. The researcher believes that senior officials working for the local governments are in need of more “delegation of power”, specially in financial and administrative matters.

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(2) Dessler views decentralisation as process of organising various responsibilities into division. The reorganisation of such responsibilities cannot be achieved without delegation of power to some extent to the subordinates; such delegation of responsibilities is essential in order to achieve desired goals, (Dessler, 1993:287).

**Table 8.7**

**The percentage distribution of governmental official who said that their jobs require delegation of power, according to the sufficiency of the power**

The sufficiency of the power	Number of Cases	Percentages %
Sufficient	8	25.4%
Sufficient to some extent	60	66.1%
Not sufficient	3	8.5%
Total	71	100.0%

Source: Survey data 1997.

Table (8.8) shows the percentage distribution of government officials, who said that their jobs require delegation of power, according to their access to such power in administrative issues. It can be revealed from the data in Table (8.8) that only 23.9% of the respondents exercise such power in administrative matters, and that 29.6% of the respondents have no access to such power. The remaining percentage of (46.5%) of the respondent have limited access to such power.<sup>(3)</sup> According to the researcher in a developing country, as is the case of Saudi Arabia, delegation of power is considered as one of the obstacles to decentralisation. Delegation is looked upon as a way of removing important functions from inefficient government bureaucracies. Moreover, according to Rondinelli and others, "delegation is seen as a way of offering public goods and services through a more "business like" organisational

structure that makes use of managerial and accounting techniques normally associated with private enterprise" (Rondinelli and others, 1987:15-16).

**Table (8.8)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials who said that their jobs require delegation of power, according to their access to such power in administrative issues**

Access of power in administrative issues	Number of Cases	Percentages - %
Yes	17	23.9%
"to some extent"	33	46.5%
No	21	29.6%
Total	71	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

#### **8.4 The role of the New Provincial System in promoting local development**

Table (8.9) shows the percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their opinions of the role of the New Provincial System in supporting local development. The majority of the respondents (51.2%) believe that the new administrative system will play an important role in local development. On the other hand only 18.3% and 1.2% of the respondents believe in "limited role" and "no role" respectively. These findings are consistent with the citizens views, presented in chapter 7 Table (7.1), which shows that nearly half of the Saudi citizens either "agree" (34.5%) or "strongly agree" (14.1%) with the statement.

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(3) According to Jumma; governments delegate some of their responsibilities to local governments for producing goods and delivering services that were previously held by governmental ministries, (Jumma, 1993: 80).

These findings are consistent with the government's objectives which concentrate on implementing developmental projects rather than citizen's participation, delegation of power in the decision-making process. The goal of development policies in Saudi Arabia is to distribute the benefits of economic growth more equitably, to increase the productivity and income for all segments of the society, and to raise the living standards of the people (for more details see Chapter III).

**Table (8.9)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their opinions about the role of the New Provincial System in supporting local development**

Extent of the Role	Number of Cases	Percentages %
Important role	42	51.2%
Average role	23	28.1%
"Limited role"	15	18.3%
"No role"	1	1.2%
Note stated	1	1.2%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

**Table (8.10)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their perceptions about the role of this system in achieving developmental goals**

Extent of Achievement	Number of Cases	Percentages %
"Great achievement"	50	61.0%
"Limited achievement"	25	30.5%
"No achievement"	6	7.3%
Not stated	1	1.2%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

The government officials who are familiar with the New Provincial System were asked to express their opinions about the role of the new Provincial System in achieving developmental goals. The responses to this question are presented in Table (8.10). It can be revealed from the data in Table (8.11) that 61.0% of the respondents believe that the new administrative system will make "great achievement" in developmental goals, and that 30.5% of the respondents believe in "limited achievement". It can also be noticed from the data in Table (8.10) that few respondents believe in "no achievement" (7.3%). In conclusion, both Saudi citizens and government officials believe that the New Provincial System may assist in achieving the country's objectives by raising administrative efficiency, and accomplishing developmental goals. This may be explained by AL-Awaji's argument which says that; "the role of local administration in Saudi Arabia has undergone fundamental changes. One of its objectives is to develop the regions through what is called "development centres" in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (AL-Awaji, 1981: 45).

**Table (8.11)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their perceptions about the statement: "The Provincial Council will lead the citizens to participate in local development."**

Extent of participation	Number of Cases	Percentages %
"more participation"	43	52.4%
"limited participation"	28	34.1%
"No participation"	10	12.2%
"Not stated"	1	1.2%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Table (8.11) shows the percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their perceptions about the statement: “The Provincial Council will lead the citizens to participate in local development”. The majority of the respondents believe in “more participation” (52.4%), and (34.1%) believe in “limited participation”<sup>(4)</sup>. On the other hand, only 12.2% of the respondents believe that the Provincial Council will not lead the citizen’s participate in local development. It is worth noting here that Article XXIV of the New Provincial System emphasises the citizen’s participation<sup>(5)</sup>. These responses are in contradiction with what has been mentioned in Table 8.8, where the governmental officials have no sufficient delegation of power (only 23.9% have access to administrative power). This contradiction could be attributed to their different perception to local participation.

### **8.5 Official’s perceptions about coordination and cooperation between the Local governments and Riyadh Provincial Council**

It can be noticed from Articles VII, IX and XIII that the New Provincial System has emphasised the need for coordination and cooperation between local governments and Provincial Councils. Article XIII reads: “The governors have to submit periodical reports to the province governor (who is the Chairman of the Provincial Council) on the

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(4) Rondinelli believes that participating of larger number of people increases scale of production and enhances provision of services, (Rondinelli, 1991: 8).

efficiency of the public services performance and the other affairs of the governorates". It has also been stated in Article VII that the province governor has to run governorates, districts and localities, monitor the functions of the governorate governors, district commissioners and locality chiefs and make sure of their efficiency in performing their duties."

Since decentralization is a process seeking far-reaching reforms it demands effective coordination between provincial level, community levels, and central government. Most of the new decentralisation measures have injected new strength and potential at the level of the municipality. (Forero & Salazar, 1991: 125). Needless to say that coordination between the various levels of local governments and central government, is the backbone for the success of decentralisation. Rondinelli et al argue that the degree to which decentralisation increases administrative effectiveness is by promoting greater coordination among units of the central government and between them and subnational administrative units, or by encouraging closer cooperation among organisations to attain mutually acceptable development goals (Rondinelli et al, 1984: 29).

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(5) The article reads: "The Provincial Council shall suggest any of the public interest works for the province citizens and encourage citizen's participation" (The Provincial System, Appendix VI).

**Table (8.12)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials, according to their opinions about the extent of coordination and cooperation between the governorates/districts and Riyadh Provincial Council**

Extent of coordination & cooperation	Number of Cases	Percentages %
More coordination & cooperation	54	38.0%
Limited coordination & cooperation	40	28.2%
No coordination & cooperation	43	30.3%
Not stated	5	3.5%
Total	142	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Table (8.12) shows the percentage distribution of government officials according to their opinions about the extent of coordination and cooperation between the governorates/districts and Riyadh Provincial Council. Slightly more than one-third of the respondents believe in “more coordination and cooperation” (38.0%), and slightly less than one-third of the respondents believe in “limited coordination and cooperation” (28.2%). On the other hand, 30.3% of the total respondents believe in “no coordination and cooperation”. The high proportion of respondents who believe in the present coordination and cooperation between the Local governments and the Provincial Council may be attributed to the fact that the province governor meets with the governorate governors at least twice a year to discuss the provincial affairs. Moreover, specialised committees from the Council’s members pay periodical visits to the governorates and districts of Riyadh Province to discuss their problems and assess their needs and requirements. The governor of Riyadh province sent a delegation in 1995, representing the Provincial Council to the governorate



of Al-Karj for the purpose of assessing the needs and studying the requirements. These kinds of visits are part of the follow up and coordination between the Provincial Council the local governments. These delegations usually held meetings with senior officials in the governorate's departments for getting complete ideas about the progress of the various developmental projects.<sup>(6)</sup>

The government officials who are familiar with the New Provincial System are asked to express their opinions about the role of the Provincial Council in meeting the needs of the citizens through coordination with the concerned ministries. The responses are shown in Table (8.13). It can be revealed from the percentages in Table (8.13) that the majority of the respondents agree with the above statement; the percentage being 58.5%. In addition, 34.2% of the respondents agree to some extent with the above statement. On the other hand, the respondents who disagree with the above statement are very small, not exceeding 5%. This high percentage of agreement can be explained by the continuous visits paid by members of Riyadh Provincial Council to the various governorates and districts to discuss citizen's problems and needs with local authorities, and with the various governmental departments. It is worth noting here that the new Provincial System is taking a step forward towards local development and towards promoting provision of services to meet citizen's needs. However, the researcher believes that the new administrative system has played a very limited role in decentralising decision-making process and in citizens' participation.

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(6) These findings are consistent with AL-Mutairy's argument : the administrative factors are influencing the delivery of public services, and the nature of coordination that exists among local public officials (1990:32).

**Table (8.13)**

**The percentage distribution of government officials, who are familiar with the New Provincial System, according to their opinions about the Council's role in meeting the needs of the citizens through coordination with the concerned ministries**

Extent of agreement	Number of Cases	Percentages %
Agree	48	58.5%
Agree to some extent	28	34.2%
Disagree	4	4.9%
Not stated	2	2.4%
Total	82	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

### **8.6 Concluding Remarks:**

In the light of the proceeding analysis of the present chapter, it can be revealed that slightly less than half of the government officials working in governorates and districts are not familiar with the new administrative system. Such situation may require an intensive orientation programmes for government officials about the objectives, goals and tools of implementing the new administrative system. Mass media, workshops, in-service training programmes could be some of the useful means to achieve the above objective. Out of those who are familiar with the new Provincial System, the analysis shows that 46.3% of respondents believe that the new system will motivate officials to solve citizens' problems. These findings are consistent with the citizens' responses, indicating that more than half of

the respondents believe that the new Provincial System will play an important role in serving people's needs.

One of the challenges facing the implementation of the new Provincial System is that the delegation of power to officials working in local governments is still limited. Most of the people working in governorates and districts lack administrative, as well as financial power (authority). They still have to refer to the provincial capital or to the central government for approval of financial and administrative matters. The respondents have expressed their views frankly, regarding this problem; the present study shows that out of the 71 respondents whose jobs require delegation of power, only 23.9% have access to such power in administrative issues. In order to raise the level of administrative efficiency in the various levels of local government, the legislator has to let government officials have access to power in administrative and financial issues. Such power will help them in performing their duties properly and efficiently.

## **CHAPTER IX**

### **THE NEW PROVINCIAL SYSTEM AS PERCEIVED BY MEMBERS OF RIYADH PROVINCIAL COUNCIL, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND NOTABLE PERSONS**

#### **9.1 Findings of the Survey**

The present chapter presents the findings of the self-administered questionnaire addressed to the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of governmental agencies. The present chapter will also include interviews with the chairman of Riyadh provincial council and a notable person. The views of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and notable persons about the new Provincial System will help in evaluating the efficiency of the system, and in identifying the difficulties facing its implementation.

A comprehensive self administered questionnaire was addressed to twenty-five members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of governmental agencies to investigate their opinions about the role of the new Provincial System in promoting decentralised policies, raising levels of local development, and in encouraging citizens' participation in social and economic development.

**Table (9.1)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh provincial council and heads of departments according to their perceptions about the role of the new Provincial System in promoting decentralised policies**

Respondent's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
"Great role"	18	72.0%
"Limited role"	7	28.0%
"No role"	0	00.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Table (9.1) shows the percentage distribution of the council's members and heads of departments according to their opinions about the role of the new Provincial System in promoting decentralised policies. The majority of the respondents (72%) believe that the new administrative system will play a great role, and that 28% of them believe that the new administrative system will play a limited role in promoting decentralised policies. It is worth noting here none of the respondents thought that the new administrative system had no role to play. We would expect such responses, since the council members are appointed to serve their provinces, and they expected to play an effective role in promoting decentralisation of policies. Furthermore, the fact that the council members and heads of departments are appointed by the Council of Ministers, [after recommendations by the minister of interior], they will not be able to criticise openly the new administrative system.

The members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of governmental agencies were asked to express their opinions regarding the role of the new Provincial System in achieving developmental objectives (see Table 9.2). The majority of the respondents believe that this new administrative system will play a “great role” in achieving developmental objectives; the percentage being 80.0%. The remaining 20.0% believe in a limited role. These findings could be attributed to the fact that the new Provincial System clearly emphasises the provision of services and the implementation of various developmental projects, with no emphasis on citizen's participation in decision making process, as shown earlier in chapter VI.

**Table (9.2)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments, according to their perceptions regarding the role of the new provincial system in achieving development objectives**

Respondent's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
“Great role”	20	80.0%
“Limited role”	5	20.0%
“No role”	0	0.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

**Table (9.3)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments, according to their perceptions regarding the role of the new Provincial System in supporting local development**

Respondent's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
Important role	17	68.0%
Limited role	8	32.0%
No role	---	
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997.

The respondents were asked to express their perceptions about the role of the new Provincial System in supporting local governments. The findings are shown in Table (9.3), where 68.0% of the respondents believe in "important role", and none of the respondents believe in "no role".

**Table (9.4)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of the Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments according to their perceptions regarding the sufficiency of authorities vested in them**

The extent of sufficiency of authority	Number of cases	Percentages
Sufficient	12	48.0%
Partial sufficient	10	40.0%
Insufficient	1	4.0%
“No authority”	2	8.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

The executive power at the provincial level is mainly vested in the province governor (Amir). The heads of governmental agencies working in Riyadh province, were asked about the sufficiency of authorities and power vested in them, and their responses are shown in Table (9.4). The majority of the respondents believe that the authorities and power given to them are either sufficient (48%) or partially sufficient (40%). On the other hand, only 8% and 4% of the respondents believe that the authorities are either not available or insufficient respectively. These findings support our earlier arguments that the administrative system in Saudi Arabia is still centralised, and the authorities are confined to the central government or to the provincial governor.

Table (9.5) shows the percentage distribution of council's member and heads of governmental agencies according to their opinions regarding the role of the new Provincial System in encouraging citizen's



participation in local development. It can be revealed from the data in Table (9.5) that 56.0% of the respondents believe that the new Provincial System will play a “great role” in encouraging citizen’s participation in local development. In addition, 32.0% of the respondents believe in “limited role”. It is the researcher’s opinion that the establishment of the Provincial Councils following popular demands symbolically makes room for hundreds of educated Saudis to claim a voice in running their communities. The establishment of the Provincial Councils has encouraged Saudis to practice open debates regarding local, national and international issues in the mass media. For example, one senior official of Saudi government has said in a press interview that the possibility of television transmission for some council sessions, similar to the practice of Arab parliaments, will attract public concern. Some sessions may have deep discussions, debates and arguments that are not easily understood in their nature unless being seen or attended. Moreover, the Provincial Councils, may not be able to convince others of its performed tasks unless being open to the public (Asharq AL-Awsat: No, 5920 : 5/6/1995).

**Table (9.5)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments, according to their perceptions regarding the role of the new Provincial System in encouraging citizens participation in local development**

Member's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
Great role	14	56.0%
Limited role	8	32.0%
No role	3	12.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

The new Provincial System has emphasised the importance of the link between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministries and governmental departments. Article XXXIII of the Provincial System reads, "the Chairman of the Provincial Council shall get the ministries and governmental departments informed of what concerns them regarding the council decisions". The findings shown in Table (9.6) reveal that the majority of the respondents (76.0%) emphasised the importance of co-ordination between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministries and governmental departments.<sup>(1)</sup> Also 12.0% of the respondents believe that this co-ordination is important to some extent. On the other hand, only 8.0% of the respondents show no or little importance for the co ordination between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministries and governmental departments.

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(1) Rashide argues that effective communication is essential between central and local government as it helps the proper planning, participation and development. (Rashide, 1987:230).

**Table (9.6)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments, according to their perceptions about the importance of coordination between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministries and governmental departments**

Respondent's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
Important role	19	76.0%
To some extent	3	12.0%
No role	2	8.0%
Not stated	1	4.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

It is worth noting here that most of the responses shown in Table (9.6) are for representatives of governmental agencies in Riyadh province, who are appointed to exercise this co ordination between the Provincial Council and their respective ministries and departments.

The data in Table (9.7) shows the extent of coordination between the governmental agencies and the governorates of Riyadh province. About 56% of the respondents believe in the importance of this co ordination for the best implementation of the recommendations approved by the Provincial Council. In addition, 20% of the respondents believe to some extent in the importance of the co ordination between the governmental agencies and the governorates. On the other hand only 20% of the respondents do not believe in the co-ordination between the concerned ministers and the governorates of Riyadh province. Based on this

experience, as a head of department of a development unit, the research disagrees with most of the responses of the heads of governmental departments, for the followings reasons: (a) there is no follow-up committees at the Provincial Councils, (b) the limited role played by the Department of Provincial Affairs (Minister of Interior) in encouraging co-ordination between the concerned ministries and the Provincial Councils. This department lacks sufficient, capable and qualified personnel to carry out the needed efforts for co-ordination, (c) the concerned ministers have no governmental unit to make the proper co-ordination between them and the secretary of the Provincial Council.

**Table (9.7)**

**The percentage distribution of the members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of departments, according to their perceptions regarding the extent of co ordination between the concerned ministries and the governorates of Riyadh province**

Member's opinions	Number of cases	Percentages
Yes	14	56.0%
To some extent	5	20.0%
No coordination	5	20.0%
Not stated	1	4.0%
Total	25	100.0%

Source: Survey Data 1997

Some of the appointed members of Riyadh Provincial Council, namely, AL-Obeikan, AL-Rabie and AL-Hokeel raised the issue of giving the council more power to perform its duties in a proper manner. Other members, namely representatives of the Ministry of Education, Agriculture

and Transportation, think that some important ministries and governmental agencies are not represented in Riyadh Provincial Council, such as the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of National Planning.

## **9.2 The Amir's perception about the New Provincial System**

According to the New Provincial System, each province in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is headed by a governor (usually Amir) at a rank of minister. The governor has a deputy to assist him, and to act for him in his absence. Both the governor and his deputy are appointed and dismissed by a Royal decree upon recommendations from the Minister of Interior. The province governor is the chairman of the Provincial Council, and he has to undertake the administration of his province and the Provincial Council in accordance with the country's public policy and the provisions of the New Provincial System and other laws and regulations.

Prince Sulman Bin Abdel Aziz is the governor (Amir) of Riyadh province and the chairman of Riyadh Provincial Council. Riyadh province is the largest and the most important province in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, because of its various economic, social and political activities as shown earlier in chapter three. Moreover, Riyadh City is the capital of the country where ministries, governmental departments and most of the economic, social and cultural institutions are located. For these the researcher conducted an interview with the governor of Riyadh province about the New Provincial System. The most important points of this interview are summarised below. <sup>(2)</sup>

When the Governor of Riyadh province was asked about the reasons behind the issue of this New Provincial System, he responded by saying: “the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is witnessing an advancement and expansion in developmental projects in all provinces, cities, governorates, districts and localities. This requires a powerful administrative system that can keep pace with the rapid socio-economic development in the Kingdom”. The idea of establishing a Provincial Council emerged to achieve the objectives and goals sought by the country with respect to raising the administrative performance level, to increase developmental rates, and to promote services in the various provinces of the Kingdom. When the Prince is asked about the tasks of the Riyadh Provincial Council, he replied that the Provincial Council should have jurisdiction over the study of all that can raise the level of services in the province. With regard to the expansion of the council activities to include legislative and organisational tasks, the Prince says: “this matter depends on the need to revise the council activities, and the amount of work. If there are other activities serving the public interest, they will be taken into consideration, and suggestions concerning them shall be submitted to His Royal Highness the Minister of Interior.”

When the Governor of Riyadh province is asked whether the New Provincial System and the Provincial Council shall play a tangible role in achieving administrative decentralisation leading to serving citizen's interest in a more efficient and comprehensive manner, he confirmed this statement, and added that no one can imagine the existence of centralisation while there is an integral work team devoted to the service of

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(2) For more details see Appendix VII.

the public interest of the citizens and the country. The Governor believes that the council plays an important role in supporting local development in the Kingdom. However, he thinks that everything has its opportune time and that actions will be noticed after the implementation of the suggested works. He also believes that the implementation of the New Provincial System has yielded positive results during the last few years of its initiation. When the Governor was asked about the role of the New Provincial System in encouraging participation of the citizens in the local development process, he replied that Article 16 (paragraph E), stipulates the participation of the citizens through their representatives in the council. The members of Riyadh's provincial council can exert efforts for advancement of their governorates and districts in the various fields of socio-economic development.

The success of the Provincial Council depends on the extent of cooperation and coordination between the ministries and governmental departments on one hand, and the Provincial Council on the other hand. His Royal Highness believes that this cooperation and coordination is emphasized in Article 16 (paragraph D) of the Provincial System. He added that the actual reality and response of the concerned governmental departments to the needs of the citizens prove this cooperation. Moreover, the Governor stated that there is a close relationship between the council and the governorates, districts and localities of the province, and he claims that the council serves the whole province and not a particular part of it.

Regarding the cooperation and coordination of the Ministry of Interior with the Provincial Council, the chairman of Riyadh's Provincial

Council has shown that copies of the minutes and the recommendations made by the council are submitted to the Minister of Interior. Moreover, the Minister of Interior has an annual meeting with the provincial governors to discuss issues and problems facing the province, and to suggest possible solutions for such problems.

Finally, the Governor of Riyadh province is asked about the adoption of election procedure for the members of the council instead of the present procedure of appointment. The Governor of Riyadh province believes that the consultation is sufficient to accomplish developmental objectives, and that the selection of learned, experienced and competent nationals to the council proves to be a successful procedure. He thinks that the appointed members show high productivity and creativity.

It has been observed that some of the Arab countries depend on election as a mechanism to set up local councils on partial basis whereas other countries follow a policy of appointing the council members on a whole or partial basis, but without depriving these councils of their role in performing their assigned duties (Awadh, 1983: 6).

The researcher has interviewed one of the notable members of Riyadh Provincial Council about the New Administrative System (in April 1997). Dr. Al-Rwaished, (one of the 20 appointed nationals), is a lawyer who can provide a fair judgement on the new administrative system. Al-Rwaished described Riyadh's Provincial Council as a newly born institution that requires competent secretariat and well trained personnel to make the necessary follow-up for the decisions approved by the council, and he adds that the council has no financial capabilities. However, he



thinks that financial capability may be thought of at a latter stage, when the staff of the council become more efficient and familiar with the various functions of the council.

Regarding citizens' attendance at the meetings of the council, AL-Rwaished thinks it is too early because the majority of Saudi citizens are not familiar with fundamentals of debate and discussion. He suggests that citizens should be invited to submit their needs, complaints and suggestions to the council's secretariat. A press committee attached to the councils secretariat may help in sorting out the complaints and issues to be presented during the councils meetings.

Concerning the number of council's meetings, Al-Rwaished indicated that four sessions are not enough, specially for a large province like Riyadh. Much of the council's work is carried out through its specialised committees. The committees meet to consider and discuss issues and make recommendations. Furthermore, committee members themselves participate in preparing the agenda to be discussed during the council's meetings and make useful recommendations. Al-Rwaished emphasized the need for a committee to monitor and follow-up the decisions and recommendations submitted to the concerned ministries and governmental departments after being approved by the Provincial Council.

Asked if each governorate can have a council that belongs to the Provincial Council, Al-Rwaished said: "I think the social and political conditions of the country do not require the formation of a council for each governorate particularly in this period because the people have the

opportunity to submit their requests to the Provincial Councils. Executive authorities shall respond to a limited number of realistic requests due to the financial conditions. In this respect some will have an impression that some provinces are favoured to others. In future requests of governorates can be crystallised by head of localities or governor as a work paper from the notables of such governorate, and through field visits made by the members of Provincial Council which may yield good results”.

Al-Rwaished mentioned that there are continuous visits paid by council members to the governorates, in order to investigate citizens' complaints and requests, and to listen to the recommendation raised by governors and representatives of governmental departments there. This suggestion is supported by the fact that the structure and formation of the council took into account the representation of governorates to a great extent. It would be better if each governorate is represented by a member in the Provincial Council, because such member may be able to identify the problems and assess the needs of his governorate.

The researcher agrees with the useful recommendations of Al-Rwaished regarding the role of the mass media in linking the council with the general public. This linkage will create awareness of the people by addressing the problems and the developmental issues relating to citizens. It is also advisable that interested Saudi citizens should be allowed to attend the council's meetings. By doing so, the council's discussions can be moulded in the direction which may be of particular importance to the general public.

The discussions concerning the public should be published in the press and should be presented in other means of mass media. This will enable the provincial governments to make an objective analysis for the reaction of the general public towards developmental issues which will in the long run leads to valuable ideas and practical suggestions for the welfare of the people. Without such deep involvement of the mass media and the public, the desired objectives of the Provincial Council may not be achieved. Some members of Riyadh Provincial Council suggested a need for establishing a follow-up department to make the necessary follow-up for the recommendations approved by the Provincial Council.

The researcher has noticed that the council is concerned with the opinions and suggestions of the citizens regarding the quality of services provided to their localities. Riyadh Provincial Council agreed in one of its regular sessions, to open new channels for topics to be discussed in the councils committees. These channels will be the link between the council and the citizens and shall be presented as follows: (i) The council secretary after being reinforced with specialised staff shall receive all incoming citizens remarks, comments and suggestion relevant to any aspect of services reflected on citizens life and affairs via suggestion box. In case a topic is considered for discussion, the secretary has to study it thoroughly and refer it to the designated specialised committee, which in turn will forward it to the council for discussion and final approval. (ii) The secretary has to follow-up all issues presented in the mass media, and to pick the topics, that are worth discussion by the concerned committees.

### 9.3 Summary:

It can be concluded from the findings of chapter IX, that the majority of the respondents believe that the new Provincial System has an important role to play in promoting decentralised policies, in raising levels of local socio-economic development and in encouraging citizen's participation. However, it remains a great challenge for the newly established administrative system to achieve the above objectives by well-trained and qualified personnel working at all governmental levels. It is our belief that efficient local governments, with sufficient financial and administrative power, remain an effective means and tools through which great and important aspects of development can be achieved.

Furthermore, the findings of chapter IX shows that the members of the council are optimistic about the role of the Provincial Council in promoting the local development, meeting citizen's needs, and practising decentralised policies. The members of Riyadh Provincial Council and heads of governmental agencies believe that the system will achieve developmental objectives in terms of defining the province requirements as suggested in the national plan and in creating the useful projects for the province as shown in the annual budget, since the regulations of the new Provincial System grant the governors and the provincial councils autonomy in deciding priorities expenditure and developmental plans.

According to the responses of the council's members more than half of them believe that the new Provincial System may encourage citizens' participation in local development. However, it is the researcher's opinion that the establishment of the Provincial Councils following popular

demands symbolically makes room for hundreds of educated Saudis to claim a voice in running their communities. The analysis in the present chapter shows that the council members have emphasised the importance of co-ordination between the Provincial Council and the concerned ministries and governmental departments in order to achieve the council's objectives.

## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 10.1 Concluding Remarks.

The present chapter will be divided into two main sections: concluding remarks for the most important findings in the first section, and some recommendations in the second section. In the late eighties the administrative system in Saudi Arabia was highly centralised. The Ministry of Interior which is responsible for the administration at the provincial, governorates and districts levels, operated with highly centralised policies with regard to administrative and financial issues. However, in recent years the government of Saudi Arabia has realised the need for softening the rigid centralised administrative structure at various levels of government.

This new administrative policy, which attempts to move towards de-centralisation was crowned by the issuance of the Provincial System according to the Royal Decree No. A/92 (March 1992), revised by the Royal Decree No. A/21 (September 1993). This new administrative system attempts to provide linkages between districts, governorates and Provincial Councils in terms of local administrative hierarchy and in terms of the distribution of responsibilities.

The present study examines the various administrative systems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and compares them with the New Provincial System. The study also examines to what extent the new administrative

system encourages decentralised policies in Saudi Arabia, and how it contributes to raise the administrative efficiency and to improve local development in the various provinces of the Kingdom. The present thesis also examines the opinions of citizens, governmental officials, the Amir of Riyadh Province, members of Riyadh Provincial Council, regarding the role of the New Provincial System in providing, promoting and developing public services for the people.

The above research questions are addressed by various methodologies and research instruments, such as sample survey, questionnaires, interviews and content analysis. The survey based research used three different questionnaires to investigate the opinions of three groups of respondents (namely: citizens, government officials, and members of Riyadh Provincial Council), about the New Provincial System and its role in raising the level of administrative efficiency in the various governorates of Riyadh's province. The sizes of the three samples are 360, 150 and 25 for citizens, local officials, and members of Riyadh Provincial Council respectively. Interviews were conducted with the Amir of Riyadh province and government official who are directly involved in the implementation of the New Provincial System.

The present study has shown that the former administrative systems in Saudi Arabia include articles which encouraged centralisation by placing localities under the control of the central government. As a result, the regional governments could not exercise a considerable amount of freedom in decision-making process with regard to their power in selecting members of the councils and the preparation of budget. It has been argued in the present study, that the former administrative systems in Saudi Arabia

delegated the councils with consultative non-executive functions, leaving the legislative, executive and judiciary functions for the central government and for the Ministry of Interior.

The present study revealed that the former administrative systems in Saudi Arabia are generally unified, centralised and composed of rules and regulations which emphasise centralised administrative policies. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Assaf, Al-Awaji, shown earlier in chapter IV. For example, the study by Al-Awaji revealed that 82% of the government officials assured the existence of centralised administration in Saudi Arabia (Al-Awaji, 1971, 34). Also the study by Assaf indicated that the authorities entrusted by the legislator to local officials were very limited, and have led to release the pressure of responsibility on the central government (Assaf, 1982: 205). Moreover, the former administrative systems in Saudi Arabia did not encourage public participation through regional and Provincial Councils. Most of the regions and districts were administered by the central government.

The present study has revealed that the new Provincial System may have an important role in serving their local communities, specially when compared with the role played by the former administrative systems. The Saudi citizens believe that the new provincial system will raise the administrative capabilities of the local governments. One third of the citizens believe that the services provided to their localities are highly centralised. However, the majority of the citizens are not able to judge the extent of centralisation of services rendered to their local communities. An important difference between the new Provincial System and Nizam Al-Mokataat is that, the Provincial System has been applied, while the others have not. However, the implementation of the new Provincial System has



lifted the burden and responsibilities of administrative affairs from the central government. The planning for the provision of services became the responsibility of the provincial governments. As a result the approval and the implementation of developmental projects take less time compared with the situation prior to the new Provincial System.

The new Provincial System differs from the earlier administrative systems in regard to the coordination between the provincial governments and the governorates, through the regular meetings between the Amir (provincial governor) and the governorate governors. According to article 9 of the new Provincial System, the governor of the province should hold regular meetings with the governorate governors at least twice a year to discuss administrative issues and developmental projects in the various governorates of the province.

The implementation of the new Provincial System has led to direct contacts between the provincial governments and the various ministries at the national level. Before the implementation of the new administrative system, the provincial governors used to address the various ministries through the Ministry of Interior. Under the new administrative system the recommendations approved by the Provincial Council (after being studied by the specialised committees of the council), are sent to the concerned ministries and governmental departments, within a period not exceeding fifteen days, to be considered for implementation. However, the new Provincial System is still suffering from financial and administrative centralism. Provincial councils are still consultative and most of their suggestions and recommendations wait for execution according to higher authority vision.

The researcher has noticed that the recommendations and deliberations of the Provincial Council are not published in the mass media. They are attended only by members and some people specialised in certain areas, determined by the council, after the council chairman's approval. Most of the citizen's are not aware of what is happening during these meetings because the sessions are not covered by the mass media, and if something is written in the daily news papers, it's not more than determining the date of the meeting and the most important issues that were discussed by the Provincial Council.

However, the role of the Provincial Council remains to be a consultative one, and a lot of improvements need to be introduced in the new Provincial System. For example, elections for the members of the councils have to be introduced gradually, in order to insure real citizen's participation. It is worth noting here that the new Provincial System does not empower financial autonomy. The researcher believes that the Provincial Councils have to be given legislative role, as well as administrative and financial authorisation, to speed up the level of local development.

The researcher noticed that the Provincial Councils have no mechanism by which the councils determine the citizens' needs and requirements. Furthermore, the discussions during the council's sessions are not broad-casted or televised to the public, and this make the citizens less aware of the discussions by the council's members concerning their provinces. In addition, the new Provincial System did not include any article which entitles the public to attend the council's meetings.

The Saudi legislator has adopted the method of appointment for selecting the council's members. However, the researcher believes that this

method of appointment may restrict citizen's participation in expressing their viewpoints through their representatives in the Provincial Councils. If the citizens are allowed to participate in selecting the council's members, one may expect an effective role for the Provincial Councils.

The researcher also noticed that the new Provincial System does not define the exact duties and responsibilities of the district commissioners, and their roles in administering and developing their local units. It is worth noting here that these districts are the basic local units, which should be looked after in order to develop local administration in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The researcher had a chance to attend some of the meetings of Riyadh's Provincial Council. From these meetings the researcher has noticed that the process of the decision making takes a long cycle. After being reviewed and approved by the Provincial Council the agenda are passed to the specialised committees for detailed investigations and discussions. The specialised committees then come-up with the appropriate suggestions and recommendations. These suggestions are then raised to the concerning ministries and governmental departments, after being approved by the Provincial Council. This process shows that the role of the Provincial Councils is limited mainly to approving suggestions and recommendations formulated by its specialised committees regarding all the provincial affairs.

Although the new Provincial System, stated that the members of the provincial council should be selected from the various governorates of the province, yet most of the members are permanent residents of Riyadh City. The lack of representation for most of the governorates of Riyadh's

province defeats the issue of public participation raised by the new administrative system.

The present study has shown that the role of the Provincial Councils is mainly to raise recommendations regarding developmental issues and provision of services, to the ministry of interior, which in turn submits these recommendations to the concerned ministries and governmental departments. Moreover, the local administrative units have no independent resources to implement its projects. The researcher believes that the authorities given to the provincial governor and the Provincial Council under the new Provincial System, are not more than additional managerial responsibilities with no real delegation of power, because the final decision will be taken by higher authorities, such as the concerned ministries or the council of ministers.

One of the obstacles facing the new Provincial System in Saudi Arabia is the insufficient power delegated to officials working for local governments. Three quarters of the government officials have limited administrative and financial power. The reorganisation of such responsibilities cannot be accomplished without administrative and financial delegation of power to the authorities of local governments.<sup>(1)</sup>

## **10.2 Recommendations:**

Although the new Provincial System issued in 1992, is considered as a step forward towards decentralisation, and towards improving

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(1) Dessler believes that delegation of responsibilities is essential in order to achieve decentralization 1993: 286).

administrative efficiency in Saudi Arabia, the new administrative system has to consider the various problems and difficulties facing its application. There is more room for improvement regarding the new Provincial System in many issues, such as delegation of power, public participation, defining community needs, and political participation. Here are a few recommendations which may help the new administrative system in meeting its objectives:

- (1) Heads of governmental departments, governors of governorates and district commissioners have to be given adequate financial and administrative power to enhance their performance. Such delegation of power in administrative and financial matters, may help in promoting the services needed for the welfare of the people.
- (2) The present study calls for more cooperation and coordination among the Provincial Councils, governorates and districts. This coordination may be achieved by various means, such as: (i) council members have to pay frequent visits to the governorates and districts to discuss developmental programmes, and assess citizens' needs; (ii) some governorates' governors should be given a chance to attend council's meetings; (iii) formation of committees at governorate level, headed by one of the council members. Such committees may strengthen the relationship between the provincial council and local governments. Such committees will facilitate the various means of coordination between the Provincial Council and the local governments regarding their needs for schools, health centers, roads and other services.
- (3) There is a need for establishing an information center at the provincial headquarters. Such centre will supply planners, policy makers,

governmental officials and researchers with the needed social, economic and demographic statistics and information. Moreover, the secretariat of the Provincial Council has to recruit capable and efficient personnel to perform properly the various activities of the council, and to exchange information among the council, concerned ministries and local governments.

- (4) The researcher recommends the establishment of councils at the governorates and districts levels to enable these geographical units to play their developmental role. These new councils will help the present Provincial Councils in submitting the needs of the governorates and districts to the Ministry of Interior or any concerned ministry responsible for the implementation developmental issues.
- (5) The representation of ministries and governmental departments in the Provincial Councils has to be increased to include representatives of important ministries, such as Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning. The inclusion of representatives from these Ministries will help in allocating the exact budget needed for the project approved by the council.
- (6) The council should meet on monthly basis instead of quarterly basis, specially for provinces such as Riyadh province which has a large population and diversified socio-economic issues. The researcher has recently noticed that some of the increasing issues and complaints raised to the Provincial Councils for discussion, are usually postponed due to lack of time.
- (7) There is a need for establishing a follow-up committee at each Provincial Council to follow-up the various recommendations

approved by the Council. This follow-up committees will be responsible for the implementation of the decisions, and will look into the reasons behind delays and rejections.

- (8) It will be useful if developmental issues discussed by the Provincial Councils are published in the press. This will enable the council to make objective analysis of citizens feelings, and to know their reactions towards fundamental issues of development, which may lead to the welfare of the people.
- (9) To ensure a proper implementation of the new Provincial System, competent, capable and qualified governors and district commissioners should be elected.
- (10) It is important to expand the activities of the Department of Provincial Affairs (at the Ministry of Interior), to include coordination and cooperation among the provinces, Provincial Councils, various ministries and governmental departments. Such role of coordination and cooperation will help the Provincial Council to follow-up their various projects with the concerned ministries of governmental departments.
- (11) For achieving social and economic development goals, there is paramount necessity for securing means of reliance on local resources, whether human or financial. The developmental process can not be accomplished by depending only on the central employment and traditional annual financing from the central budget.
- (12) It may be concluded that one of the challenges facing the implementation of the new Provincial System is that the delegation of power to officials working in local governments is still limited. Most

of the people working in governorates and districts lack administrative as well as financial power. They still have to refer to the provincial capital or to the various ministries and governmental agencies for approval of financial and administrative matters. In order to raise the level of administrative efficiency in the various levels of local government the legislator has to let government officials have access to power in administrative and financial issues. Such power can help them in performing their duties properly and efficiently.

### **10.3 Further Studies:**

It has been noticed that the application of the new Provincial System has faced administrative, as well as financial difficulties that need to be investigated. The researcher has noticed that most of the local governments, at provincial, governorate and district levels, have no financial authority regarding developmental projects and provision of services. These local governments have to refer to the central government for financial approval. Further studies have to investigate means and methods of improving the efficiency of personnel working in local governments.

It has been mentioned in chapter III that, the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs is responsible for planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of infrastructure and municipal services as well as on going comprehensive urban planning of cities, villages and "Higars".<sup>(2)</sup> Further studies have to examine the relationship between

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(2) Higars are residential settlement for nomads which have been established by the late King Abdul Azia.



the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, and the Department of Provincial Affairs in the Ministry of Interior, in order to enhance the means of co-ordination and cooperation between these ministries.

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# **Appendix I**

## **Questionnaires**

QUESTIONNAIRE

No. (1)

Citizen's Questionnaire

DECENTRALIZATION IN SAUDI ARABIA:  
THE ROLE OF PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

Abdul Mohsen M. Reshoud

Riyadh, September 1996





- (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) Do not know
- (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
13. I believe that the New Provincial System will encourage citizen's participation in the voluntary committees and various non-governmental organizations.
- (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) Do not know
- (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
14. Do the local authorities at the districts and governorates allow the citizens to participate in defining the needs and in solving the problems at your locality?
- (1) Always  (2) Sometimes  (3) Rarely  (4) Never
15. The New Provincial System adopts decentralization with respect to the services rendered to your locality:
- (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) Do not know
- (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
16. Are there enough educational services in your locality to meet the necessary requirements of citizens?
- (1) Sufficient  (2) To some extent  (3) Insufficient
- (4) There are no such services
17. Are you satisfied with the educational services rendered in your locality?
- (1) Completely satisfied  (2) Satisfied  (3) To some extent
- (4) Dissatisfied  (5) Completely dissatisfied
18. Are there enough health services in your locality to meet the necessary requirements of citizens?
- (1) Sufficient  (2) To some extent
- (3) Insufficient  (4) There are no such services
19. Are you satisfied with the health services rendered to your locality?
- (1) Completely satisfied  (2) Satisfied  (3) To some extent
- (4) Dissatisfied  (5) Completely dissatisfied
20. Are there enough paved roads in your locality for communication with neighbouring provinces.
- (1) Sufficient  (2) To some extent
- (3) Insufficient  (4) There are no such services
21. Are you satisfied with services of roads?
- (1) Completely satisfied  (2) Satisfied  (3) To some extent
- (4) Dissatisfied  (5) Completely dissatisfied
22. How sufficient are the cleaning services rendered by local authorities?
- (1) Sufficient  (2) To some extent
- (3) Insufficient  (4) There are no such services
23. Are you satisfied with the cleaning services provided to your locality?

- (1) Completely satisfied  (2) Satisfied  (3) To some extent  (4)   
 Dissatisfied  (5) Completely dissatisfied
24. The above services (education, health, roads, cleaning ... etc.) provided to your locality are highly centralized?  
 (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) To some extent    
 (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
25. Do you think that local authorities undertake their responsibilities with the required efficiency?  
 (1) Always  (2) Sometimes  (3) Rarely  (4) Never
26. Appointment of the provincial council members helps select the capable and qualified elements to design programmes and developmental policies for the country.  
 (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) Do not know    
 (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
27. The local authorities have limited capabilities to solve the problems relating to the provision of services in your locality?  
 (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) To some extent    
 (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
28. The local authorities have limited power that adversely affect the performance of their duties.  
 (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) To some extent    
 (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
29. Administrative decision making procedures in your locality are time consuming?  
 (1) Strongly agree  (2) Agree  (3) To some extent    
 (4) Disagree  (5) Strongly disagree
30. Do your governorates and districts respond to your suggestions concerning the solution of problems of services in your locality?  
 (1) Always respond  (2) Sometimes respond  (3) Rarely respond   
 (4) Never respond
31. If the administrative authorities supervising the administration of your locality do not respond to your requests for any reason, what is the authority you refer your requests to?  
 (1) Ministry of Interior  (2) Province Governor  (3) Governorate    
 (4) Other authorities (please specify).....
32. From your point of view what are the difficulties facing governorates and districts to fulfill the needs of your province? .....
33. Do you have any comments on the following:  
 A) Provincial System.....  
 B) Provincial Council.....  
 C) The governorate (you belong to).....  
 D) The district (you belong to).....

Questionnaire No. (2)  
For  
Those Working in Governorates and Districts

DECENTRALIZATION IN THE KINGDOM  
OF SAUDI ARABIA: THE ROLE OF THE  
NEW SYSTEM OF PROVINCIAL COUNCILS  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RIYADH  
PROVINCE

Prepared by  
Abdul Mohsen Mohammed Al-Reshood

Riyadh, November 1995

1. How old are you in full years? ..... year
2. What is your current occupation in governorate/ district? .....
3. What is the nature of your job?
  - a) Administrative
  - b) Supervisory
  - c) Technical
  - d) Clerical
  - e) Other (specify)
4. How long have you been in your current job in years? ..... years
5. Marital Status
  - a) Married
  - b) Single
  - c) Divorced
  - d) Widower
6. What are your educational qualifications? .....
  - a) Below the elementary level
  - b) Completed the elementary level
  - c) Completed the preparatory level
  - d) Completed the secondary level
  - e) Completed University and higher institute
  - f) Completed post graduate studies
7. Is your current job related to the works of provincial council? \*\*
  - a) Yes
  - b) To some extent
  - c) No
8. In your opinion, what is the nature of the relationship between your work and the work of the provincial council?
 

.....

.....

.....
9. Does your job require specific authority to carry your responsibilities?
  - a) Yes
  - b) To some extent
  - c) No

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\*\* The council refers to Riyadh provincial council located in Riyadh Emirate.

10. Do you have sufficient power to carry your responsibilities?

a) Yes  c) No

b) To some extent

11. Do you have such power in administrative issues?

a) Yes  c) No

b) To some extent

12. If the power given to you is not sufficient, does that affect your work negatively?

a) Yes

b) To some extent

c) No

13. Are you familiar with the provincial system and the provincial council founded in 1412H and modified in 1414H?

a) Yes

b) To some extent

c) No

14. Do you think that the provincial council has an important role in motivating officials in ministries and governmental departments to solve the problems of people and meet their needs?

a) Important role  b) Average role

c) Limited  d) No

15. Do you think that this system and the provincial council have an important role in decentralization?

a) Important role  b) Average role

c) Limited role  d) No role

16. Do you think that the new provincial system and provincial council have a role in supporting the local development in provinces?

a) Important role  b) Average role

c) Limited role  d) No role

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17. Do you think that the provincial system can achieve development goals more than the previous systems?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

18. Do you think that the provincial councils will lead the inhabitants of provinces, governorates, and districts to participate in the local development process?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

19. Do you think that the provincial councils have an obvious role in meeting the needs of the citizens through coordination with concerned ministries and government departments?

a) Important  b) To some extent  c) No

20. Is there any coordination and cooperation between your governorates/districts and the council of Riyadh?

a) Yes

b) Limited coordination and cooperation

c) No coordination or cooperation

21. What is the nature of this coordination and cooperation?

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

Questionnaire No. ( 3 )

For

Officials working in Ministries and  
Governmental Departments.

DECENTRALIZATION IN SAUDI ARABIA:  
THE ROLE OF THE NEW SYSTEM OF  
PROVINCIAL COUNCILS WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO RIYADH PROVINCE.

Prepared by

Abdul Mohsen Mohammed Al-Reshood

Riyadh, July 1995





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9. Does your job require specific authority to carry your responsibilities?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

10. Do you have sufficient power to carry your responsibilities?

a) Yes  b) Partial  c) No

11. Are you familiar with the provincial system and the provincial council issued in 1412H and modified in 1414H?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

12. Do you think that the provincial system and the provincial council have an important role in decentralization?

a) Important role  b) Average role   
c) Limited role  d) No role

13. Do you think that the provincial system and provincial have an important role in motivating officials in ministries and governmental departments to solve the problems of people and meet their needs?

a) Important role  b) Average role   
c) Limited role  d) No role

14. Do you think that the new provincial system and provincial council have a role in supporting the local development in provinces?

a) Important role  b) Average role   
c) Limited role  d) No role

15. Do you think that the provincial system achieve development goals more than the previous systems?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

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16. Do you think that the provincial councils will lead the inhabitants of provinces, governorates, and districts to participate in the local development process?

a) Yes  b) To some extent  c) No

17. Do you think that the provincial councils have an obvious role in meeting the needs of the citizens through coordination with concerned ministries and government departments?

a) Important  b) To some extent  c) No

18. Is there any coordination and cooperation between your ministries and the council of Riyadh?

a) Yes

b) Limited coordination and cooperation

c) No coordination or cooperation

19. What is the nature of this coordination and cooperation?

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

20. Do you have any comments about the provincial system and the provincial councils?

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

## **Appendix II**

### **Methods of Sample Selection**

## Appendix II

### Methods of Sample Selection

The sample size of any study depends on various factors. The most important of these factors are: (a) the cost of data collection, (b) the efficiency of data collection and precision, and (c) the objectives of the study (Sudma: 1976: 69). Taking these factors into account the most appropriate sample size and sampling procedure for the two groups of citizens and local governmental officials is as follows:

**Table (1)**

**The breakdown of population in  
Riyadh province by sex and nationality :  
- 1992 Census -**

Nationality \ Sex	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Saudi	1,341,594	1,272,321	2,613,915
Non-Saudis	881,909	339,162	1,221,071
	2,223,503	1,611,483	3,834,986

Source: Department of Statistics, Preliminary Findings of the 1992 Census of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The data in table (1) shows the distribution of the population of Riyadh province by sex and nationality. The total population of Riyadh province is about 3.84 millions, constituting 22.65% of the total population of the Kingdom. The Saudi population in Riyadh province is

about 2.61 millions, constituting 21.24% of the total Saudi population of the Kingdom. It can be deduced from table (1) that the Saudi male population is slightly higher than Saudi female population; i.e. 1.34 and 1.27 millions males and females respectively.

The 1992 census shows that Saudi male population aged 20 years and over is about 52% of the total Saudi male population. Since the present study is limited to the Saudi male population, the sampled population will be selected from 697,629 persons, aged 20 years and over. The following formula has been used to estimate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{4p(100-p)XD}{(\textit{precision required})^2}$$

Where “n” stands for the sample size, “p” stands for the percentage of those reporting that the “New Provincial System” will promote decentralization policy in the pilot survey.

“D” stands for an estimate of the design effect.

$$n = \frac{4(35)(100-35) 1}{(5)^2}$$

n = 364 respondents

The sampling procedure is a multi-stage sampling technique. The data shown in table (2) shows that there are 19 governorates and 346 districts in Riyadh province. First, a number of five governorates will be

selected from the 19 governorates in Riyadh province by simple random sampling. Secondly, a number of thirty districts will be selected from the five governorates proportional to the size of districts in each governorate using simple random sampling. Finally about 364 respondents will be selected from the thirty districts using simple random sampling.

**Table (2)**  
**Governorates and Districts in Riyadh Province**

Governorates	Districts	
Diriyah	3	
Dwadmi	89	
Kwaiyah	55	
Wadi Al Dwasir	32	
Majmaah	32	
Kharj	22	
Aflaj	22	
Shagra	16	
Al Hotah	8	
Alzolfi	4	
Romah	11	
Afif	9	
Horaimila	9	
Thadiq	8	
Mozahmiah	8	
Alsolaile	7	
Dharama	3	
Algadh	2	
Al Harih	2	
Total	346**	

\*\* There are five districts reporting to the capital of Riyadh province.

Another sample of 150 local officials is selected from 3,115 persons working in the 19 governorates. The sample of the local officials is selected, by simple random sampling from the nationals working in the five selected governorates.



## **Appendix III**

### **Findings of the Pilot Survey**

## Appendix III

### Findings of the Pilot Survey

The sample for the pilot survey consists of 63 questionnaires distributed among the two groups of respondents: 51 questionnaires for the citizens and 12 for the local officials working at the governorates and the districts. The following are the most important observations and valuable findings of the pilot survey.

- 1- The Pilot Survey shows that most of the Saudi citizens have not heard of the "New Provincial System" and its usefulness in promoting decentralization policies in Saudi Arabia. As a result, the responses for some of the questions in this regard are of little value for the present study. This could be attributed to a number of reasons: (a) the lack of citizen participation and involvement in policy making, (b) the relatively low level of education, specially among rural population, (c) the limited role of the mass media in explaining how the new "Provincial System" is important for providing services for the citizens, and meeting their needs.
- 2- The researcher has noticed that the screening questions have negatively affected the answers to the consequent questions. Consequently, they have been deleted.
- 3- Some of the governmental officials were very conservative in releasing information about the "New Provincial System". They tried not to be very critical about this new system. However, the responses of others were very useful for the present study.

- 4- Some of the respondents believe that the "Provincial System" is a new experience to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, therefore, it will be difficult for them to evaluate this new administrative system at this early stage.
- 5- The Pilot Survey shows a need for additional questions regarding the administrative and the financial power given to the provincial councils. These questions are added at a later stage to the questionnaire of the governmental officials.
- 6- Some of the questions have been re-stated to avoid confusion and inconsistency in responses. Other questions are corrected for spelling and other typing mistakes.
- 7- According to the findings of the pilot survey and the useful observations made by my academic advisor, minor modifications and corrections were made in the questionnaire for the officials. However, major modifications were made for the citizen's questionnaire: Some questions were deleted and added while others were re-phrased in order to avoid ambiguity and confusion. The final version of the two questionnaires were fully translated into Arabic, and only the Arabic version of the questionnaires were distributed among the two groups of respondents.

Table (1) shows that 50% of the governmental officials working at the governorates and the districts are not fully delegated to perform their duties, and about 33% of them exercise very limited powers. These high percentages indicate that the administration at local government is still highly centralized in many parts of Saudi Arabia. These findings mean that the new provincial system tends to delegate the administrative

authorities to the provincial councils, instead of expanding decentralization policies to governorates and districts. It can also be concluded from table (1) that the majority of those respondents think that the limited delegation of powers has no negative effect on their duties and responsibilities (66.7%). This may be attributed to the fact that the officials working at governorates and districts are not fully aware of the new administrative system, so they may not be in position to judge the effect of limitation of power on their performance.

Table (2) shows the percentage distribution of officials working at the governorates and the districts according to their opinions towards the role of the provincial councils in solving citizen's problems and promoting decentralization policies in Saudi Arabia. It can be revealed from the data in Table (2) that about 50% of the respondents either think that the new administrative system has no role (33.3%), or have limited role in solving citizen's problems (16.7%). These percentages are even higher regarding "the role of the new provincial system in promoting decentralization policies", reaching 58.3%. The findings of the pilot survey also show that about 58% of the respondents think that the new provincial system has either limited role (8.3%), or no role (50.0%) in enhancing local development, and in achieving better development at the local governments. The fact that about 50% of the respondents believe that the new provincial system has either limited or no role in solving citizen's problems, and in promoting decentralization policies may be attributed to the recency of implementing the new administrative system in Saudi Arabia.

The second group of respondents, namely the citizens, were asked in the pilot survey about the availability of services at the local level, and the citizen's satisfactions of these services. These services include education, health and disposal of wastes. The findings are shown in tables (3) and (4) respectively. Table (3) shows that 25.5%, 7.8% and 35.3% of the respondents believe that the availability of educational, health and wastes' disposal services are sufficient. On the other hand, 27.5%, 58.9% and 29.4% of the respondents believe that these services are not sufficient. Table (4) shows that low proportions of citizens are satisfied with the present services provided by the local governments. These percentages are 17.6%, 13.7%, 33.3% and 27.5% for the educational, health, roads and wastes' disposal services respectively. The percentages are higher for people with limited satisfaction; the percentages being 60.8%, 29.4%, 51.0% and 52.9% for educational services, health services, roads and waste's disposal services respectively.

The citizens were asked in the pilot survey about the department to which their complaints are submitted. The majority of the citizens (58.8%) still believe that the most effective way of solving their problems is to submit their complaints to either the central government (Ministry of Interior) or to the provincial government (Emarah). By doing so they ignore the role of the local government at the governorates and districts levels. The percentages of respondents submitting their complaints to the Ministry of Interior and to the provincial government are 35.2% and 23.6% respectively. These findings are consistent with our earlier conclusion that most of the people are unaware of the objectives of the new administrative system.

**Table (1)**

The percentage distribution of officials working at the governorates and the districts, according to the extent of powers delegated to them.  
(Pilot Survey)

Extent of power delegated	Are you fully delegated to perform your duties?	Do you think that the limited delegation of power negatively affects your performance?
Yes	16.7%	25.0%
To some extent	33.3%	8.3%
No	50.0%	66.7%
Total	100.0% (12)	100.0% (12)

**Table (2)**

The percentage distribution of officials working at the governorates and districts level, according to their opinions towards the role of the provincial councils in solving citizen's problems, and in promoting decentralization policies.

(Pilot Survey)

The extent of the role	Role in solving citizen's problems	Role in decentralization policies. (%)
Important role	50.0%	41.7%
Limited role	16.7%	8.3%
No role	33.3%	50.0%
Total	100.0% (12)	100.0% (12)

**Table (3)**

The percentage distribution of respondents according to the availability of services in the governorates and districts.  
(Pilot Survey)

Extent of availability	Educational services		Health Services		Disposal of Wastes	
	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%
Sufficient services	13	25.5%	4	7.8%	18	35.3%
Sufficient to some extent	24	47.1%	17	33.3%	18	35.3%
Not sufficient	14	27.5%	30	58.9%	15	29.4%
Total	51	100.0%	51	100.0%	51	100.0%

**Table (4)**

The percentage distribution of the respondents according to their satisfaction of the services provided by the governorates and districts.

Extent of satisfaction	Educational Services		Health Services		Roads		Disposal of Wastes	
	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%	Frequencies	%
Satisfied	94	17.6%	7	13.7%	18	35.3%	14	27.5%
Satisfied to some extent	31	60.8%	15	29.4%	26	51.0%	27	52.9%
Not satisfied	11	21.6%	29	56.9%	7	13.7%	10	19.6%
Total	51	100.0%	51	100.0%	51	100.0%	51	100.0%

**Table (5)**

The percentage distribution of the respondents according to the governmental departments to which complaints of citizens are submitted.

Governmental Departments	Number	Percentage (%)
Emarah (at the province)	12	23.6%
Governorates	9	17.7%
The district's authority	9	17.6%
Ministry of Interior	18	35.2%
Other departments	3	5.9%
Total	51	100.0%



## Appendix IV

Nezam Al-Omara Wa Al-Majalis Al-Edariah  
(GOVERNORS AND LOCAL COUNCIL REGULATIONS)

APPENDIX ~~IV~~

NEZAM AL-OMARA WA AL-MAJALIS AL EDARIAH

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

No. 41/1/1

His Majesty the King's Office

Date 15/1/1359 A.H.

Attached = 9

Subject: Nezam Al-Omara Wa Al-Majalis Al-Edariah  
(Princes and Managerial Councils)  
Regulations

His Royal Highness the Viceroy of His Majesty the King  
Respected.

In reference to note No. 471 dated 6/11/1358 A.H. regarding Nezam Al-Omara wa Al-Majalis Al-Edariah (Princes and Managerial Councils) Regulations, I am honored to inform Your Highness that His Majesty the King has worked some changes in the regulation done by the consultative council. Attached herewith you will find the changed regulation, approved by His Majesty the King. Please inform all whom it concerns to deal accordingly. God save you.

Chief of His Majesty the King's Office

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

His Majesty the King's Office

NEZAN AL-OMARA

1. Al-Omara are the administrative governors.
2. In each area an administrative governor is appointed and named Amir of that area.
3. Al-Omara are responsible (according to the authorizations concerning them) for the areas under their control, every one on the limit of his area; and they are to execute the Islamic rules and adhere to the regulation.
4. The reference for all villages and tribes is Al-Amir.
5. Al-Omara are to look after the work and affairs concerning the areas they supervise, in the following ways:
  - a) Affairs that concern Islamic courts must be referred to them if they are in the urban or the nomadic areas;
  - b) All affairs without regulation, instructions, or orders, concerning the urban or the nomadic areas, must be delivered to the administrative council;
  - c) Matters that concern official government agencies or management branches must be passed to it;
  - d) All correspondence, orders, and decisions that he receives must be passed to the chief of his office to take necessary action (i.e., registration, pass, or retain) by concerned branches in the office.

The most important aims of which Al-Amir must take extreme care in his area are:

- 1) To conform to Islamic rules, in himself and in his work;
- 2) To demonstrate Islamic behavior, personal money and public rights;
- 3) To do the best to develop the area economically and physically;

- 4) To supervise the public health, develop it, and ensure all possible protection against disease among people or animals;
  - 5) To give assistance and care in obtaining the state money and keeping its properties according to Islamic laws and regulations. Al-Amir must do his best to put justice between people and anyone who seeks his rights;
  - 6) To prepare reports from time to time for any improvements that are considered important for public convenience as well as any other development work in the country, in consultation with the authorized branches in his area;
  - 7) To not interfere in any way in the affairs of the government agencies; that is, to not break rules and regulations or to seize their authority.
6. Al-Amir must supervise and control the regulations and instructions in all government agencies and commissions within his area.
  7. Regarding Point 5 in Item 5, if Al-Amir finds any defect in any of the government agencies in his area and he does not have the right to directly intervene and correct this defect, he must notify the chief of the agency mentioned, and ask him to take necessary action; and if this does not prove successful he must report the matter to his superior. But if the defect was in a place connected directly to him, he must correct it immediately within the limits of the approved regulation.
  8. Al-Amir is not allowed to see the secrets in cables or mail unless he is ordered to do so.
  9. Any complaint in the appendages is to be presented to Al-Amir each in the limit of his area; if it is from people of the urban areas, it must be turned to specialized places to carry out necessary action, if it is of a management, rights, or criminal nature. If it is from people of the nomadic areas, the people must be asked to come and turn them over in writing to the Islamic court. Any of them can send his representative if the areas are different. Regulations must be carried out. Decisions of the courts must be raised to Al-Amir for action.

10. If the problem is balanced, Al-Amir can solve it according to the acceptance of two sides. The solutions must be fair.
11. If necessary Al-Amir can discipline or arrest when reasonable need is present, such as with corruption, hunting of others, and doings against security. If the accusation is false, or his reasons were not satisfactory, or his action was not right, Al-Amir will hold responsibility. Discipline and arrest must be through police.
12. Al-Amir must build justice and equality among the people. He must give mercy to small people, and respect the old and the chiefs.
13. Al-Amir is fully responsible for any corruption, defect, or injustice in his area.
14. Al-Amir must follow up all matters, regulations, and instructions concerning him.
15. Al-Amir is not allowed to interfere in Islamic court affairs, finance or fees with regard to Items 7 and 27.
16. Al-Amir must be careful of what occurs in his area in public circumstances, particularly anything against security, and to reach criminal people and report these to his higher authorities; otherwise he will be responsible.
17. Al-Amir is not allowed to be a merchant or to buy and sell.
18. Al-Amir is not allowed to use his position as the Governor for his own purposes, and is not to use police for personal affairs.
19. Al-Amir is not allowed to set aside areas for his animals unless this area belongs to His Majesty the King or by high order the area is appointed therefor.
20. Al-Amir is bound to his area; if any criminal, thief, etc. escapes to another area, Al-Amir must write to Al-Amir of the other area to safely return him to justice. Otherwise he must report to his higher authorities.
21. Regarding any offenses committed by Al-Amir's relatives or anyone working with him, the one who commits the

offense is responsible in the first degree and Al-Amir in the second degree if he agreed or did not prevent the offender from doing it, as any other person.

22. All people working with Al-Amir are forbidden to take any money against service for people in the government by any means or in kind; otherwise Al-Amir is responsible.
23. A highly skilled and competent administrator is to be appointed as an assistant to Amir Al-Madinah, Jiddah, Abha, Jizan, or any other widespread area with many imarates attached to it.
24. Each and every prince must forward all complaints of the people to Al-Majalis Al-Edariah (the administrative councils) to study and deliberate on them; also, to give consideration to complaints concerning Islamic courts.
25. Correspondence must be scrutinized by Al-Amir and all regulations, orders, and instructions must be delivered to the head of his office for registration. Al-Amir must sign all correspondence which is to be detained or delayed. His staff must be qualified. The head of the office must organize correspondence and Al-Amir has overall responsibility. For any irregularity arising out of correspondence within the limit of his authority or anything against regulations and instructions, Al-Amir will be answerable. If any correspondence is to be detained or delayed, his office must give him a monthly list of such correspondence.
26. Any Amir who is going to replace another must receive and inspect all regulations and instructions, and understand them for his day-to-day administration.
27. Heads of government agencies must obey the orders of Al-Amir concerning management of the town, within the limit of the regulation.

#### Al-Majalis Al-Edariah

28. In any government area there must be an administrative council to carry out the job pertinent to the area, its towns and villages, and all official affairs as per regulations.
29. The administrative council consists of from four to eight members.

30. The administrative council is headed by Al-Amir or his representative from the members.
31. Period of membership in the council is two years.
32. The members of the administrative councils must have the following qualifications:
  - a) They must be of Saudi nationality;
  - b) Their ages must be not less than 25 years;
  - c) They must have the necessary experience and knowledge;
  - d) They must not have been convicted of a felony and must not be financially bankrupt;
  - e) They must be of good character.
33. Membership, when not occupied in one of the councils, the one who follows that member has to have obtained the majority in second class and he must have had hand of voices.
34. The election of the managerial councils in the Kingdom takes place every two years during the month of Rajab; and this month is the time to renew the election in every turn. Members can be reelected.

Responsibilities and Powers  
of the Administrative Council

35. To supervise application of government regulations and instructions in all government offices;
36. To investigate all complaints filed against employees, unless such complaints are within the jurisdiction of the Shariah courts;
37. To investigate all tenders, contracts, and fees payable to government departments, municipalities, Akwaf, Ein Alzarga (in Al-Madinah), and Ein Alwazeereya (in Jiddah), in relation to matters which are within the boundaries of the area, and approve such matters if they are in the public interest;
38. To investigate all public local projects and submit reports on such projects to the Viceroy's Office through the imarah.

39. To inquire as to all means of catering to the welfare of citizens and visitors;
40. To investigate all disputes between citizens in all matters relating to administration, finance and real estate, provided that these matters are not within the jurisdiction of the Shariah courts;
41. To review the budgets and annual expenses of offices having independent treasuries, and submit the necessary reports;
42. To review all decisions of official concern related to the imarah, and submit the necessary reports;
43. To issue licenses required for initiating financial and construction projects in the area;
44. To review additional funds which are to be added during the year to the budgets referred to in Article 41 above;
45. To investigate contracts with companies and merchants to purchase or sell government items;
46. To give utmost care and attention to construction works, city planning, and promotion of agriculture, and to encourage farmers by all legitimate means to sustain or increase their production, and to help all national bodies perform their duties;
47. To draw the imarah's attention to any discrepancy in the application of notified orders and regulations, and if Al-Amir does not attend to the matter, it shall be the council's duty to refer the matter to the Supreme Authority;
48. Members who are unable to attend the council's meetings for excusable reasons, should notify the council of their absence in writing, stating their extenuating reasons; and
49. After deliberations on any matter being presented to the council for discussion, the Chairman should ask the attendees whether any one of them has something to say on the matter. If none of them has anything to say, the discussions should be closed.



APPENDIX V

NIZAM AL-MOKATAAT  
"PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS"

APPENDIX **V**  
"NIZAM AL-MOKATAAT"  
PROVINCIAL REGULATIONS

ROYAL DECREE

No. 12  
21/5/1383 A.H.

We, Saud Ben Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, King of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom.

After reviewing the Articles 19 and 20 of the Regulation of the Council of Ministers issued by Royal Decree No. 38, dated 22/10/1377 A.H., and according to the decision of the Council of Ministers No. 419, dated 13/5/1383 A.H., and according to what was submitted to us by the Prime Minister, we appoint the following:

- Firstly: The approval of the province regulation in the form attached herewith;
- Secondly: This regulation is to be applied within nine months of the date of its publication; and
- Thirdly: For the Prime Minister and Minister, each in his jurisdiction, to execute this decree.

The Royal Signature.

Saud

## Provincial Regulation

### PART ONE

#### The Local Administrative Divisions

##### ARTICLE ONE:

The Saudi Arabian Kingdom is composed administratively of provinces. When defining them, geographical, inhabitants, the circumstances of the community, the necessities of security, the means of communications should be put into consideration. To fulfill the aforementioned composition and definition, a decision of the Council of Ministers is issued according to a recommendation made by the Ministry of the Interior. The province is attached to the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

Every province is divided into divisions and every division consists of a town or more, or of a town and a number of adjacent villages, and that is according to the proposal of the Minister of the Interior and the approval of the Council of Ministers, and every division is divided into districts. A district may include a town or a number of neighboring villages.

##### ARTICLE TWO:

The provinces are considered when experiencing their powers a fictitious persons, represented in this concern by the councils of provinces. That is to be in accordance with the terms and conditions determined by this regulation.

### PART TWO

#### The Administrative Governors

##### CHAPTER ONE

#### The Rules of Employment Concerning the Administrative Governors

### ARTICLE THREE:

For each province a governor is appointed to be the administrative head of the province, and to represent the government in it. The Minister of the Interior nominates him, and his appointment is made by a Royal Order according to the proposal made by the Prime Minister. The governors of provinces stand before His Majesty the King before they proceed to their jobs to vow that they will be loyal to their religion, to their country, and to their King, and to perform their duties truthfully and honestly.

### ARTICLE FOUR:

A deputy governor is appointed in every province, to help the governor in his work, and to act on behalf of him in his absence, and to be responsible to him. The deputy governor performs the duties specified in this regulation for the governor, and that is in the governorate that includes the headquarters of the province. The appointment of the deputy governor is made by a decision of the Council of Ministers according to a proposal made by the Minister of the Interior.

### ARTICLE FIVE:

A commissioner is appointed for every division, he is tied to the governor of the province and he acts on his behalf in the administration of the division. Commissioners are appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers according to a proposal made by the Minister of the Interior.

### ARTICLE SIX:

A district commissioner is appointed for every district, tied to the commissioner and acts on behalf of him in the district administration. The grades, as well as the appointments of the district commissioners, are determined and made respectively by the decision of the Interior Minister in accordance with the importance of the districts, and according to the regulation based on the nomination made by the concerned governor.

### ARTICLE SEVEN:

The rules determined by the Public Employee's Regulation are effective on the Administrative Governors unless a different rule is determined in this regulation or in any other one.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Jurisdiction of the Administrative Governors and Their Duties

#### ARTICLE EIGHT:

The governors administer the province in accordance with the rules determined in this regulation as well as in any other effective regulations, by-laws, decisions, orders, and instructions issued by the concerned authorities, and in accordance with the general policy of the Kingdom. They are particularly in charge of the following duties:

- A. The execution of the legal judgments if they reach their final stage according to the judicial regulations.
- B. Maintain peace and order in the province, and take the necessary preventive steps in accordance with the regulations.
- C. Cooperate with the Council of the Province, and with representatives of the Ministries for the protection of public health, raising the standard of medical services, reviving education, taking care of agriculture, irrigation, communications, labor, commerce, industry, municipal affairs, and other public services in the province.
- D. Warrant the rights of individuals and their liberties, and avoid taking any step that affects these rights and liberties, but within the limits of the law.
- E. Supervise the administration of divisions and districts, and control the work of the commissioners and district commissioners, to ensure the efficiency of their administration.
- F. Make inspection visits for the province affairs and submit periodical reports to the Minister of the Interior on those matters within their jurisdiction.
- G. Assist the departments concerned in collecting government funds due to be paid by individuals, companies, organizations, and others.

- H. Maintain government funds and property according to the regulations in effect, and prevent infringing upon them.
- I. Communicate with the different ministries for the affairs and jurisdictions related to these Ministries in the province, that is if the matter in question could not be solved with the representative of the Ministry in the Council of the Province, provided that the Interior Minister be informed.
- J. Perform the powers determined in this regulation for the governor of the province in his capacity as the head of its council and as its representative of that council.
- K. Supervise the works of the municipalities in the province. The governor can delegate any of the commissioners or district commissioners in supervising and inspecting those works.
- L. Supervise the works of the employees following these province regulations, and direct their executive works related directly to the interests of the province, putting into consideration the bonds the employees of the different Ministries and departments have in the province to their authorities.

ARTICLE NINE:

The commissioner and the district commissioner, each in his jurisdiction, experience the powers determined by the preceding article, with the exception of what is determined in items F, E, H, and I. The commissioner supervises the administration of the district, and controls the works of the district commissioners, to ensure they have adequately administered their works. Commissioners and district commissioners should report on the course of affairs of their administrative superior and neither of them should communicate with a higher authority by surpassing the administrative authority he is tied to. Similarly, the higher authorities should not issue their orders and instructions to the employees of the provinces except through the concerned governor of the province.

ARTICLE TEN:

The administrative governors, the commissioners, and the district commissioners, are interdicted to experience any of the following deeds:

- A. Intervention in the juridical affairs or attempt to influence the judges.
- B. Purchasing any governmental, provincial, or municipal property, or renting any, whether it is directly, through a medium, or by general auction.
- C. Selling or leasing any of the aforementioned property in the province to the government, the province, or the municipalities.
- D. Ordering any soldier or employee (or the like) to perform services for personal interests, or use any public property for these purposes.

ARTICLE ELEVEN:

Every administrative governor should reside in the administrative area over which he presides. Commissioners and district commissioners should not leave the area of their works without a leave from the concerned administrative authority they follow.

PART THREE

Councils of the Provinces

CHAPTER ONE

The Formation of the Councils  
of the Provinces

ARTICLE TWELVE:

In every province a Council of the Province shall be constituted, the headquarters of which will be the headquarters of the province.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN:

The Council of the Province is composed of:

- A. The Governor of the Province, as chairman; the Deputy Governor, who acts on his behalf during his absence or when his attendance proves to be difficult.

- B. Members selected from the inhabitants of the province by a decision from the Council of the Ministers according to the nomination made by the Minister of the Interior. Among the members are those who represent the ministries whose work is connected with the authorities of the province, provided that the number of the Council's members does not exceed thirty members.
- C. The duration of the Council of the Province is two years; it could be extended by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN:

The selected members of the Council of the Province should fulfill the following:

- A. His age should not be less than twenty-five years on the day of his selection.
- B. A Saudi by blood or birth, or ten years at least should have elapsed since he was granted Saudi nationality.
- C. His ordinary residence should be in the Province.
- D. He should be connected to the province, such as being a land owner or among those who experience the province in some commercial, industrial, agricultural, or professional capacity, as a means of making a living.
- E. Be legally qualified.
- F. Know how to read and write.
- G. Be of good conduct; he should not have committed a dishonorable crime, sentenced, or punished by Hadd, imprisoned or

The Council of Ministers, in exceptional cases necessitated by public interest, free themselves from the rules determined by items C, D, or F above or some of them, whenever the Council believes that an urgent, temporary needs require.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN:

The duration of membership in the Council of the Province is two years, however, the Council of Ministers may increase this period. The member may be reselected after any termination of his membership.



**ARTICLE SIXTEEN:**

With the exception of the members who represent ministries whose works are connected with the Province, joining both the membership of the Council and taking any post in public service, whatever its kind, or membership in another Council of the Province or municipality, is interdicted. Any member accepting either his selection in another Council of the Province or his appointment in a public position, is to be considered resigned.

**ARTICLE SEVENTEEN:**

If any member of the Council of the Province should lose one of the conditions required for membership, or it is proved that he did not fulfill one of those conditions from the beginning, his membership is forfeited. This is declared by a decision of the Ministry of the Interior, provided that the Council of the Province in question is informed.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**Jurisdictions of the  
Council of the Province**

**ARTICLE EIGHTEEN:**

The Council of the Province is generally concerned with everything that interests the inhabitants of the Province. The Council shall particularly perform the following functions.

Firstly, in municipal affairs:

- A. Cooperate with municipalities in the execution of their jurisdiction concerning the Province.
- B. Propose what the Council deems adequate for the improvement of the Province in those matters that concern municipal affairs. The concerned authority is to consider these proposals in accordance with the interests of the Province and within the limits of its capacities.
- C. The Council of the Province may help the municipalities in performing the services they are charged with.

- D. Propose new municipalities within the province or alter the places of the existings municipalities.

Secondly, in education:

- A. Supervise the execution of the program of obliterating illiteracy in the province in agreement with the Ministry of Education and other concerned authorities.
- B. Propose the establishment of centers for social care and civics, preparing them for submission to the authorities concerned to carry out that which falls within their capabilities.
- C. Propose the establishment of professional training centers, preparing them for submission to the authorities concerned to carry out that which falls within their capabilities.
- D. Propose the establishment of technical schools adaptable to the community, preparing to submit them to the authorities concerned to carry out that which falls within their capabilities.

Thirdly, in agricultural affairs:

- A. Propose the establishment of model farms for the most successful agriculture in the province, and pattern centers for cattle breeding and other domestic animals, preparing them for submission to the authorities concerned to carry out that which falls within their capabilities.
- B. Propose instructions for the creation and maintenance of centers for the selling of agricultural crops and products for the markets.
- C. Encourage the establishment of agricultural cooperative associations for the farmers in accordance with the effective regulations.
- D. To aid in the establishment and production of industries related to agricultural products among the inhabitants of the province, in cooperation with all concerned authorities.

Fourthly, in public utilities affairs:

The Council of the Province can, with the approval of the Council of Ministers, experience any

of the works that have public utility for all, or part of, the province; no particular provisions are stated in this regulation.

Fifthly, in social and cooperative affairs:

The Council of the Province can financially assist the social and charitable bodies existing in their area; they can also lend cooperative association to help them.

Sixthly, in financial affairs:

- A. Propose the creation of financial resources to help the Council in performing the services necessary to the province. The decision of the Council of the Province in such concerns are not to be carried out until all legally required procedures have been completed.
- B. Make necessary loans by acquiring the permission of necessary from the Council of Ministers.
- C. Set down a comprehensive budget for the revenues of the expenditures of the Council of the Province, and submit it to the Ministry of the Interior by at least three months prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. When preparing the province budget, as well as its approval and publication, the rules determined for the state budget are to be followed. The Council for the Provinces are to include in their budget the following revenues:
  1. The revenues indicated in this Article.
  2. The governmental aids allocated by the state in its public budget for the Council of the Provinces.
  3. All donations and gifts accepted by the Council of the Province in accordance with the rules of this regulation.
  4. The revenues of the Council property, its works, and the public utilities it performs.

The Council of the Province is always restricted in its expenditures by the accredited budget items, and the effective laws and regulations. No modification should be made to the chapters of the budget, and no

funds added, unless the method of setting down the original budget is followed. The Council of the Province may transfer funds from one item to another in the same chapter. The Council funds are considered as public funds, and the rules of public funds should be followed in maintaining, spending, or investing these funds.

- D. Prepare the closing accounts of the Council's financial administration of the past fiscal year and submitted to the Ministry of the Interior within three months after the end of the fiscal year. The rules for determining the closing financial account of the state are to be followed by the Council.

#### ARTICLE NINETEEN:

Each Council of the Province may, after the approval of the Interior Ministry, participate with other Council of Provinces in establishing or administering any of the activities indicated in the previous article, if the benefit returns to the provinces, towns, and villages that are represented by those Councils. The concerned Councils are to set down the terms of such a cooperation.

#### ARTICLE TWENTY:

The concerned Ministries should consider the opinion of the Councils of the Provinces in the following matters:

- A. The establishment or transference of government schools in the province;
- B. The execution of all projects related to agriculture in the province, or the alteration of any part of a project intended to be executed;
- C. Surveying the lands owned by the state in towns and villages, where there are no municipalities, either for selling or for investing them;
- D. The agricultural lands, or the lands useful for agricultural investment, owned by the state within a province, whence they are to be exhibited for sale;

- E. Installing government buildings, or those under government administration, or the altering of the way in which they are utilized or destroyed;
- F. Granting a concession for running or investing in any of the province public utilities;
- G. Building hospitals or public dispensaries, their transference, or their abolishment; and
- H. Building inland roads or railway and the definition of their direction whenever they are particularly for the province, in addition to the definition of the direction of public roads that pass through the province.

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE:

In other than the jurisdictions determined for the Council of the Province by the provisions of this regulation, or any other regulations, the Governor and every Minister may consult the Council on any matter deemed necessary to gain the Council's opinion. The Council can forward to the Governor, or through the Governor to any Minister, and to the Council of Ministers, any suggestions related to the public interest of the province--particularly in agricultural, industrial, commercial, labor, irrigation, communications, public security, health, and educational affairs. All such information must also go to the Minister of the Interior.

ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO:

The Council of the Province can demand through the Interior Ministry, from the Ministries and governmental departments, the data and information related to activities included in the Council's jurisdiction. The Council of the Province is entitled to ask the delegation for one of its experienced employees to help the Council in a particular matter being discussed by the Council, and to attend any other discussions of the Council on that matter. These delegations may participate in the discussions but not in the actual decision-making.

ARTICLE TWENTY-THREE:

The Council of the Province should accomplish the task forwarded to them and give their opinion within a period of not more than three months

from the date the matter was submitted to the Council of the Province. The Governor or the Minister can demand the opinion of the Council on an urgent basis; in such a case, the Council should give their opinion within a period not exceeding one month from the date the matter was submitted to them. The Council of the Province can, when necessity deems so, ask the concerned authority to extend the period determined in this article by one-half the period.

**ARTICLE TWENTY-FOUR:**

Matters included in the jurisdiction of municipalities are excluded from the jurisdictions of the Council of the Province, excepting what is determined by Articles 18 and 19 of this regulation.

The Council of the Province should not discuss the military or political affairs of the state, internally or externally.

**ARTICLE TWENTY-FIVE:**

The decisions of the Council of the Province are to be cancelled if the Council exceeds the limits of their jurisdiction. The Minister of the Interior issues a decision of cancellation. The decisions made by the members of the Council in the name of the Council made in a place other than the regular meeting place of the Council, or outside the place specified for their meeting, shall be cancelled automatically.

**PART FOUR**

**General Rules for the  
Councils of the Provinces**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**The Course of Work in the Councils**

**ARTICLE TWENTY-SIX:**

An ordinary session of the Council of the Province should be held every month, by a call from the Governor, and the Governor of the Province may call the Council for extraordinary meetings whenever

necessity deems so. The Governor should also call for an extraordinary meeting of the Council of the Province if such a meeting is demanded in writing by half the members of the Council in question.

The meeting session includes the meeting or meetings held during one call; the session should not be dismissed until all matters included on the agenda have been considered and discussed.

**ARTICLE TWENTY-SEVEN:**

The discussions of the Council of the Province are not to be considered legal unless two-thirds of the Council members are in attendance. Decisions are taken by the absolute majority of the present members; when the votes are equal, preponderance is to be given to the side of the Chairman of the Council of the Province.

**ARTICLE TWENTY-EIGHT:**

If two-thirds of the Council members are not in attendance after one hour from the appointed time of the meeting, the meeting is to be adjourned for at least three days, but no more than seven days, during which the absent members are called to attend the next meeting.

The Council's discussions at the reconstituted meeting will be authentic regardless of the number of attendees, but the discussions are restricted to the agenda of the adjourned meeting.

**ARTICLE TWENTY-NINE:**

A general regulation is issued by a decision from the Council of Ministers, including the rules related to the by-laws of the Province Councils and the course of work in them, in that which does not contradict the rules of this regulation.

The Council can set-down a special by-law that keeps up with the aforementioned general regulation; this by-law should be approved by the Ministry of the Interior.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Committees

#### ARTICLE THIRTY:

The Council determines during the first ordinary session of every year, the permanent committees needed to study the activities of the Council and prepare their proposals. The number of each committee's members and their jurisdictions are defined likewise. The election of the committee members is made by secret votes and proportional majority. The Council may form special committees for certain matters within the jurisdiction of the Council. Every committee selects a chairman and a secretary from among its members. The members appointed by virtue of their positions are members of the committees assigned to discuss matters related to the jurisdictions of the ministries they represent. The committee may also seek the help of technical experts for the matters under discussion. These experts are not to participate in the voting toward decisions.

#### ARTICLE THIRTY-ONE:

The reports of the committees are to be submitted to the Council to issue a decision in their concern. The Council shall not delegate their powers to one of their committees.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Rights and Duties of Members

#### ARTICLE THIRTY-TWO:

A member is entitled to forward his proposals or submit his questions, to the Chairman of the Council in writing--that is, for matters within the jurisdiction of the Council. The Chairman includes every proposal or question in the agenda of the next session or meeting. The answers to the questions should be provided in one of the meetings held during the same session they were submitted. The Chairman may adjourn the reply to the next session, and such a postponement may be repeated with the approval of the Council of the Province.



**ARTICLE THIRTY-THREE:**

A member should not attend the meetings of the Council of the Province or its committees if the discussion is related to his personal interest to him, as a guardian, curator, or agent.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-FOUR:**

A member should not either by himself or through a medium, undertake any work, contract, tender or produce a party with the Council in a sale or rent. The membership of any who violates the rules of this article is terminated by a decision of the Minister of the Interior, provided that the Council is informed.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-FIVE:**

The allowance for the selected members, excluding the government employees, is determined by a decision of the Council of Ministers. The members in question are entitled to the expenses of transportation from their residences to the Council or committee meetings or to the areas in which they have been assigned to perform a certain duty.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-SIX:**

If a selected member wishes to resign, he should submit his request to the Minister of the Interior through the Governor of the Province. His resignation is not to become effective before the approval of the Council of Ministers.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-SEVEN:**

Each selected member failing to attend two consecutive ordinary sessions without an acceptable excuse, is considered to have resigned. Such a decision is not taken before a hearing of the member in question, or before his absence is proved to be for no acceptable reason. The process of resignation must be in accordance with the previous article.

The rules of the general employee's regulation are effective for the non-selected members.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-EIGHT:**

In other than the specified cases of terminating membership in this regulation, the selected member may not be dismissed except by a decision from the Council of Ministers, according to the demand of the Interior Minister.

A member whose case is submitted to the Council of Ministers may be suspended by a decision from the Minister of the Interior until a final decision has been made.

**ARTICLE THIRTY-NINE:**

In the case that the place of a member is vacant for any reason whatsoever, another member is selected to replace him within three months following the date of vacancy. The period of service of the new member will be for the remaining duration of his predecessor's term only.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**Dissolution of Councils**

**ARTICLE FORTY:**

The members of a Council of the Province could be discharged by a decision from the Council of Ministers according to the proposal of the Ministry of the Interior. However, the selection of new Council of the Province should be made within three months of the date of discharge. All of the Councils of the Provinces may not be discharged by a comprehensive decision, except in urgent cases determined by the Council of Ministers. During the period of discharge and dissolution, the Governor of the Province must carry the jurisdictions of the former Council of the Province, in cooperation with the members nominated by virtue of their position, provided that the decisions taken during this period are submitted to the new Council of the Province during its first session.

APPENDIX VI  
THE NEW PROVINCIAL SYSTEM

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

No.: A/92  
Date: 27/8/1412H

With Allah's Assistance

We, Fahad Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud,

King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

Subject to what the public interest necessitates, and desiring to achieve the country's objectives in raising the performance level of and developing the Government Agencies in the various provinces in such a manner as to be in line with the development achieved by the country, have ordered the following:

- I - Issuance of the Province System in the form attached herewith.
- II - This System shall be effective within a period not exceeding one year from the date of its publication.
- III - - - This System shall be published in the official newspaper.

## Article I

This System aims to raise the level of the administrative function and development in the Kingdom provinces, and it also aims to keep Security and Regulation, and to ensure the citizen's rights and liberties within the framework of the Islamic Law.

## Article II

The Kingdom provinces and the Headquarters of each province principality [Emirate] shall be organized by a Royal Order upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior.

## Article III

Each province shall administratively consist of a number of governorates, districts and localities; the demographic, geographical and security aspects, environment conditions and transportation channels shall be taken into consideration. The governorate shall be organized by a Royal Order upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior. As to the districts and localities, a decision by the Minister of Interior upon suggestion by the province governor [Emir] shall be issued with regard to the affairs and correlation thereof.

## Article IV

Each province shall have governor at the rank of Minister, and he shall have Deputy at the excellent rank to help him with his tasks and act for him when absent. The governor and his deputy shall be appointed and removed by a Royal Order upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior.

## Article V

The province governor shall be responsible before the Minister of Interior.

## Article VI

Before undertaking work the governor and his Deputy shall take the following oath before the King:

"I swear by the Almighty Allah to be sincere to my religion, King and country, not to reveal any of the country's secrets, to keep the interests regulations thereof, and to perform my functions faithfully, honestly, sincerely and fairly"

## Article VII

Each province governor shall undertake the administration thereof in accordance with the country's Public Policy and the provisions of this System and other laws and regulations. It shall particularly be incumbent upon him to:

- A - Keep security, discipline and stability and take the necessary measures therefor according to the Laws and Regulations.
- B - Execution of the juridical judgements after being finally determined.
- C - Ensure individuals' rights and liberties and not to take any procedure affecting such rights and liberties except within the lawfully and legally determined limits.
- D - Develop the province socially, economically and constructionally.
- E - Endeavour to develop public services in the province and raise the efficiency thereof.
- F - Run governorates, districts and localities, monitor the functions of the governorate mayors and district commissioners and Locality chiefs and make sure of their efficiency in performing their duties.

- G - Keep the public funds and properties and prevent trespassing them.
- H - Supervise the Government Agencies and officers in the province to make sure of their performing their duties well, honestly and sincerely, while taking into consideration the various ministries and departments officers' liaison with their references in the province.
- I - Directly contact the ministers and head of departments, discuss the province matters with them for the purpose of raising the efficiency of the Agencies related to them, and get the Minister of Interior informed with the same.
- J - Submit annual reports to the Minister of Interior on the efficiency of the public services performance in the province as well as the other affairs of the province in accordance with what is defined by the Executive Regulations of this System.

### Article VIII

An annual meeting for province governors shall be held under the chairmanship of the Minister of Interior to discuss the issues related to the provinces. The Minister of Interior shall submit a report on the same to the Prime Minister.

### Article IX

A meeting for the governorate mayors and district commissioners shall be held under the chairmanship of the province governor twice a year at least to discuss the province affairs. The governor shall submit a report on the same to the Minister of Interior.

## Article X

- A. - Each province shall have one deputy or more appointed, at no less than the fourteenth grade, through a decision by the Cabinet upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior.
- B - Each governorate shall have mayor appointed, at no less than the fourteenth grade, through an Order by the Prime Minister upon recommendation by the Minister of Interior, and have deputy appointed, at no less than the twelfth grade, through a decision by the Minister of Interior upon recommendation by the province governor.
- C - Each district shall have commissioner appointed, at no less than the eighth grade, through a decision by the Minister of Interior upon recommendation by the province governor.
- D - Each locality shall have chief appointed, at no less than the fifth grade, through a decision by the province governor upon recommendation by the governorate mayor.

## Article XI

Province governors, governorate mayors, district commissioners and locality chiefs shall have to reside where their work headquarters are and not to leave their work area except with a permission by the immediate boss.

## Article XII

The governorate mayors, district commissioners and locality chiefs shall undertake their tasks within the administrative framework of their Bodies and within the limits of the authorities vested in them.



### Article XIII

The governorate mayors shall have to run their governorates within the framework of the powers provided for in Article VII with the exclusion of what is stated in paragraphs "F", "I" and "J" thereof, monitor the functions of the district commissioners and locality chiefs subordinate to them, make sure of their efficiency in performing their duties, and submit periodical reports to the province governor on the efficiency of the public services performance and the other affairs of the governorate in conformity with what is defined by the Executive Regulations of this System.

### Article XIV

Each Ministry or Government Department having services in the province shall appoint head for the Agencies thereof in the province, at no less than the twelfth grade, who shall have direct liaison with the Central Agency and coordinate with the province governor in the field of his job.

### Article XV

In each province a council called "Province Council", of which headquarters shall be the same headquarters of the province principality, shall be established.

## Article XVI

The Province Council shall consist of:

- A - Province governor as chairman.
- B - Province deputy governor as vice-chairman
- C - Principality deputy and governorate mayors.
- D - Heads of the Province Government Agencies that are defined through a decision by the Prime Minister upon recommendation of the Minister of Interior.
- E - Number of no less than ten natives, who are learned experienced and competent, appointed through an Order by the Prime Minister upon nomination by the province governor and approval by the Minister of Interior. Their membership term shall be four years renewable.

## Article XVII

The council member shall meet the following requirements:

- A - He shall be Saudi national by parentage and origin.
- B - He shall be known for his righteousness and efficiency.
- C - His age shall not be less than 30 years old.
- D - His residence shall be in the province.

## Article XVIII

The member can submit suggestions in writing to the Province Council Chairman regarding the matters falling within the Council competence. The chairman shall list every suggestion in the council agenda to present and consider the same.

## Article XIX

The Province Council member shall not attend the deliberations of the council or its committees if the subject is relevant to a personal interest for him or the interest of any one for whom his testimony cannot be approved, or if he is a guardian, curator or attorney of the person having interest therein.

## Article XX

If the appointed member wishes to resign he shall submit an application with the same to the Minister of Interior through the province governor. The resignation shall not be deemed effective except after the Prime Minister's approval upon the suggestion of the Minister of Interior.

## Article XXI

In cases other than provided for in this system, the appointed member shall not be removed within his membership term except through an Order by the Prime Minister upon the suggestion of the Minister of Interior.

## Article XXIV

The Province Council shall suggest any of the public interest works for the province citizens and encourage citizens' participation therein and submit the same to the Minister of Interior.

## Article XXV

The Province Council shall not consider any matter falling outside the powers determined thereto by this System. The decisions thereof shall be null and void if exceeding the same. The Minister of Interior shall issue a decision regarding the same.

## Article XXVI

The Province Council shall hold an ordinary session every three months upon a convocation by its Chairman. The Chairman shall have the right to convene the Council to an extraordinary meeting if he finds the same necessary. The session includes the sitting or sittings held upon one convocation. The session shall not be adjourned except after considering and discussing all the issues stated in the agenda.

## Article XXVII

The attendance of the province council meetings is considered a job duty for the members mentioned in paragraphs C & D of Article XVI of this System. They must attend by themselves or any one acting for them in case of their absence from their work.

As to the members mentioned in paragraph E of the said Article, the member's default to attend two successive sessions without an acceptable excuse shall be considered enough cause for his removal from the council. In such case this member shall not be nominated once more for the council membership except after two years from the date of his removal decision issuance.

## Article XXVIII

The Province Council meetings shall not be legal except with the attendance of two thirds of the members thereof at least. The decisions thereof shall be issued by the absolute majority of the council members' votes. If the votes become equal, the side with which the chairman has voted shall be preponderated.

## Article XXIX

When needed, the Province Council shall have special committees to study any matter falling within its competence. It shall have the right

to ask the assistance of any of the experienced and competent persons it finds suitable. It shall also have the right to convene person it wishes to attend the meetings of the council and participate in the discussion without having any right to vote.

### Article XXX

The Minister of Interior shall have the right to convene the council to meet under his chairmanship at any place he decides, and to the chairmanship of any meeting he attends.

### Article XXXI

The Province Council shall not sit except upon a convocation by its chairman, vice-chairman or the Minister of Interior.

### Article XXXII

The Council Chairman shall submit a copy of the decisions to the Minister of Interior.

### Article XXXIII

The Province Council Chairman shall get the ministries and government departments informed of what concerns them of the council decisions.

## Article XXXIV

The ministries and government departments shall observe the province council decisions with regard to what's stated in paragraphs A & B of Article XXIII of this System. If the ministry or government department decided not to adopt the province council decision regarding what is mentioned, it shall have to explain the reasons of the same to the province council. If the province council is not convinced with the properness of the reasons indicated by the ministry or department, it shall submit a report on the same to the Minister of Interior in order to be presented to the Prime Minister.

## Article XXXV

Every ministry and department having services in the province shall get the province council informed of the projects determined for the province in the budget right after the issuance thereof, and get it also informed of what is determined for the province in the development plan.

## Article XXXVI

Every Minister and Department Head shall consult the province council regarding any matter relating to his competence in the province, and the council shall express its opinion regarding the same.

## Article XXXVII .

The Cabinet shall, upon suggestion by the Minister of Interior, define remunerations for the Province Council Chairman and members; the costs of transport and stay shall be taken into consideration when estimating the same.

## Article XXXVIII

The Provincial Council shall not be dissolved except through an Order by the Prime Minister upon the suggestion of the Minister of Interior provided that the members thereof shall be nominated anew within three months as of the date of dissolution. During the dissolution period the members mentioned in paragraphs C & D of Article XVI of this System, shall exercise, under the chairmanship of the province governor, the council powers.

## Article XXXIX

The Province council shall have secretariate in the province principality which shall undertake the preparation of its agendas, addressing convocations at the times thereof, recording of the discussions conducted within the sittings, counting votes, preparation of minutes, drawing up of the decisions and performing the necessary procedures for controlling the council sittings (meetings) and drawing up the decisions thereof.

## Article XL

The Minister of Interior shall issue the Regulations required for the execution of this System.



**APPENDIX VII**  
**INTERVIEW WITH RIYADH**  
**PROVINCIAL AMIR**

## Appendix VII

### Interview with Riyadh Provincial Amir

- Q1.** Your Highness, in your capacity as governor (Amir) of Riyadh Province, the largest province and national capital of the country, and head of the Provincial Council, and through the Provincial Council's last meetings presided over by Your Highness for the two past years, does your excellency believe that the Council's formation actually represents the whole province of Riyadh?
- A.1** Yes, the Provincial Council represents the whole province of Riyadh. This could be noticed from the Council Minutes.
- Q.2** Why has this specific system been applied at this time? Does your excellency believe that it is the suitable time?
- A.2.** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is witnessing an advancement in its various cities, provinces and sectors. This requires a powerful administrative system that can keep pace with the rapid socio-economic development in the Kingdom. Therefore, the Provincial Council idea emerged to achieve the objectives and goals sought by the country with respect to raising the administrative performance level and to increase developmental rates and to promote services in the Kingdom's provinces so as to keep pace with the progress accomplished by the country in all of its utilities and as stipulated by the Executive Regulation of the Provincial System.
- Q.3** What are the bases of the criteria which the members of the Riyadh Provincial Council have been selected?
- A.3** The criteria include educational qualification, specialization, integrity and creativity.
- Q.4** Does your Excellency believe that the Provincial Council meeting for only four sessions a year, i.e., a meeting each three months, is sufficient to perform the major security and development tasks assigned to it?

- A.4** At the beginning I think this is sufficient. If need and tasks required the expansion of its tasks and activities, the same would be addressed timely.
- Q.5** Are the tasks of the Provincial Council supervising, executive or consulting tasks? Is it possible to expand these tasks to include some legislative and organizational tasks for Administrative and Social Rules and Regulations?
- A.5** The answer to the first part of this question is contained in Article 23 of the Provincial System. The Provincial Council is concerned with the consideration of everything that could raise the level of services in the Province while the answer to the last part of the question depends on the need to revise the Council activities and the development, addition and density of work necessitated by them. If there are works serving the public interest, they will be taken into consideration, and suggestions concerning them shall be submitted to His Royal Highness the Minister of Interior.
- Q.6** Does your Excellency think that the number of the present members of the Provincial Council (20 nationals and 12 ministry representatives) is suitable for the Council's tasks and responsibilities?
- A.6** At the time being they are sufficient. In the future we will reconsider this point when the need arises.
- Q.7** Does your Excellency believe that the Provincial Council and Provincial System play a tangible role in achieving administrative decentralization leading to serving citizen's interests in a more perfect and faster manner? Is there a real decentralization?
- A.7** I think so. No one can imagine the existence of centralization while there is an integral work team devoted to the service of the public interest of the citizens and country.
- Q.8** Does the Provincial Council have financial obstacles to carry out its suggestions with respect to citizens' service? Does it face any

financial difficulties from the various ministries or from the Ministry of Finance?

A.8 The Council is capable of preparing the necessary studies for raising the level of services in the Province and formulating suggestions. Then it writes to the concerned authorities to which will take the necessary steps to approve their implementation.

Q.9 Does your Excellency think that the past period of Council activities was sufficient to judge the success of the experiment?

A.9 Yes. And we have to wait for a while before we make a judgement on that. Nevertheless, there are a lot of achievements accomplished by the Council, thank God.

Q.10 Does your Excellency feel that Provincial Councils play an important role in supporting local development in the Provinces belonging to them? How does this take place from your Excellency's point of view?

A.10 Yes, I feel so. However, everything has its opportune time so that actions shall speak for themselves after the implementation of the suggestions. However, there are positive results that had emerged.

Q.11 Does your Excellency think that the Provincial Council and Provincial System will achieve their developmental objectives better than before?

A.11 As the developmental plans in the Kingdom advance and develop, this system will react in response to such development.

Q.12 Does your Excellency believe that the Provincial Council and New Provincial System will lead to the participation of the people of provinces, governorates and localities in local development process?

A.12 Article 16, paragraph E, stipulates the participation of the citizens through their representatives in the council by a number of nationals not less than ten persons from the educated, experienced and specialized elite. These represent the people of the provinces,

governorates and localities. They must be exerting efforts for advancement of urban, economic and social development. People are now represented in the Council by 20 members who meet the above mentioned requirements.

**Q.13** What is your Excellency's opinion on the formation of a high level advertising committee affiliated to the Council to be the contact link between Council's officials and Province people, invite them to attend some of the council sessions, participate therein, and listen to deliberation without having the right to vote?

**A.13** Advertising has its potent role in shedding light on efforts and works. Therefore, at the end of each session all issues considered and recommended are disclosed through all mass media.

**Q.14** Does your Excellency feel that the past period (from Council formation up to present) is enough for members of the Council to be familiar with their respective tasks and responsibilities?

**A.14** Yes. This question has been answered earlier in question nine.

**Q.15** Does your Excellency think that ministries and governmental departments cooperate with the Provincial Council in fulfilling the requirements and needs of governorates and localities belonging to Riyadh Province.

**A.15** In paragraph D of Article 16 of the Provincial System the participation of the heads of the governmental departments is stipulated. This undoubtedly indicates the importance of cooperation of the ministries and governmental departments with the Provincial Council. The actual reality and response of the concerned governmental departments prove this cooperation.

**Q.16** What is the relation between the Provincial Council and governorates and localities?

**A.16** There is a close relation between the Council and the governorates and localities in the Province. It is to serve the whole Province and its efforts are not limited to particular part thereof.

**Q.17** Are there certain important matters not addressed by the Provincial System? Does your Excellency believe that its tasks are sufficient to develop provinces?

**A.17** This comes under the concerns of the Council that considers the suggestions presented by its members or any member of the society. If these suggestions serve the public interest of the Province and people, it is listed in the Council Agenda, presented, considered and necessary recommendations made with respect thereto.

**Q.18** What is the role of the Ministry of Interior with respect to the Council activities? And to what extent does it cooperate and coordinate with the Council?

**A.18** A copy of the decisions made with respect to recommendations presented to the Council is submitted to His Royal Highness Minister of Interior. There is cooperation and coordination in all fields that could support and make the Council successful in performing the tasks assigned thereto.

**Q.19** What are the difficulties facing the Provincial Council?

**A.19** The council has not faced any difficulties, thank God, since commencement of authority its work is progressing smoothly.

**Q.20** To what extent does the council make use of technical and technological experts and specialists in the specialized issues?

**A.20** The Council members include an elite of technical and technological engineers. Moreover the Council System allows it to make use of any expert or specialist and it is authorized to invite any qualified person to attend the council meetings and take part in the discussion without having the right of voting because he is not a member.

**Q.21** Is there a necessity to involve citizens in the selection of members in the forthcoming stages with respect to election as it was applicable in the Omarah (Princesses) and Administrative System issued in

1359AH, or is the consultation sufficient to achieve the development objectives?

A.21 No doubt that the consultation is sufficient to accomplish the developmental objectives. This was proven by the members selected to the member of the Council and who have shown their creativity through the results of the studies they submitted to the Council.

Q.22 Does your Excellency have any further comments on Council's role in achieving the development objectives?

A.22 The council system ensures the accomplishment of the tasks assigned thereto including raising the level of services and upgrading performance and the execution level. Thus the development objectives sought by the country could be achieved.

13/11/2000

Notes on the Sample size for the Government Officials (chapter 8)

In reference to your comments about the variations in the sample size of the government officials shown in chapter 8 and not in chapter 7, as mentioned in your letter dated 31/10/2000, I would like to clarify the following:

**First**, there is a typing mistake in page 248 ( line 20). Please note that the original sample size mentioned in chapter 1 ( page ) is 150. But eight questionnaires were excluded from the analysis due to reporting errors, making the total sample for the government officials 142 respondents.

**Secondly**, For the analysis for tables 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.9, 8.10 8.11 and 8.13, the sample size of the government officials has dropped from 142 to 82 respondents, because the questions for the analysis in these tables were addressed to respondents who are familiar with the new provincial system.

**Thirdly**, For the analysis in tables 8.7 and 8.8, the sample size of the government officials has dropped from 142 to 71 respondents, because the questions for these two tables were addressed to the respondents who said that their jobs require delegation of power.

