

the gap between the education of girls and boys, most Zbeidat women remain illiterate. This is only partly due to the reason given by the villagers themselves, namely, that they have to walk along the major highway all the way to Marj Na'je (2½ km. north) to attend school. It seems that the increased demand for child labour in the family farm has lent a positive incentive for Zbeidat to keep their daughters illiterate, a tendency reinforced by the traditional low status held by females in this formerly bedouin community. Data acquired from 23 households in whose names the land is registered (involving 231 members) show two and one-half times as many illiterate females as males for age groups 15 years and over (Table 12:3).

Table 12:3

Illiteracy & Education Levels in Zbeidat
By Sex for Households Owning Lands

	Illiterate*	Total Schooled	Primary	Inter-mediate	Secondary	Post-Secondary
TOTAL	69	97	57	27	10	3
MALE	20	68	32	24	9	3
FEMALE	49	29	25	3	1	-

*Illiteracy calculated for people over 15 years old.

Source: Author's Zbeidat Household Survey (1980).

Most girls stopped going to school after finishing six years of schooling while a third of those males that have received any education continued to the intermediate level (9 years). Another tendency associated with the increased demand for female labour, but one which we cannot establish empirically, is the postponement of a daughter's marriage to later years, currently at age 18 (cf. Table 11:1, and following discussion in Chapter 11). The reader is cautioned that figures for schooling years