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**WOMEN AND MEN IN LEBANON:
A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT**



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FOREWORD

This booklet represents one of the activities carried out under the umbrella of the regional project on the Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries (RAB/96/007), which is being funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and executed by ESCWA in nine Arab countries.

The national activities of the project were implemented in Lebanon by the joint collaboration of the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, the Central Administration of Statistics and the Ministry of Social Affairs. In addition, the offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), operating in Lebanon, participated in the implementation of the project at the national level.

This booklet is intended to offer a statistical portrait of the different roles of women and men in Lebanon based on the original Arabic document entitled "Women and Men in Lebanon: A Statistical Portrait" that was produced by the joint collaboration of UN-ESCWA, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs and the above mentioned UN organizations.

I would like to thank the working team who contributed to this booklet. It is hoped that this publication will be beneficial to those interested in gender statistics.



MERVAT TALLAWY
Executive Secretary

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This booklet represents one of the activities carried out under the umbrella of the project entitled Development of National Gender Statistics Programmes in the Arab Countries (RAB/96/007). It was prepared by an ESCWA team supervised by Ahmed Hussein, the regional coordinator of the project. He was assisted by Nada Moudallal, May Beydoun and Nadine Baltagi who contributed to the revision of the booklet.

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INTRODUCTION

In response to the evolving process of sustainable human development, and with the appearance of gender as a concept to be adopted by experts in the field of development, new methods to analyze social data have emerged and were termed gender statistics.

Gender statistics provide a wealth of information that reflect problems, issues and queries related to the status of women and men within the society. They are primarily used in designing policies, observing and evaluating progress in various development programs that are related to the empowerment of women and her participation in the development process. In addition, they can also be used in clarifying gaps between women and men.

After fifteen years of civil strife, Lebanon is currently in the process of rebuilding its statistical database. To this end, governmental entities with the help of United Nations agencies effectively working in Lebanon were able to execute a number of studies and statistical surveys.

The importance of the Arabic publication entitled "Women and Men in Lebanon: A Statistical Portrait" lies in the fact that it was the first study that clearly showed gender gaps in different social and economic areas, by presenting data in a user-friendly manner.

The Arabic publication was prepared by focusing on priority in gender issues and by taking the national strategy devised for the Lebanese woman into account. Hence, the areas that were tackled included legal, social, educational, economic and leadership/decision-making aspects.

The data was drawn from a number of sources, including the following studies and surveys:

1. ***Population and Housing Survey*** in Lebanon that was carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The survey was completed between the years 1994 and 1996.

2. ***Household Living Conditions Survey***, which was conducted by the Central Administration of Statistics in 1997, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

3. ***PAPCHILD Survey*** (or Maternal and Child Health Survey), which was conducted by the Ministries of Public Health and Social Affairs in 1995, in collaboration with a number of international organizations and Arab institutions.

4. ***Labour Market Survey*** in Lebanon, which was executed in 1997 by the National Institute of Employment in collaboration with the InterNational Association for Employment (ILO) and UNDP.

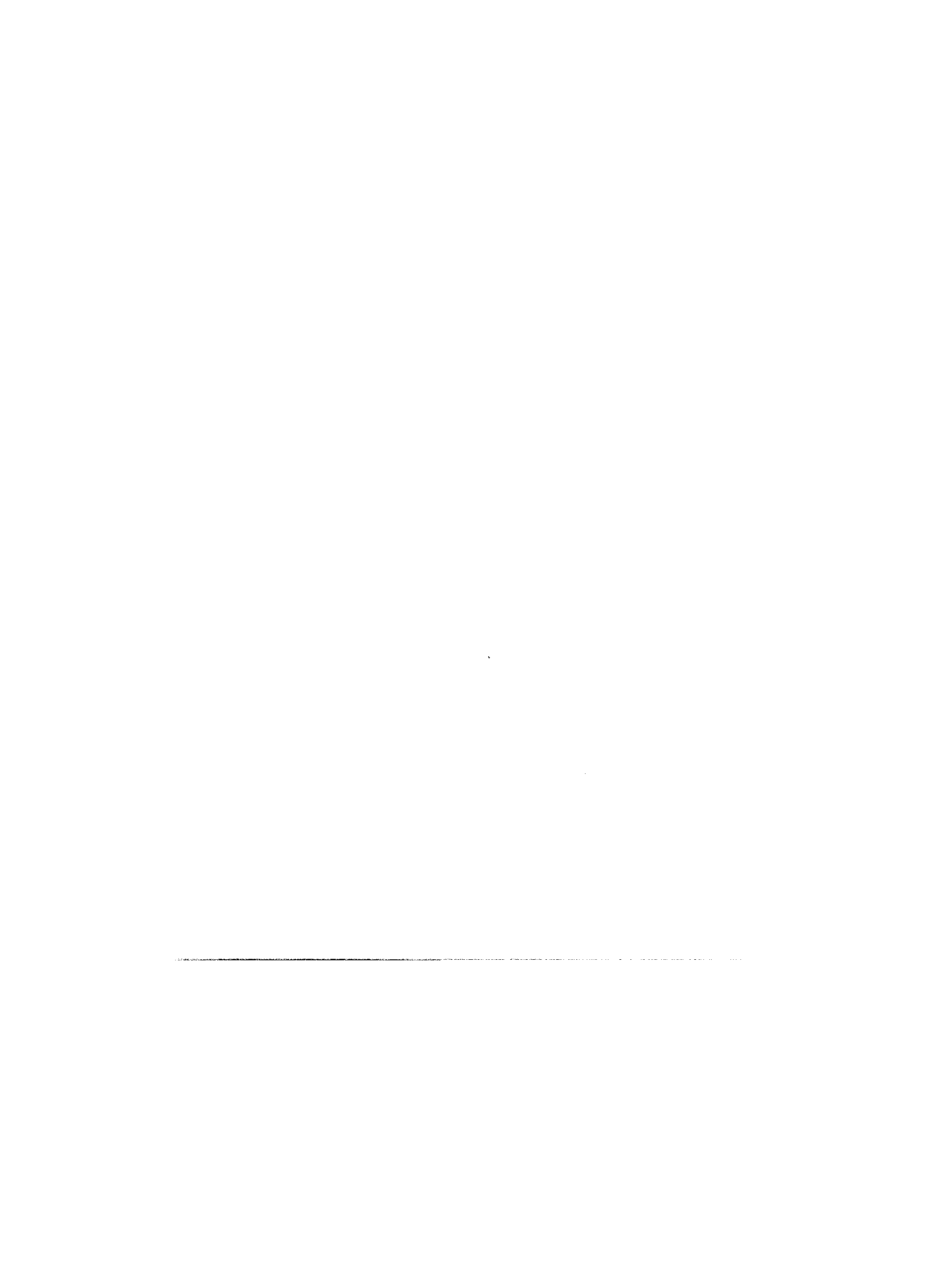
5. ***Study on Women in the Labour force***, which was carried out in 1997 by the Consultancy and Research Institute (CRI), upon the request of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World located within the Lebanese American University (LAU).

6. ***Study on Poverty and Gender*** in the areas of Baalbek and Hermel, which was prepared by the CRI upon the request of the UNDP and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR).

While most of the data presented dates back to the year 1996 and onward, earlier sources were also used in order to show

Chapter I

THE LEGAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN LEBANON



THE LEGAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN LEBANON*

I. The Lebanese Constitution

The Lebanese Constitution emphasizes the need to achieve gender equality in civil and political rights, in duties and responsibilities as well as in public positions. Unfortunately, the constitutional text did not directly claim the issue of equality between women and men in all other areas and domains.

Alleged political rights encompass the right to vote and the right for candidature in all public leadership positions. Specifically, it is a constitutional right for “any Lebanese citizen aged over 21 years to be a potential voter”. Moreover, whether for parliament or municipality, candidature in Lebanon is valid for both women and men. Finally, the constitution allows any Lebanese citizen to take on public employment positions.

II. Labour Laws

The Lebanese system does not discriminate between women and men in work-related issues including appointments, promotion and assigned duties.

* This chapter relies on comparisons found in the book “Women’s Rights in the Lebanese Law (in light of international conventions and in comparison with regional Arab legislation)” by Laure Mgheizel, 1985.

III. Citizenship

A woman with a foreign nationality becomes a Lebanese citizen after one year of marriage to a Lebanese and upon her request. In addition, a Lebanese woman remains so even after marrying a foreigner, unless she asks for the elimination of her name from the registry in order to gain her husband's nationality. However, such a demand may be reversed for women in case of divorce, who may upon request re-acquire the Lebanese nationality.

On the other hand, a man with foreign nationality who marries a Lebanese woman has the right to become a Lebanese citizen, based on a presidential decree, after having proven that he has spent at least one year in the country since his marriage. However, the laws that followed have integrated many contradictory items in that area. This necessitates a revision of the legal text in order to rectify this situation.

In what concerns child's citizenship, the Lebanese law claims that a child should in principle acquire his father's nationality and that a mother's nationality is not granted to a child except in few special circumstances. In other words, children of a Lebanese mother and a foreign father cannot become Lebanese citizens. It is worth noting that granting Lebanese nationality to children based on the mother's origins is one of Lebanon's reservations on the convention for eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

IV. Civil Status Law

There are no explicit legal texts pertaining to the civil status of women in particular, since they were written to address the Lebanese population as a whole. Hence, as soon as a Lebanese woman reaches the age of 18, she is granted full majority, except in the few instances where the law states otherwise.

In addition, a Lebanese woman has the civil and independent right to monetary possessions as well as financial management and spending. The most recent achievement was that of granting married women full civil rights in what concerns life insurance policies.

Real estate laws do not recognize gender equality, since women cannot stand as witnesses when registering personal data on official documents. With respect to inheritance-related laws, the Lebanese people abide by their confessional or religious origins. For instance, according to the Islamic law, men have the right to inherit double the portion given to women, with few exceptions. In contrast, the law of inheritance for non-Moslems proclaims gender equality. In addition, a married woman cannot justify the right to own a business, unless she obtains her husband's explicit or implicit consent to do so.

In 1996, a non-mandatory civil status law was forwarded to the Lebanese parliament, but has not been endorsed up until today.

Some national strategic actions undertaken to improve the status of the Lebanese woman at the legislative level

- Striving to remove existing reservations on the convention on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.
- Striving to endorse conventions related to human rights as well as all agreements made by international and regional organizations, particularly those related to women's rights in the labour force.
- Creation of new laws, including a unified law for civil status and civil marriage, and other laws that prohibit any discrimination against women with clear statements of punishment in case such a discrimination takes place.

V. Socio-economic rights

The Lebanese law imposes the principle of equal pay for equal work. In addition, the law states that the minimum wage should apply to both women and men without any discrimination.

The end of service indemnity system in Lebanon states that any employee, whether man or woman, should be treated the same way and following the same rules and conditions. In addition, a woman has the right to retire and obtain her indemnity earlier in the event of marriage.

VI. Penal system

The penal system in Lebanon integrates several rulings that discriminate between women and men especially in what concerns adultery. The discrimination appears in many aspects of the crime, including the type of punishment, and indicative evidence. Moreover, abortion in Lebanon is legally prohibited, and the law allows it only for therapeutic purposes and under special circumstances.

VII. Legal improvements

It is worth noting that distinctive improvements have been noted in what relates to the legal status of women in Lebanon since the 1980s and in the following aspects:

1. Family planning: Two articles in the Lebanese legal system have been eliminated since 1983⁽¹⁾. These stated that anyone who attempts to prescribe, promote or even sell contraceptive methods and enhance its accessibility should be punished.

⁽¹⁾ Legislative decree number 112, dated 10/11/1983.

2. Retirement: Unify age at retirement between women and men to 64 years, according to the social security law of 1987⁽¹⁾.

3. Real Estate: The law that prevented women to act as witnesses in the domain of real estate was completely modified by the year 1993⁽²⁾ allowing women to independently witness under any circumstance.

4. Business: Modification of the law that did not give married women the right to manage their own business unless she obtains her husband's explicit or implicit consent to do so. This modification was accomplished in 1994⁽³⁾.

5. Employment in the diplomatic sector: Elimination of the law stating that a woman employed in the diplomatic sector should be transferred from foreign affairs to an administrative position in case she marries a foreigner.

In addition, Lebanon has ratified the convention on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) under one condition which was to retain its reservation concerning women's right in awarding their nationality to their children (article 9, item 2) and the equal right between women and men concerning marriage, family and children's custody.

⁽¹⁾ Law number 87/2, dated 6/1/1987.

⁽²⁾ Law number 275, dated 4/11/1993.

⁽³⁾ Law number 380, dated 4/11/1994.

Chapter II

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

I. Population & gender distribution

The last census in Lebanon dates back to 1932. A number of national surveys were conducted over the years and were considered as suitable alternatives to a general population census, like for instance the study carried out by the Ministry of Planning during 1964 and the one conducted by the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) in 1970⁽¹⁾. The latter survey was able to estimate the population size in 1970 at 2,126,000. Another survey was conducted in 1997⁽²⁾ by the CAS, which yielded a current estimate of the population at 4,005,052 persons, out of which 7.5% were non-Lebanese. However, this study did not include foreigners residing in Lebanon on temporary basis, such as seasonal workers.

Whereas one third of the Lebanese population in 1997 was concentrated in the capital city Beirut and its suburbs (32.5%), the highest aggregation of people was found in Mount Lebanon that encompassed 37.6% of the total population.

Overall, women constituted around one half of the total population (49.8%). **Table 2.1** shows the gender distribution of the Lebanese population by governorates.

⁽¹⁾ Survey of active population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics

⁽²⁾ Household living conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Table 2.1 Gender distribution of the Lebanese population by governorates; 1997

Governorate	Women(%)	Men (%)	% by governorate
Beirut	51.2	48.8	10.0
Suburbs	49.6	50.4	22.5
Mount Lebanon	49.7	50.3	15.1
North Lebanon	49.3	50.7	20.1
South Lebanon	50.5	49.5	11.8
Nabatieh	50.6	49.4	6.9
Bekaa	48.6	51.4	13.6
Total	49.6	50.2	100.0

Source: Household living conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

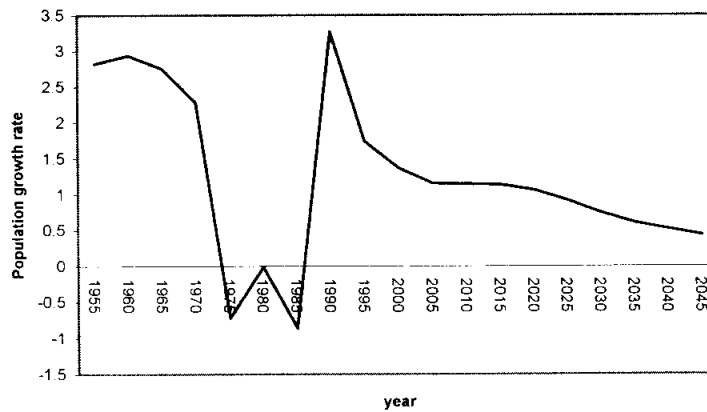
A. Population growth

Population growth rate reflects to a certain extent the level of development attained in a society, given its strong association with economic factors and living conditions. Over the past two decades, the population has witnessed a sudden decline in its growth rate. This was mainly attributed to the fifteen years of civil war (1975-1990) that engendered massive emigration movements and to other factors that have affected the level of fertility as well as mortality, marriage and divorce. These factors included economic conditions, rise in educational level and better health awareness among the Lebanese population. Recent estimates indicate that the current annual growth rate in Lebanon is around 1.4%. However, this value is projected to decline over the coming few decades (**Figure 2.1**).

It is worth noting that the annual growth rate among women declined from 2.4% during the period 1970-1986 to only 0.6% during the years 1987-1997⁽³⁾.

⁽³⁾ The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

Figure 2.1 Population growth rate in Lebanon (1955-2045)



Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

Nevertheless, Lebanon is considered to have a relatively low population growth rate, if compared with other Arab countries. The Arab region has witnessed the most rapid growth rate encountered in the developing world as a whole (2.9% between 1960 and 1992 as compared to 2.1% among the developing countries in the same period). In fact, it has even surpassed the level of growth attained by the least developed countries (2.7% during the same period). It is projected that population growth rate in the Arab region will remain one of the highest in the world between 1992 and 2000 directly after that of the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

However, a tangible amount of variability exists between Arab countries in that respect, since growth rate in 1960-1992 ranged between 2.2% in Tunisia and 9.6% in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)⁽⁴⁾.

⁽⁴⁾ Human Development Report, UNDP, 1994

Such variability can be explained by several determinants, including emigration, high levels of fertility, or low mortality rates. This rapid growth renders Arab countries more susceptible to socio-economic pressures, such as allocation of scarce resources and its utilization in order to fulfill educational and health needs of poor families and the population as a whole, in addition to creating opportunities for work.

B. Men to women ratio

The men-to-women ratio is affected by several factors such as birth and death patterns and the level of migration in the country.

In Lebanon as a whole, this ratio was estimated at 100.9 men for every 100 women in 1997, although some variation was noted across governorates. For instance, in administrative Beirut, this ratio is as low as 95.2 men per 100 women, whereas in the Bekaa region its value has reached 105.7 men per 100 women (**Table 2.2**)⁽⁵⁾. Future projections indicate that the men-to-women ratio will follow a decreasing trend in Lebanon, until it reaches a value of 97.2 men for every 100 women by the year 2015. Consequently, it will increase gradually to reach a value of 98.7 men per 100 women by the year 2050⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁶⁾ World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

Table 2.2 Men-to-women ratio by age group and governorate; 1997

Age group	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon*	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa	Total
0-4	95.7	106.4	93.8	102.8	113.3	98.7	103.7	103.1
5-9	113.4	116.1	106.8	114.0	91.5	112.4	107.8	109.3
10-14	121.3	108.8	112.5	105.7	101.0	105.1	105.3	107.6
15-19	116.9	105.2	100.7	98.8	98.4	117.9	108.3	104.6
20-24	102.1	105.8	113.3	119.9	120.1	109.4	129.7	114.5
25-29	93.3	98.2	100.0	106.0	95.7	79.5	109.6	99.3
30-34	74.0	88.7	90.4	92.5	87.7	85.3	93.9	88.3
35-39	70.8	89.8	93.2	89.0	85.5	73.3	86.2	86.0
40-44	73.0	86.3	83.0	89.5	96.7	100.0	90.9	86.7
45-49	94.2	99.6	100.0	92.9	78.7	83.5	89.3	93.1
50-54	96.9	103.9	106.7	101.1	97.5	74.4	92.0	98.3
55-59	104.2	117.1	106.2	83.3	91.3	131.3	107.3	104.5
60-65	87.9	109.0	107.3	107.9	104.5	83.8	139.7	106.2
65-69	84.8	105.5	105.3	105.2	99.1	124.0	125.0	105.4
70+	109.6	89.5	113.6	104.8	103.6	91.6	95.5	101.4
Total	95.2	101.5	101.2	102.7	98.2	97.7	105.7	100.9

Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

* excluding Beirut suburbs

The number of women per 100 men in Lebanon is found to be slightly higher than the average ratio observed in the North African Arab region (97) and significantly higher than that of Arab countries in West Asia (94). These differences may be explained by the civil war in Lebanon, which triggered a massive emigration to foreign countries, a movement that was mostly undertaken by men. Added to this, is the differential effects of war on women and men, mainly in terms of human loss ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽⁷⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

II. Age and gender distribution

Current figures obtained from the 1997 household living conditions survey indicate that the Lebanese population still incorporates a large proportion of youth aged less than 15 years that was estimated at 28.7% among men and 27.1% among women. Overall, 38.9% and 17.8% of the population is under 20 and 10 years of age, respectively⁽⁸⁾.

Nevertheless, the shape of the population pyramid varied to some extent across different governorates. In fact, women aged less than twenty years accounted for 29.0% of total Lebanese women in Beirut. This figure was estimated at 34.5% among men. In contrast, the proportion of women in that age group was found to be higher in other governorates, especially in the North, where it has reached a value of 44.8%⁽⁹⁾.

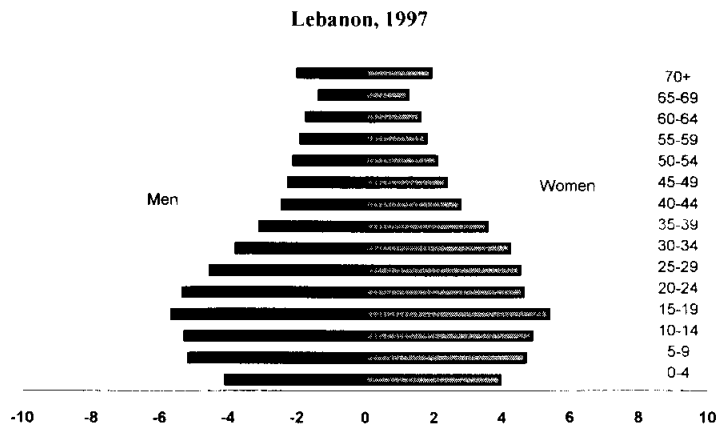
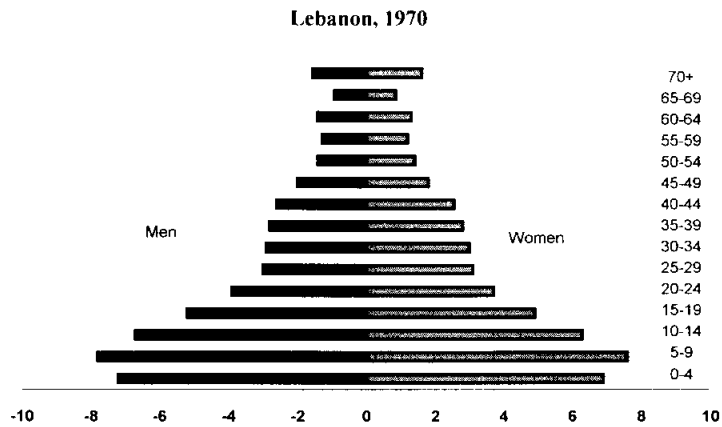
When comparing the 1997 population pyramid to that obtained from the 1970 survey, we notice the following trends (**Figure 2.2**):

- The proportion of young women (aged 15 years and less) has decreased from 42.4% in 1970 to 27.1% in 1997.
- The proportion of women in the elderly age group has increased from 5.2% in 1970 to 6.4% in 1997.
- The same pattern was observed among men, leading to a narrowing down of the population pyramid base, an overall reduction in total dependency and an increase in old-age dependency ratio.

⁽⁸⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁹⁾ Ibid

Figure 2.2 Population pyramids, 1970-1997



Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

The narrowing of the age pyramid's base with time can be attributed to many factors, including a slower rate of population growth, and a reduction in crude birth and fertility rates. This trend is expected to continue whereby the young population size (aged less than 15 years) will decrease to 21% by 2025 and 16% by 2045. Parallel to the decrease in the young age segment, an increase in the proportion of elderly was observed over the past two decades, a proportion that is likely to become further inflated in the coming years to reach 8% by 2025 and 14% by 2045 (**Table 2.3**)⁽¹⁰⁾.

The young age segment in Lebanon remains one of the least elevated in the Arab region. The latter is distinguished by the large base of its population pyramid, with a proportion under 15 estimated at 44%. It is worth noting that the Gulf region lies slightly below the average in that respect, followed by the North African countries. On the other hand, the elderly segment in Lebanon is one of the highest amongst other Arab countries (only 3% are aged 60 years and over), especially when compared to the Gulf region⁽¹¹⁾.

Table 2.3 Projected trends in broad age group distribution of the Lebanese population; 1995-2045

Age group	1995	2005	2015	2025	2035	2045
<15	31.0	28.0	22.0	21.0	18.0	16.0
15-64	55.0	59.0	63.0	61.0	56.0	52.0
60+	8.0	7.0	8.0	11.0	15.0	17.0
65+	6.0	6.0	6.0	8.0	11.0	14.0

Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

⁽¹⁰⁾ World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

⁽¹¹⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

III. Marital status

The proportion single among women aged 10 years and over was estimated at 55.1% according to the 1997 household living conditions survey, as compared to 62.2% among men. Married women accounted for 37.6% of the total female population (15 years or more), in comparison to 36.4% for married men. Widowhood was found to be relatively elevated among women as it was estimated at 6.5%. This figure was much lower among men (1.1%). This can be explained by the fact that men tend to remarry after widowhood and divorce much more likely than women.

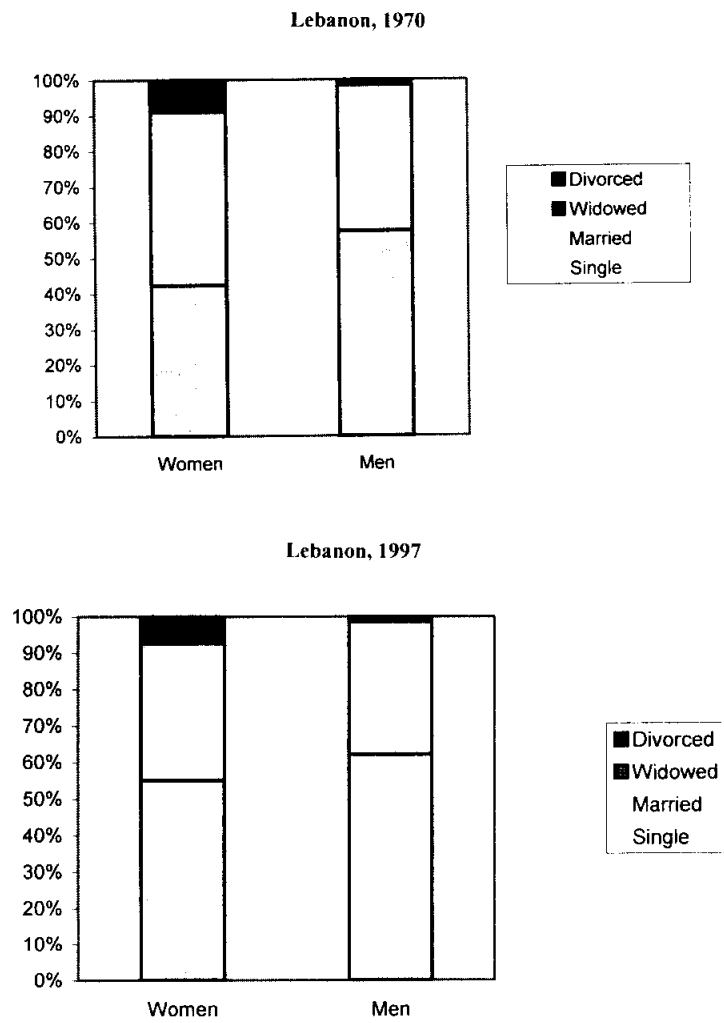
These figures can be compared to those observed earlier during the 1970 survey. These indicate that the proportion single has increased among men from 57.5% to 62.2% and among women from 42.4% to 55.1% over the past two decades⁽¹²⁾ (**Figure 2.3**).

As expected, the proportion single dropped gradually with age and ranged between 94.4% among women aged 15-19 years and 5.3% among older women aged 70 years or more. The same pattern is observed among men. However, up to a certain age (35-39 years), the proportion single among men was found to be higher than that observed among women. The largest gender gap in the proportion single was found in the age group 25-29 years⁽¹³⁾ (**Figure 2.4**).

⁽¹²⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

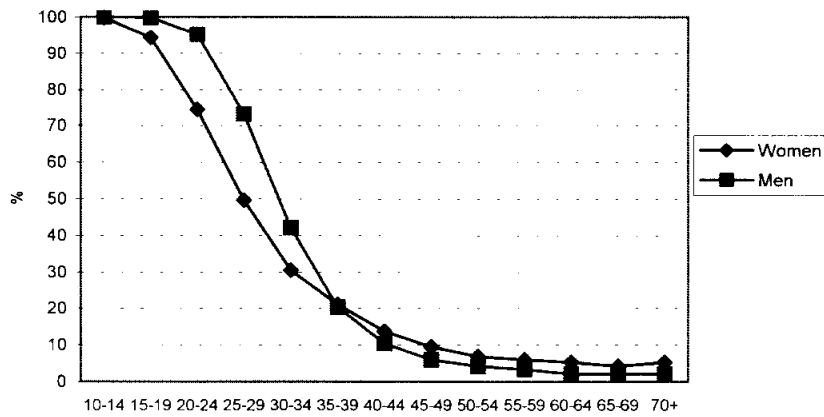
⁽¹³⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Figure 2.3 Marital status among women and men; 1970-1997



Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Figure 2.4 Proportion single by age and gender; 1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

It is worth noting that in the age segment 15-54 years the proportion single has increased between the years 1970 and 1997, except for men in the age group 50-54 years where it has slightly declined (Table 2.4).

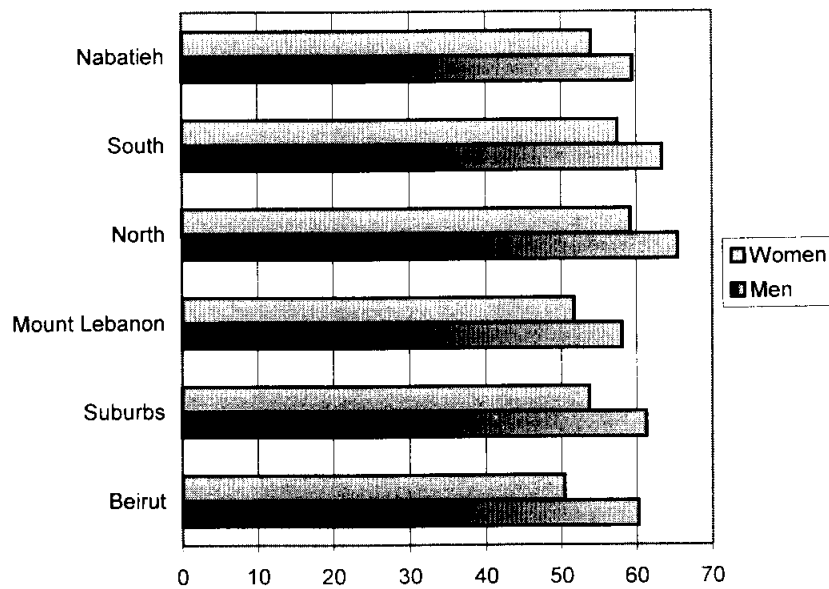
Table 2.4 Trends in the proportion single by age and gender; 1970-1997

Age group	1970		1997	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
15-19	86.8	99.0	94.4	99.9
20-24	50.9	88.1	74.4	95.3
25-29	25.1	54.9	49.7	73.3
30-34	14.2	25.3	30.5	42.0
35-39	10.1	15.0	21.2	20.4
40-44	7.6	8.5	13.7	10.3
45-49	6.9	5.7	9.5	5.9
50-54	7.3	6.4	6.8	4.3

Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Geographical differences were noted with respect to the proportion single among both men and women in 1997 (**Figure 2.5**). In fact, whereas 59.2% of women in the Northern governorate were single, only 50.4% of them were so in Beirut. Among men, the highest proportion single was also observed in the North (65.5%) and the lowest proportion was found in Mount Lebanon, excluding the suburbs (58.1%). On the other hand, the largest gender gap in the proportion single was observed in Beirut and the smallest was found in the governorate of Nabatieh ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Figure 2.5 Proportion single by gender and governorate*; 1997



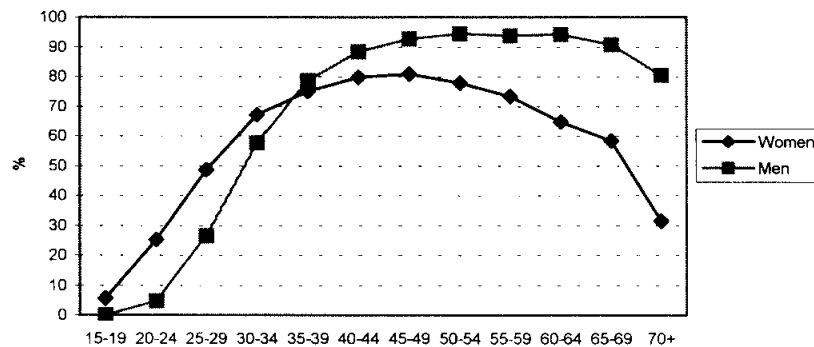
Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

* Mount Lebanon governorate excluding Beirut suburbs.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Women are still marrying at an earlier age as compared to men, since the proportion married in the age group 15-19 years was 5.6% among women and did not exceed 0.1% among men. In addition, the proportion married among women aged 20-24 years was significantly higher than that of men (25.1% vs. 4.7%). The same applies for the age group 25-29 years (48.7% vs. 26.5%) (**Figure 2.6**). However, the overall mean age at first marriage has increased between 1970 and 1996 from 23.7 years to 27.5 years ⁽¹⁵⁾. This increasing trend reflects many interconnected socio-economic factors, in addition to the effects of civil war and the emigration of the youth. This delay in marriage can also be explained by increased schooling of girls and increased level of educational attainment, as well as their improved workforce participation over the past few decades.

Figure 2.6 Proportion married among women and men by age groups; 1997

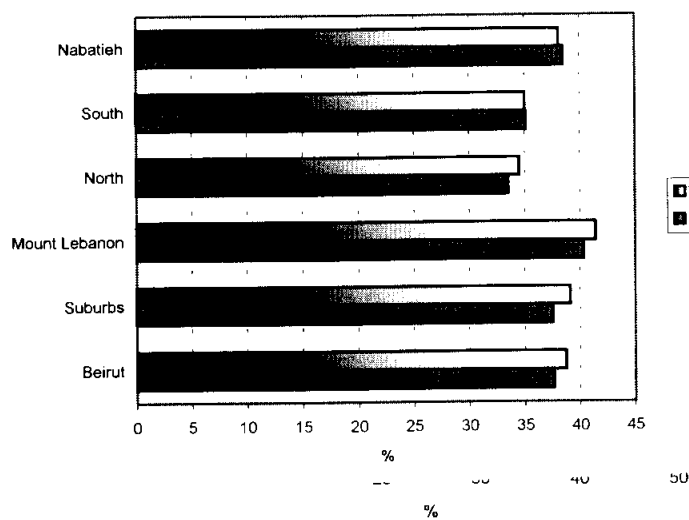


Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹⁵⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Recent studies have shown that men remain single for a longer period than women do. However, geographical variability exists, since the mean number of years whereby a woman remains single is as low as 25.9 years in the North and as high as 28.6 years in Beirut⁽¹⁶⁾. In addition, data indicate that women tend to delay their marriage to a greater extent with increased educational attainment. **Figure 2.7** shows how the proportion married in Lebanon varies across different geographical areas. It is clear that the married segment among women is higher in most governorates namely Beirut and its suburbs, Mount Lebanon, and the Bekaa. On the other hand, an almost equal proportion of men and women were married in the South and Nabadieh governorates.

Figure 2.7 Proportion married among women and men by governorate;1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹⁶⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

It is worth noting that the mean age at first marriage among both men and women is relatively high when compared to other Arab countries in the region. In fact, on average, these countries have estimated their mean age at marriage at 22 years for women and 27 years for men. Among the least developed countries of the region, the mean age at first marriage did not exceed the value of 20.5 years⁽¹⁷⁾.

IV. Fertility

The total fertility rate is known as the average number of children ever born to a woman during her reproductive life, based on the pattern observed in age-specific fertility in the year of study. A number of social, economic, educational and cultural factors may have a direct impact on the total fertility rate.

According to the PAPCHILD survey on maternal and child health in Lebanon, the total fertility rate was estimated at 2.8 children per woman during the year 1996. In addition, using an indirect method termed the **Brass Technique**, the total fertility rate was estimated at 3.0 children per woman*.

In fact, the majority of married women had three or four children, while 7% had none, and 4% had 9 children or more⁽¹⁸⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

⁽¹⁸⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

* Population of Lebanon: Demographic Estimates & Projections by M. Faour, P. Saxena, H. Nawfal & A. Farah, August 1998

Nevertheless, the total fertility rate in Lebanon is considered to be relatively low, a fact that is attributed to many factors including the increase in the proportion single over the years and the drop in the proportion married, as well as the increased school enrollment and literacy among women and their greater participation in the labour force. Moreover, the general economic conditions of the country may also affect fertility in addition to war events and their impact on migration movements and population growth.

However, fertility in Lebanon varies significantly with age as shown in **Table 2.5**, and reaches its peak among women aged 25-29 years (127.5) and then drops gradually to reach its minimum at the end of the reproductive period (5.2)⁽¹⁹⁾.

Table 2.5 Age-specific fertility rates (per 1000 women); 1996

Age group	Age-specific fertility rate (ASFR)
15-19	15.7
20-24	84.9
25-29	127.5
30-34	113.1
35-39	68.0
40-44	21.2
45-49	5.2

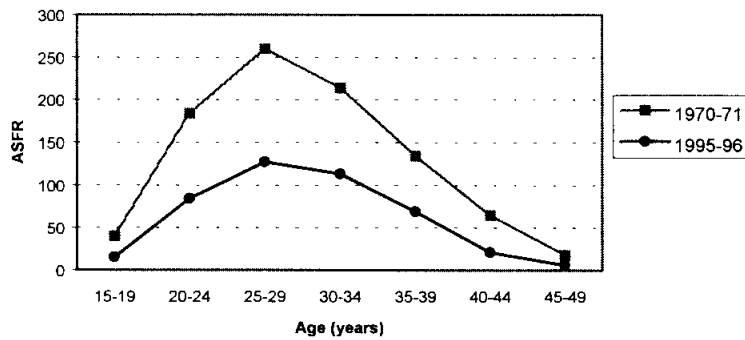
Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

It was observed that fertility has declined over the years among women of all age groups. In fact, when comparing results of the 1970 survey of active population to those of the 1996 population and housing survey, we find that women aged 15-19 years had less children than before, since their age-specific fertility rate dropped from a value of 40 per 1000 in 1970 to a value of 15.7 per 1000 in 1996.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Similarly, the age-specific fertility rate among women aged 45-49 has dropped from 8 per 1000 women in 1970 to 5.2 per 1000 women in 1996⁽²⁰⁾ (**Figure 2.8**).

Figure 2.8 Trend in age-specific fertility rates; 1970-1996



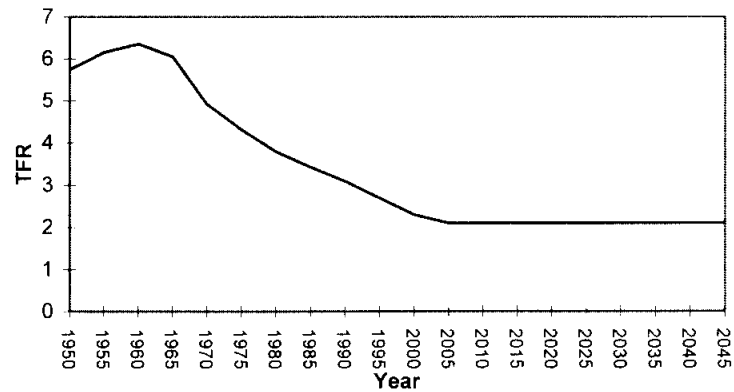
Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

It is expected that the total fertility rate will continue to decline over the coming years (**Figure 2.9**), although at a slower pace than the one witnessed in the past. Future projections indicate that fertility will reach near replacement level (around 2 children per woman) by the year 2045⁽²¹⁾.

⁽²⁰⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽²¹⁾ World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

Figure 2.9 Trend in total fertility rates and future projections; 1950-2045



Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

It is clear that the total fertility rate in Lebanon is distinctively lower than rates encountered in other Arab countries, which on average were estimated at 5.8 children per woman with ten countries exceeding this average. Whereas Lebanon and Tunisia were shown to have the lowest total fertility rates (3.4 on average), Yemen exhibited the highest level of fertility reaching a value of 7.5 children per woman⁽²²⁾. Similar to the pattern observed in Lebanon, rural fertility in all Arab countries was shown to exceed that in urban areas. It is worth noting that in all Arab countries, total fertility rates have decreased over the past two decades, which has led many researchers to label this trend by using the term “demographic transition”. This transition has affected greatly the structure of the population pyramids in all these countries, leading to a decline in the total dependency ratio.

⁽²²⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

V. Household headship and size

A significant proportion of Lebanese households had a size ranging between four and five members (17.6% and 18.4%, respectively). However, there remain around 11.1% of households having a size of more than eight members. These are mainly found in the North and Bekaa governorates and constitute 20% and 14% of total households in these respective areas. The average household size in Lebanon was estimated at 4.8 in 1997 and hence, is lower than the one estimated in 1970 (5.3 members) (**Table 2.6**).

Woman-headed households constitute around 12.5% of the total Lebanese households. The majority of women heads are widowed (80%); 12% of them are single and the remaining 6% are divorced. Hence, only 1.5% of women heads of households are married. The proportion of woman-headed households differs across geographical areas, and is most elevated in Beirut (20%), followed by the South and Nabatieh (around 14%), and decreases to 12% in the North of Lebanon and 10% in the Bekaa region⁽²³⁾.

The majority of woman-headed households are small in size, whereby 29.1% of them consist of a woman living alone. In addition, only 1.5% of woman-headed households contain nine individuals or more. Most of these households have a low level of income. In fact, whereas 40% of households earn less than 800 thousands Lebanese Pounds (LP) on a monthly basis, this proportion among woman-headed households was estimated at 59%. In spite of this, the average per capita income in woman-headed households was found to be higher than that obtained at the national level, a fact that is probably due to the small size of woman-headed households (**Table 2.7**).

⁽²³⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

It was also noted that only a small proportion of woman heads of households are economically active, since 23% of them are wage-earning employees. In addition, those women usually benefit from other sources of income besides employment, such as financial aid and real estate among others⁽²⁴⁾.

Moreover, the proportion of households that are headed by women has increased over the past two decades from 11.3% in 1970 to 12.5% in 1997⁽²⁵⁾.

Table 2.6 Household size by governorate; 1997

Household size	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon*	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa
1	9.0	5.6	5.9	4.9	5.3	8.9	5.9
2	13.0	10.9	12.6	9.9	11.0	17.3	10.8
3	14.2	13.2	12.7	10.6	12.3	14.2	11.3
4	18.1	21.7	22.3	12.5	16.2	14.3	14.3
5	19.2	19.7	20.6	16.5	17.7	13.9	17.8
6	13.3	13.8	14.1	14.1	12.9	13.4	15.2
7	6.8	7.5	6.5	11.0	10.7	8.8	10.7
8+	6.4	7.6	5.3	20.5	13.9	9.1	14.0

Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

* excluding Beirut suburbs

⁽²⁴⁾ The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

⁽²⁵⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Table 2.7 Distribution of household size by gender of head; 1996

Household size	Household headship	
	Woman-headed	Man-headed
1	29.1	3.5
2	20.2	10.3
3	16.7	12.8
4	12.7	18.5
5	9.7	19.6
6	5.6	15.0
7	2.7	8.6
8	1.7	4.9
9	0.9	3.0
10+	0.8	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

VI. Geographical distribution and population growth

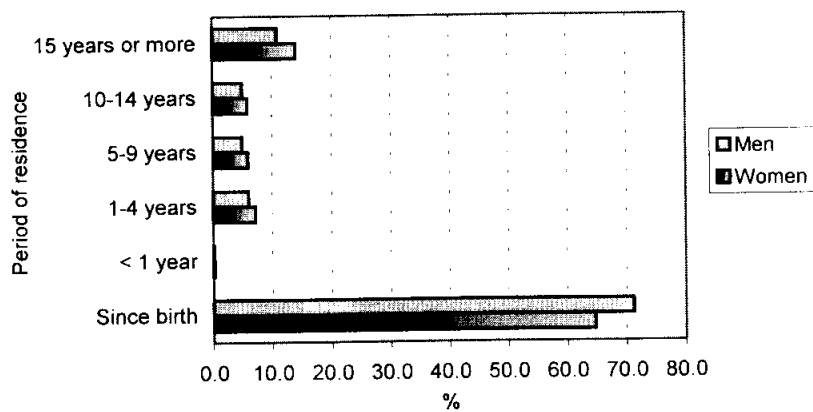
The ever-evolving economic and demographic situation has triggered a decline in the proportion of women residing in Beirut from 21% in 1970 to 13% in 1996. This decline was also noted in other governorates.

In general, the urban area in the Middle East and North Africa has witnessed a growth in its population that was more rapid than the one observed in the region as a whole. In fact, the average annual increase in urban areas has reached a value of 4.4% during the 70s and 80s. It was estimated, in 1990, that more than half of the population in our region were living in urban areas. Rates of urbanization were shown to increase from a regional average of 45% in 1985 to 51% in 1995. It is worth noting that Lebanon currently has the highest proportion of urban population.

VII. Internal and external migration

Data from the Population and Housing Survey that was conducted in 1996 by the Ministry of Social Affairs indicates that around two thirds of the population (67.9%) have not left their place of residence since birth. However, this proportion differed between women and men and was found to be 64.8% among women as compared to 71.2% among men. Those who have resided in their place of birth for less than one year accounted for 0.21% of women and 0.17% of men. This reflects the extent of internal migration movements in the country (Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10 Period of residence among men and women; 1996



Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

The rate of external migration in Lebanon is estimated at 0.79%, and is more commonly undertaken by men than by women, with respective rates estimated at 1.34% and 0.24% (out of the total population).

The majority of women who emigrate are aged between 15 and 24 years (0.43% of total women in that age group). On the other hand, men usually emigrate at an age ranging between 25-49 years i.e. at the peak of their economic activity (2.5% of total men in that age group); (**Table 2.8**). Overall, women constitute 15.4% of the total emigrants⁽²⁶⁾.

Table 2.8 External migration rate by gender and age group; 1996

Age group	Women	Men
0-14	0.05	0.07
15-24	0.43	2.03
25-49	0.30	2.54
50-64	0.27	0.75
65+	0.14	0.20
Not reported	0.78	5.45
Total	0.24	1.34

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

VIII. Housing conditions

Secondary analysis of the PHS data shows that a significantly higher proportion of women heads were living under poor housing conditions. In fact, whereas around 7.0% of men heads had no heating systems, this proportion among women was estimated at 9.6%. Similarly, 8.3% of woman heads were living in a single-room abode as compared to 4.4% of men⁽²⁷⁾.

⁽²⁶⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽²⁷⁾ Ibid

In terms of infrastructure, woman-headed households were more likely to be deprived from any form of sewage systems (1.1% vs. 0.8% among men) or water networks (11.7% vs. 4.9%). In terms of drinking water, woman-headed households had less access to safe and filtered water than their counterparts (5.3% vs. 6.3%) (Table 2.9).

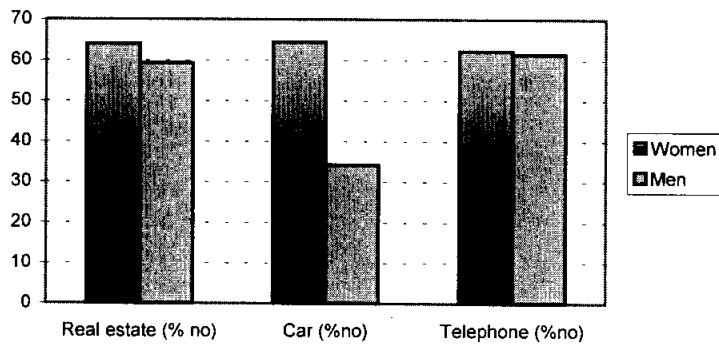
Table 2.9 Selected housing conditions by gender of head; 1996

	Gender of head		
	Women	Men	Both
Heating system			
Central	7.0	7.5	7.5
Gas/diesel	64.4	67.5	67.0
Electrical	4.9	5.3	5.2
Other	14.1	12.7	12.9
No heating	9.6	7.0	7.4
Number of rooms			
One	8.3	4.4	4.9
Two	20.3	16.4	17.0
Three or more	71.4	79.2	78.1
Sewage			
% none	1.1	0.8	0.8
Water network			
% none	11.7	4.9	4.7
Drinking water			
No filtering	64.0	60.0	60.6
Filtered water	12.8	13.0	13.0
Spring water	7.9	10.5	10.2
Bottled/Other	15.2	16.2	16.2

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

In terms of material possessions, whereas 59.3% of men-headed households did not possess any real estate, this proportion was estimated at 64.0% among woman heads. Similar results were found in terms of car possession, since 64.5% of woman heads did not own any car as compared to 34.2% among their male counterparts. However, with respect to the number of telephone lines, no significant difference was found between women and men (**Figure 2.11**).

Figure 2.11 Real estate, car and telephone ownership by gender of head; 1996



Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Chapter III

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Lebanon has witnessed a sizeable improvement in school enrollment and literacy over the years, among both men and women. In spite of this improvement, there remains a certain degree of variability with respect to educational indicators across geographical areas. These differences reflect the unevenness of socio-economic conditions and levels of development in different areas of Lebanon. In addition, within each area, school enrollment varies at the level of subgroups of individuals based on their socio-economic status.

I. Illiteracy

In spite of the improvement in illiteracy rate that was witnessed at the national level (11.6%), gender gap in that respect is still a significant one. In fact, illiteracy accounts for 16% of women aged 10 years and above as compared to 7.2% among men⁽¹⁾. The rate of illiteracy was shown to increase with age and a wide gap was noted between the young segment of the female population aged 20-24 years and older women aged 70 years or more in that respect (3.9% vs. 63.1%)⁽²⁾ (**Table 3.1**).

Among adult men (15 years and over), rates of illiteracy differ across various geographical locations and the highest levels were observed in North Lebanon (16.7%) and the South and Nabatieh governorates (14.4% and 14.8%, respectively) (**Table 3.2**).

⁽¹⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽²⁾ Ibid

Table 3.1 Illiteracy rate among women by age group and governorate; 1997

Age group	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa	Total
10-14	0.7	1.5	0.6	3.3	1.3	1.1	1.7	1.7
15-19	1.3	1.1	0.3	5.3	2.4	0.7	2.9	2.3
20-24	4.2	2.7	2.4	6.6	2.6	2.0	5.0	3.9
25-29	6.1	3.2	2.1	11.5	8.2	1.6	5.9	5.7
30-34	6.8	5.1	2.4	15.6	11.4	7.4	6.6	7.7
35-39	8.2	7.9	3.3	19.3	12.1	8.7	16.0	10.7
40-44	9.8	10.6	4.7	29.1	25.1	26.8	26.8	16.6
45-49	12.9	17.9	8.7	33.0	39.3	36.0	33.3	23.9
50-54	16.6	26.0	14.6	38.4	49.4	40.3	43.0	30.8
55-59	24.6	33.6	22.0	51.4	58.7	57.3	64.9	42.1
60-65	32.4	42.3	34.2	70.0	63.4	59.5	65.2	50.7
65-69	43.5	47.2	39.2	72.8	77.4	77.3	71.4	58.0
70+	38.0	50.7	51.6	72.6	81.7	86.5	70.9	63.1

Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

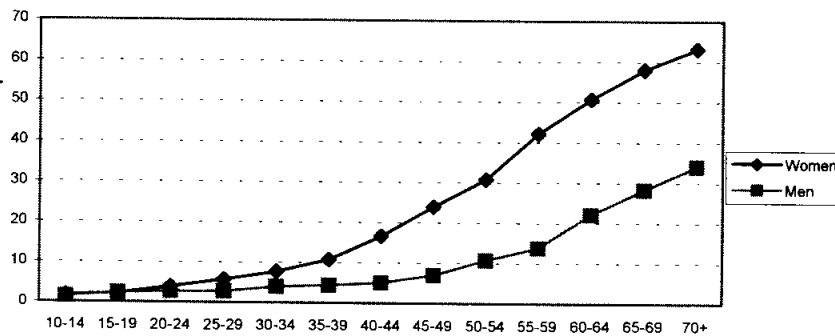
Table 3.2 Illiteracy rate among men by age group and governorate; 1997

Age group	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa	Total
10-14	0.8	1.2	0.4	3.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	1.4
15-19	0.9	2.0	1.0	6.0	1.9	1.3	1.5	2.4
20-24	0.8	2.6	1.0	5.3	2.2	1.9	2.7	2.7
25-29	1.2	2.5	0.7	6.4	4.1	0.5	1.8	2.8
30-34	5.3	2.0	1.0	9.2	5.6	2.5	3.0	4.0
35-39	2.1	3.8	2.4	8.7	5.0	2.1	4.1	4.4
40-44	5.8	3.6	0.6	11.5	5.9	4.7	4.6	1.5
45-49	4.9	5.1	1.9	16.7	7.2	1.7	10.1	7.0
50-54	6.9	9.3	4.5	19.2	14.7	8.3	12.6	10.7
55-59	8.6	14.0	7.9	23.0	16.1	13.5	15.5	13.8
60-65	10.6	16.5	10.2	37.1	33.6	25.8	25.4	22.1
65-69	13.7	23.5	17.3	44.0	36.8	30.1	35.0	28.3
70+	22.0	27.8	18.7	47.3	45.1	45.8	42.1	34.1

Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

The following figure shows how gender gaps in illiteracy become wider with age (**Figure 3.1**).

Figure 3.1 Illiteracy rate by gender and age group; 1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

It is worth noting that illiteracy rate among men aged 10 years and over has declined distinctively over the past two decades from 31.8% in 1970 to around 11.6% in 1997.

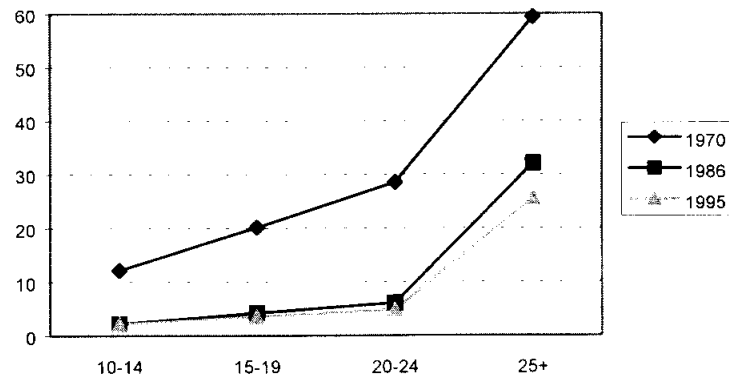
Among women aged 10 years or more, this trend was also noted for all age groups, and especially among the youth. In fact, young women aged 10-14 years have witnessed a clear drop in illiteracy from 12.1% in 1970 to 1.7% in 1997. Among those in the age group 20-24 years, the rate has declined from 28.5% in 1970 to 3.9% in 1997. This general decline in illiteracy is a direct response to the increase level of school enrollment during that same period (**Table 3.3 & Figure 3.2**).

Table 3.3 Trend in illiteracy rate by gender and age group; 1970-1997

Age group	1970			1997		
	Women	Men	Gender gap	Women	Men	Gender gap
10-14	15.3	6.1	2.5	1.7	1.4	1.2
15-19	20.7	8.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	0.9
20-24	28.6	11.0	2.6	3.9	2.7	1.4
25-29	37.8	15.2	2.4	5.7	2.8	2.0
10+	42.1	21.5	1.9	16.0	7.3	2.2

Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Figure 3.2 Trends in illiteracy rates among women for selected years; 1970-1995



Source: The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

Illiteracy rate in Lebanon seems to be one of the lowest in the Arab region, where more than half of adult women are illiterate, with a regional average rate of 54% among women and 32% among men. However, in terms of gender gap, Lebanon remains similar to other Arab countries whereby for each illiterate man we may find a regional average of 1.7 illiterate women⁽³⁾.

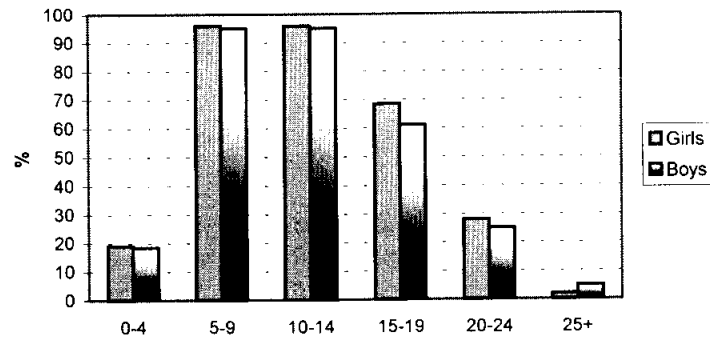
II. Educational enrollment and dropping out

The rate of enrollment in schools and universities has reached around 30.9% for the total population (31.5% among men and 30.3% among women). The peak of enrollment is attained by children aged 5-9 years (95.4%), and drops to 93.9% and 64.3% among the older groups 10-14 and 15-19 years, respectively. No gender gap is noted with respect to the school enrollment of young children (5-9 years), since rates were estimated at 95.6% among girls and 95.3% among boys. In contrast, enrollment rates in older age groups (i.e. 10-14 and 15-19) were higher among girls. For instance, 67.6% of girls aged 15-19 years were enrolled in schools, as compared to 61.2% of boys in the same age group (**Figure 3.3**)⁽⁴⁾.

⁽³⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

⁽⁴⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Figure 3.3 Educational enrollment (school & university) by gender and age group; 1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

In general, school enrollment was more prone to drop off at the post-primary levels and this applies to both girls and boys. Among girls, 95.6% and 94.8% were enrolled at the primary and intermediate levels, respectively. This proportion was shown to decrease reaching 67.6% at the secondary level. In the case of boys, a similar pattern was observed with 95.3% enrolled at the primary level, 93.2% at the intermediate and 61.2% at the secondary level⁽⁵⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

The rates of dropping out of school at the primary level were almost equal between boys and girls in the age group 6-11 years. As for the intermediate level, girls were found to be less likely than boys to drop out of school, since rates were 33% and 40%, respectively. The same pattern applies to secondary levels with 63% of girls dropping out as compared to 66% of boys; (Tables 3.4 & 3.5) ⁽⁶⁾.

Table 3.4 Number of girls per 100 boys enrolled in schools and proportion of girls among drop-outs by level of education; 1996

Educational level	Number of girls per 100 boys enrolled*	Proportion of girls who drop out of school
Primary	93.09	50.60
Intermediate	104.08	44.12
Secondary	102.56	47.30

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

* Within eligible age group

Table 3.5 Enrollment and dropping out of schools by educational level and gender; 1996

Educational Level	Enrolled in school			Dropped out			Eligible population		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Primary (6-11 years)	153136	164499	31763	33570	32776	66346	186706	19727	383981
Intermediate (12-15 years)	85652	82295	16794	43144	54634	97778	128796	13692	265725
Secondary (16-18 years)	35013	34139	69152	59456	66239	125695	94469	10037	194847

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽⁶⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

School enrollment has slightly decline over the past two decades from 33.6% in 1970 to 30.9% in 1997. This trend can be attributed to the ageing of the Lebanese population and the narrowing of its pyramid's base leading to a smaller number of young children with the potential to enroll in schools. However, gender differentials were noted in that respect, since the drop in school enrollment has affected exclusively boys (from 36.8% in 1970 to 31.5% in 1997). In contrast, school enrollment among girls has not changed over the past two decades (30.3%).

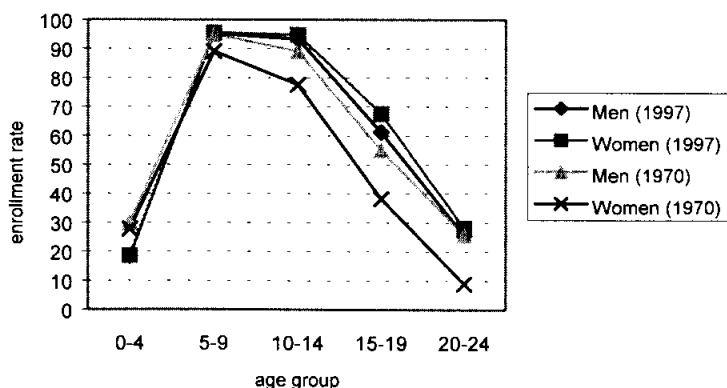
When we consider each educational level on its own, we notice an increasing trend in school enrollment among both boys and girls over the past two decades. In particular, among girls aged 10-14 years, enrollment has increased from 77.5% in 1970 to 94.8% in 1997. This positive trend applies also to boys in all age groups (Figure 3.4)⁽⁷⁾.

Some strategic actions undertaken at the national level for Lebanese women in the area of education:

- Adopting a national policy that enforces schooling until the intermediate level of education.
- Following-up on the development of new educational programs that would emphasize gender equality in rights and duties and the equal roles of women and men in all areas and at all stages.
- Enhancing the participation of women in the formulation of policies at all levels of education.

⁽⁷⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Figure 3.4 Trends in school enrollment by gender and age group; 1970-1997



Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Lebanon can still be classified as having the highest school enrollment rate both at the primary and secondary levels of education among other Arab countries. In fact, the average regional rate of enrollment among girls was estimated to be 81% at the primary level and 47% at the secondary level (1992). Data also points towards an improvement in the Arab region with respect to school enrollment over the past two decades.

III. Educational attainment

Current figures on population distribution by gender and educational attainment among those aged 20 years or more show that 24.2% of women have completed primary level, 19.1% were illiterate and 7.5% had reading and writing abilities. Moreover, 7.3% have attained a university level education.

On the other hand, data prove that around 29.1% of men aged 20 years or more have finished primary education, while 10% have completed university studies and 18.4% were either illiterate or had only informal reading and writing skills (9.7%) (Figure 3.5)⁽⁸⁾.

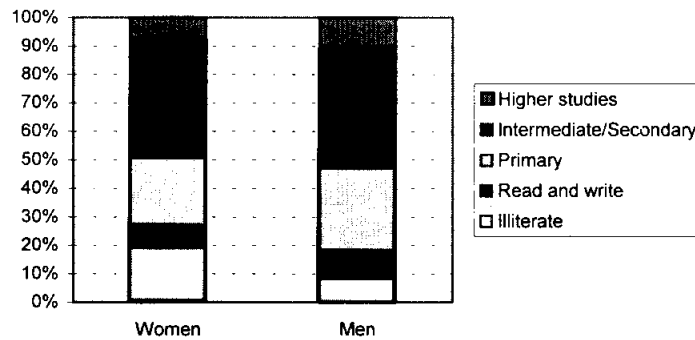
The same source of data shows that the lowest educational attainment is more found among the older generations. However, it is expected, as a consequence to improvement in schooling particularly at the primary level, that educational attainment will rise in future decades among both men and women. In addition, with the rise in school enrollment among the youth, it is expected that illiteracy rates will drop eventually in the Lebanese population as a whole.

It is worth noting that the proportion of women with completed university studies (8%) in Lebanon remains one of the highest in the Arab region, where this proportion does not exceed 5%. However, the gender gap in educational attainment at higher levels remains considerably elevated in Lebanon and in all Arab countries with an average ratio of 50 women for every 100 man⁽⁹⁾.

⁽⁸⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁹⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

Figure 3.5 Educational attainment among women and men (aged 20 years or more); 1997



Sources: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

IV. Higher education

Currently, around 51% of the total number of students enrolled in higher education is composed of women. This proportion of women in the case of the Lebanese University has increased over the years from 22.7% in 1970 to 46.0% in 1980-81 to finally reach 52.0% in 1993-94 ⁽¹⁰⁾. In the case of other universities, this proportion of women remains significantly lower than that of men, even though it has increased during the period 1980-1994 (Table 3.6).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Center for Educational Research and Development, preliminary statistics for the academic years 1970-1971 till 1995-1996

Table 3.6 Percent distribution of university students by gender; 1980-1996

University	Academic year					
	1980-1981		1992-1993		1995-1996	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Lebanese University	54.0	46.0	50.0	50.0	48.0	52.0
Other universities	71.0	29.0	61.0	39.0	56.0	44.0

Source: Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Center for Educational Research and Development, preliminary statistics for the academic years 1970-1971 till 1995-1996.

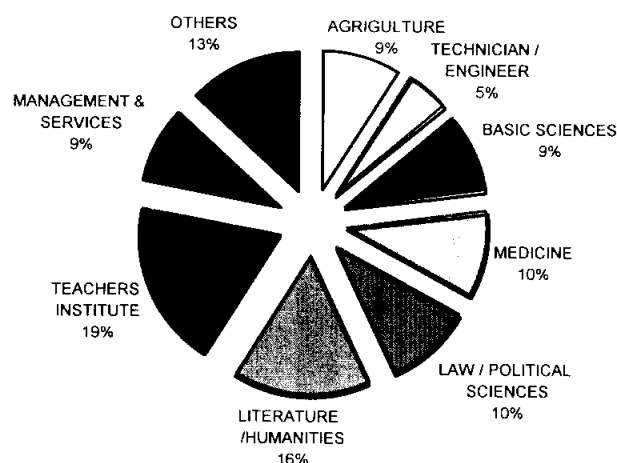
The 1996 population and housing survey data shows that women constitute the majority of registered students in the literature and humanities branches (77%) and more so in teaching diplomas (94%), whereas they are less represented in other areas such as engineering with a proportion not exceeding 23.6% ⁽¹¹⁾. **Figure 3.6** presents the composition of women in higher education by specialization, according to the Household Living Conditions Survey in 1997.

Another study that was carried out among working women has shown that a significant proportion of women in the labour force had acquired university degrees in the fields of literature and humanities (30.4%) or in economics and business administration (18.4%). This study has also indicated that these fields of specialization are in particular women's favorite choices of study. This proves that even though educational attainment had been improved over the years, no diversity in specialization among women accompanied this improvement. The feminization of certain areas of specialization is still prevailing in Lebanon, irrespective of the labour market demand ⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹¹⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽¹²⁾ Lebanese Women in the Labour Force, Lebanese American University, 1998

Figure 3.6 Distribution of women in higher education by field of specialization; 1996



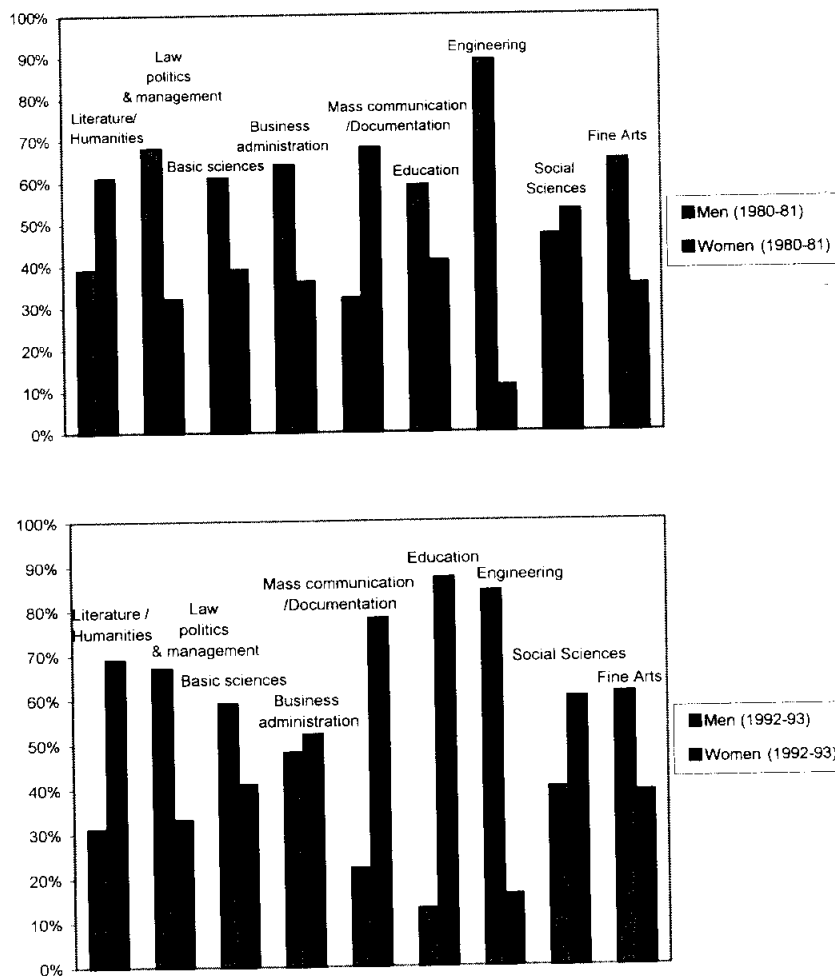
Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Nevertheless, it has been shown that enrollment of women in specialties perceived earlier as “men’s work”, namely engineering, science and medicine, has witnessed an increasing trend in the past few years (**Figure 3.7**)⁽¹³⁾. A recent study conducted by the Lebanese Association for Educational Sciences (LAES) in the year 1994-1995 indicated that specialties that encompassed 60% to less than 90% of women in Lebanese universities included paramedical sciences (nutrition, laboratory medicine, x-ray and pharmacy), general medicine, and interior design. However, specialties that still incorporate men at a rate of 60-90% included basic sciences, engineering, applied sciences, law and medicine⁽¹⁴⁾.

(13) Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Center for Educational Research and Development, preliminary statistics for the academic years 1980-1981 till 1992-1993

(14) Higher Education in Lebanon (*Al taalim al 'ali fi lubnan*) by Adnan el Amine (ed.), LAES, 1997

Figure 3.7 Distribution of students in the Lebanese University (LU) by gender and field of specialization; 1980-1993



Source: Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Center for Educational Research and Development, preliminary statistics for the academic years 1980-1981 till 1992-1993.

V. Technical and vocational training

Women's enrollment in vocational and technical training programs is still a modest one when compared to that of men, accounting only to 34% of the total enrolled during the year 1995-1997⁽¹⁵⁾. It is worth noting, however, that the proportion of women enrolled in training and vocational programs has increased over the years from 17.5% in 1982 to 34.2% in 1994⁽¹⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Center for Educational Research and Development, preliminary statistics for the academic years 1970-1971 till 1995-1996

⁽¹⁶⁾ The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

Chapter IV

HEALTH AND REPRODUCTION

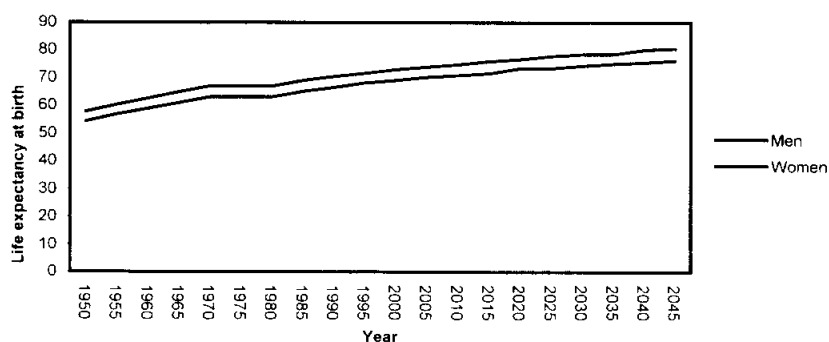
HEALTH AND REPRODUCTION

I. Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth was reported in 1996 to be 72 years among women and 69 years among men. Even though earlier statistical estimates are not available, the marked improvements at the socioeconomic, health services and health awareness levels have positively affected longevity among both women and men⁽¹⁾.

According to the United Nations estimates, the rising trend in life expectancy at birth will persist in the coming years. It is also projected that the gender gap in life expectancy will remain in its current status; (**Figure 4.1**)⁽²⁾.

Figure 4.1 Estimated life expectancy at birth in Lebanon; 1950-2045



Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

⁽¹⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽²⁾ World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

The regional life expectancy at birth is currently estimated at 61 years, reaching around 64 years among women. Hence, life expectancy in Lebanon can be considered among the highest in the Arab region as a whole⁽³⁾.

II. Infant and child mortality

By the year 1997, infant mortality rate had reached an approximate value of 27 per 1000, without any sensible gender gaps (27.6 per 1000 among girls and 28.2 per 1000 among boys). On the other hand, the overall mortality among children under five years of age was reported to be 32.2 per 1000, and was significantly more elevated among boys (33 per 1000), as compared to girls (31.2 per 1000). Child mortality between one and four years of age was also found to be higher among boys as compared to girls (5.0 vs. 3.7 per 1000, respectively, with an overall rate of 4.4 per 1000)⁽⁴⁾.

Moreover, the United Nations estimates indicate that infant mortality rates in Lebanon will continue to decrease and will eventually reach a value of 25 per 1000 by the year 2000, 15 per 1000 by 2020 and 9 per 1000 by 2045. However, projections of gender gaps in infant mortality were not available (**Figure 4.2**)⁽⁵⁾.

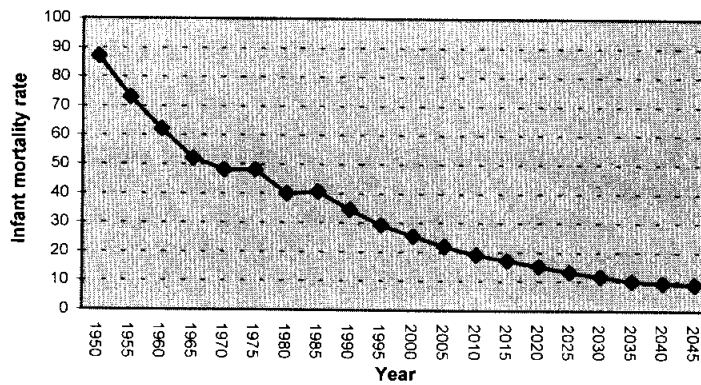
⁽³⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators. UN-ESCWA, 1998

⁽⁴⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

⁽⁵⁾ World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

In addition, it was observed that infant mortality was inversely related to women's education since according to the 1996 PHS survey, rates among illiterate women and those who have completed secondary were 54.5 and 14.8 per 1000, respectively⁽⁶⁾. Age of the woman at birth was also noted as an important determinant for neonatal mortality rate, which seems to rise when the mother's age was less than 20 years or when in the older categories (35-49). Birth order of the child was also an important determinant for both infant and child mortality (Table 4.1)⁽⁷⁾.

Figure 4.2 Estimated trends of infant mortality in Lebanon; 1950-2040



Source: World Population Prospects, United Nations, 1998

⁽⁶⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽⁷⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

Table 4.1 Infant and under five child mortality rates during the ten years preceding the survey by demographic characteristics (1986-1996)

	Mortality rate				
	<1 month	1-11 months	<1 year	1-4 years	<5 years
Gender					
Girl	25.3	8.4	33.7	3.0	36.6
Boy	24.6	8.8	33.4	3.2	36.4
Age of mother at birth					
< 20	26.8	9.7	36.5	2.0	38.4
20-29	21.6	8.7	30.4	2.8	33.1
30-34	25.5	10.4	35.9	1.3	37.1
35-49	39.6	4.0	43.6	9.1	52.4
Birth order					
First	25.5	6.1	31.6	1.8	33.4
Second or third	18.4	6.5	24.8	3.3	28.1
Fourth or more	32.7	13.1	45.8	3.8	49.4
Birth spacing interval					
< 2 years	32.1	13.8	45.9	2.6	48.4
2-3 years	17.7	7.2	24.9	6.5	31.2
4 years or more	24.6	6.0	30.6	0.0	30.6
Total	24.9	8.6	33.5	3.1	36.5

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

The PAPCHILD survey (1997) has shown that infant and child mortality has decreased over the past fifteen years from 41.0 to 27.9 per 1000 for infants and from 43.6 to 32.2 per 1000 among children aged less than 5 years⁽⁸⁾ (Table 4.2).

⁽⁸⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

Table 4.2 Direct estimates of infant and under five years child mortality rates by 5-year periods preceding the survey (1991-1996)

Mortality rates	Years preceding the survey				
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24
Girls					
Under 1 month mortality	19.9	3.5	28.7	18.3	23.1
Mortality between 1 month and 1 year	7.7	9.0	10.5	7.2	21.9
Under 1 year mortality	27.6	39.5	39.2	25.5	45.0
Mortality between 1 and 5 years	3.7	2.3	2.1	9.5	7.1
Under 5 years mortality	31.2	41.7	41.3	43.7	51.8
Boys					
Under 1 month mortality	20.7	28.2	32.1	23.1	34.0
Mortality between 1 month and 1 year	7.5	10.1	10.6	15.0	9.4
Under 1 year mortality	28.2	38.3	42.7	38.0	43.6
Mortality between 1 and 5 years	5.0	1.3	3.3	7.4	2.4
Under 5 years mortality	33.0	39.5	45.9	45.2	45.9

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

Finally, statistical indicators show that infant deaths often occur as a consequence to pregnancy and birth-related morbidity as well as blood diseases. On the other hand, under-five child mortality is primarily caused by congenital malformation triggered by genetic disorders.

It can also be noted that infant mortality rates in Lebanon are significantly lower than those witnessed in the Arab region. These were estimated on average to be 50 per 1000 among girls and 55 per 1000 for boys.

Similar to the Lebanese situation, infant mortality among boys remains more elevated than that among girls in all Arab countries with the exception of Yemen where the reverse pattern is noted⁽⁹⁾.

⁽⁹⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

III. Maternal mortality

Data has shown that the risk of dying among mothers around the period of delivery was close to 0.39%, i.e. one case in every 256 births. In addition, it has proved that the majority of deaths among women in their reproductive age (15-49 years) are caused by pregnancy-related or perinatal complications. **Table 4.3** shows the age pattern of maternal mortality, as estimated by the PAPCHILD survey between 1995 and 1996⁽¹⁰⁾.

Table 4.3 Indirect estimates of lifetime maternal mortality risk, using the sisterhood method; 1995-1996

Age group	Number of respondents	Ever married sisters	Number of maternal deaths	Correction factor	Exposure to risk	Lifetime mortality risk	Rate*
15-19	49	114	0	0.1070	12	0.0000	--
20-24	320	743	2	0.2060	153	0.0130	0.5073
25-29	539	1005	1	0.3430	345	0.0030	0.0871
30-34	619	1314	3	0.5030	661	0.0045	0.1897
34-39	608	1498	3	0.6640	995	0.0030	0.1080
40-44	492	1262	4	0.8020	1012	0.0039	0.1378
45-49	372	1020	3	0.9000	918	0.0033	0.0719
Total	3000	6957	16	--	4096	0.0039	0.1227

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

* Maternal mortality rate

⁽¹⁰⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

IV. Pregnancy and reproduction

The utilization of prenatal care is an essential means to ensure safety for both woman and foetus. Available data prove that the majority of women in Lebanon are utilizing primary health care services during pregnancy (87% over the period 1991-1996). This proportion, however, varied across different geographical areas to reach around 99% in Beirut. In addition, it was more elevated among women aged less than 30 years (89.2%). On the other hand, prenatal care utilization was positively associated with women's educational attainment (96% among those with secondary level education or more as compared to 65% among illiterates). The 1996 PAPCHILD survey has also shown that 79.1% of pregnant women had undergone physical check-up. Whereas 20.9% of women did not follow-up on their pregnancy, 34.2% received such care on at least four consecutive occasions⁽¹¹⁾. However, these proportions differ according to woman's age, educational attainment and geographical area of residence (**Table 4.4**).

It was observed that the main reason for not seeking prenatal care was the absence of any complaint or health problem during pregnancy (58.5%). It was also found that the cost of specialized care constituted another barrier among 23.8% of women in their prenatal period. Nevertheless, data indicated that most of prenatal health care takes place in the presence of a physician (92%), whereas 5.5% is carried out by nurses and 2.2% by midwives. In addition, most of these services take place in private health care institutions (85.8%), mainly due to the unavailability of governmental health care institutions in all geographical areas⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹¹⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

⁽¹²⁾ Ibid

Table 4.4 Prenatal care over the five years preceding the survey (1996) by reason for visit and socio-demographic characteristics of the mother

Characteristics	Percent births that received prenatal care	# of births	Reason for visit			# of births that received prenatal care
			Follow-up	Complaint	Total (%)	
Age of mother (years)						
< 30	89.2	1121	69.5	30.5	100.0	1000
30-49	84.3	1069	67.7	32.3	100.0	901
Place of residence						
Beirut	98.8	238	76.8	23.2	100.0	235
Mount Lebanon	95.8	670	72.4	27.6	100.0	642
North	71.0	603	64.1	35.9	100.0	428
Bekaa	86.1	312	63.8	36.2	100.0	269
South	93.6	233	73.1	26.9	100.0	218
Nabatieh	82.0	135	50.5	49.5	100.0	110
Education						
None/informal	69.5	534	53.3	46.7	100.0	371
Primary	87.1	656	66.6	33.4	100.0	571
Intermediate or more	95.9	1000	75.9	24.1	100.0	959

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

On the other hand, data indicate that the vast majority of births occur in the hospital (88%), while only 12% of them take place at home. The latter proportion varies across a woman's level of education (28.4% among the illiterate vs. 4.4% among those with intermediate education or more). In addition, this proportion also increases with the age of the pregnant woman and with the number of children ever born (Table 4.5)⁽¹³⁾.

⁽¹³⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

Table 4.5 Percent distribution of births over the five years preceding the survey (1996) by place of delivery and socio-economic characteristics of the mother

Characteristics	Place of delivery						# of Births
	Governmental institution	Private institution	Home	Other	NR**	Total (%)	
Age of mother (years)							
< 30	18.1	70.7	11.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	1121
30-49	19.1	67.8	12.6	0.3	0.3	100.0	1069
Place of residence							
Beirut	6.6	87.6	4.9	0.4	0.4	100.0	238
Mount Lebanon	12.0	83.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	670
North	33.3	42.0	24.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	603
Bekaa	11.6	80.1	7.0	0.7	0.7	100.0	312
South	17.6	71.2	11.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	233
Nabatieh	24.8	61.7	13.5	0.0	0.0	100.0	135
Education							
None/informal	23.5	47.6	28.4	0.6	0.0	100.0	534
Primary	22.3	22.3	9.8	0.0	0.3	100.0	656
Intermediate or more	13.5	13.5	4.4	0.0	0.1	100.0	1000
Number of children							
0-1	16.2	80.9	2.9	0.0	0.0	100.0	264
2-3	17.2	76.1	6.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	1088
4+	21.2	56.8	21.3	0.4	0.4	100.0	837
Total	18.6	69.3	11.9	0.1	0.1	100.0	2189

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

** Not reported

The cost associated with hospitalized delivery was the primary cause of births occurring at home as reported by 54% of mothers who did not deliver under a physician's care. Data has also shown that around 77% of births occurred normally without any complication.

It was observed that most of mothers who suffered from birth-induced complications were either less than 20 years of age or more than 35 years old⁽¹⁴⁾. As for post-natal care, only a small proportion of women were receivers of such a service (39%) over the period 1991-1996. This service occurred in the majority of cases under the care of a physician as shown in **Table 4.6**.

Table 4.6 Percent distribution of births over the five years preceding the survey (1996) by provider of post-natal care and socio-economic characteristics of the mother

Characteristics	Provider of post-natal care						Total (%)	# of Births
	Physician	Nurse	Midwife	Other	None	NR**		
Age of mother (years)								
< 30	33.9	2.5	0.9	0.6	61.9	0.3	100.0	1121
30-49	36.5	2.2	0.9	0.3	59.7	0.5	100.0	1069
Place of residence								
Beirut	63.5	0.4	1.2	0.0	34.4	0.4	100.0	238
Mount Lebanon	40.4	2.0	0.9	0.5	56.1	0.0	100.0	670
North	27.4	0.8	1.1	0.8	69.7	0.2	100.0	603
Bekaa	28.8	6.0	1.0	0.0	62.9	1.3	100.0	312
South	23.2	5.6	0.4	0.8	70.0	0.0	100.0	233
Nabatieh	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	69.9	1.5	100.0	135
Education								
None/informal	19.9	3.0	1.8	0.2	74.9	0.2	100.0	534
Primary	27.6	2.0	1.1	1.1	68.0	0.3	100.0	656
Intermediate or more	48.3	2.2	0.3	0.2	48.5	0.5	100.0	1000
Number of children								
0-1	50.8	1.9	0.4	1.1	45.5	0.4	100.0	264
2-3	38.6	1.9	0.6	0.4	58.1	0.4	100.0	1088
4+	25.7	3.0	1.4	0.3	69.2	0.4	100.0	837
Total	35.1	2.3	0.9	0.4	60.8	0.4	100.0	2189

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997. ** Not reported

⁽¹⁴⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997

V. Family planning

The PAPCHILD survey indicated that knowledge of family planning methods is widespread among Lebanese women, since 99.4% of them reported being aware of their existence and the majority demonstrated knowledge of modern contraceptive methods (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7 Percent distribution of ever-married women by knowledge of any family planning method; 1996

Type of family planning method	Nature of knowledge		Total (%)
	Direct	Indirect*	
Any method	96.0	88.6	99.4
Modern methods	94.3	82.0	99.0
Contraceptive pill	89.7	8.7	98.3
IUD	79.6	18.4	98.0
Injections	10.3	22.9	33.2
Douche	9.9	20.3	30.2
Condom	41.8	38.8	80.6
Sterilization (women)	25.3	59.0	84.3
Sterilization (Men)	8.0	31.9	40.0
Traditional methods	58.0	80.1	96.2
Safe period	34.4	49.1	83.4
Withdrawal	32.5	45.5	78.0
Breastfeeding	23.8	64.6	88.4
Others	6.2	0.0	6.2
Number of women	3000	3000	3000

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab states, 1997.

*After description of the method

In addition, data has shown that around 82% of married women had used a family planning method prior to the survey, with the pill being the most common followed by the intra-uterine device (IUD).

It is worth noting that 43.6% of the women had used a family planning method after their first birth, while 24.9% had used it after their second⁽¹⁵⁾. These proportions vary, however, according to geographical area in question as well as educational attainment (**Table 4.8**).

Table 4.8 Distribution of women by use of family planning methods and number of children alive at first use; 1996

Characteristics	% never used	Children alive at first use							# ever used
		0	1	2	3	4	5+	Total (%)	
Current age of mother									
15-19	50.4	8.6	83.4	8.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	24
20-24	33.3	10.0	65.4	20.9	2.3	1.4	0.0	100.0	214
25-29	20.9	9.3	52.6	23.7	9.0	2.8	2.5	100.0	427
30-34	15.3	7.5	45.9	27.9	9.6	5.1	4.0	100.0	525
35-39	15.2	4.3	37.4	28.2	12.2	8.7	9.2	100.0	516
40-44	17.2	4.4	32.4	25.4	15.0	6.9	15.9	100.0	407
45-49	15.9	3.2	34.5	19.2	13.4	10.0	19.7	100.0	313
Place of residence									
Beirut	16.5	9.7	51.4	25.0	8.1	3.6	2.2	100.0	351
Mount Lebanon	16.8	9.4	48.8	23.0	8.8	4.9	5.1	100.0	916
North	25.6	3.4	35.3	23.7	15.1	7.2	15.1	100.0	482
Bekaa	16.2	1.3	40.0	26.3	10.8	9.5	12.1	100.0	325
South	21.0	3.9	37.3	30.0	12.4	6.4	9.9	100.0	217
Nabatieh	20.4	2.3	36.8	29.3	12.0	6.8	12.8	100.0	135
Education									
Illiterate	24.0	0.9	17.2	19.6	12.0	14.0	36.0	100.0	329
Read and write	22.1	5.9	30.3	28.5	14.1	9.4	11.8	100.0	255
Primary	21.1	3.3	43.5	25.5	13.7	6.7	7.3	100.0	669
Intermediate	16.9	5.5	54.3	27.6	7.9	3.6	1.1	100.0	556
Secondary or more	14.6	13.3	53.7	23.0	7.9	1.8	0.3	100.0	616
Total	19.2	6.3	43.6	24.9	10.7	6.0	8.5	100.0	2425

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab States, 1997.

(15) PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab States, 1997

It appeared according to the results of the survey that the majority of women used family planning methods temporarily in order to increase the birth space (70%), while 29% used them for the purpose of birth control. These proportion varied again across different socio-demographic characteristics (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9 Percent distribution of ever married women who have used a family planning method by purpose of first use; 1996

Characteristics	Purpose of first use			Total (%)	# of women
	Birth spacing	Birth control	Other		
Current age of mother					
15-19	83.4	16.6	0.0	100.0	24
20-24	81.1	18.0	0.9	100.0	214
25-29	81.2	18.1	0.7	100.0	427
30-34	73.2	25.8	1.0	100.0	525
35-39	66.3	32.3	1.4	100.0	516
40-44	56.2	42.3	1.3	100.0	407
45-49	62.5	37.5	0.0	100.0	313
Place of residence					
Beirut	75.0	23.9	1.1	100.0	351
Mount Lebanon	68.1	30.3	1.6	100.0	916
North	66.9	32.9	0.2	100.0	482
Bekaa	64.4	34.9	0.3	100.0	325
South	77.3	21.9	0.9	100.0	217
Nabatieh	77.4	22.6	0.0	100.0	135
Education					
Illiterate	53.3	46.0	0.6	100.0	329
Read and write	61.2	38.8	0.0	100.0	255
Primary	71.3	27.7	0.9	100.0	669
Intermediate	76.0	23.2	0.7	100.0	556
Secondary or more	74.7	23.6	1.7	100.0	616
Total	69.0	29.3	0.9	100.0	2425

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab States, 1997.

Moreover, data has shown that the use of family planning methods is highly associated with the number of children and their sex ratio. In fact, the rate of utilization increases when the number of male births reaches the value of two or more, which reflects the phenomenon of son preference that is still prevailing in our society (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Rate of utilization of family planning methods among married women by number of surviving male and female children; 1996

Female children	Male children						Total (%)
	0	1	2	3	4	5+	
0	5.6	43.1	72.9	72.0	--	--	45.6
1	47.3	69.2	73.2	73.2	(77.4)	--	67.7
2	58.1	69.0	73.1	63.4	(64.7)	--	67.7
3	59.4	64.3	63.4	(66.7)	--	--	63.0
4	(60.6)	(65.6)	(63.0)	(74.3)	--	--	60.7
5+	--	--	(66.2)	(59.5)	--	--	59.4
Total	36.4	62.7	71.3	69.3	66.1	59.7	61.0

Source: PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab States, 1997.

() Between 15 and 49 cases
 -- less than 25 cases

The private sector has a principal role in providing family planning methods for around 66% of women, as compared to 20% who get them from governmental hospitals and 10% from primary care centers and dispensaries⁽¹⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁶⁾ PAPCHILD survey in Lebanon 1995-1996, Ministry of Public Health and League of Arab States, 1997

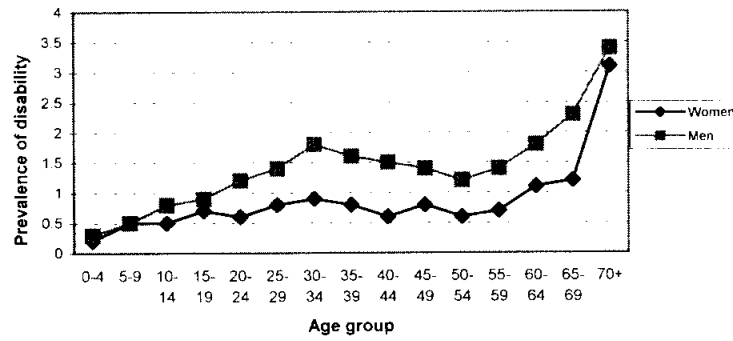
Some strategic actions undertaken at the national level for Lebanese women in the area of health:

- Ensure health care services for the Lebanese woman at all stages of her life cycle.
- Disseminate primary care centers for mother and child health in urban and rural settings and especially in remote areas.
- Organize awareness campaigns related to reproductive health of families, emerging infectious diseases and increase awareness regarding child health risks and safety issues.

VI. Disability

Analysis of data from the Population and Housing Survey indicates that disability in Lebanon is a major problem, especially among older men and women. Prevalence was estimated at 1.2% among men and 0.8% among women. According to **Figure 4.3**, this prevalence tends to increase slowly at first from less than 0.5% among young children (0-4 years), to reach a peak of 1.8% and 0.9%, respectively among men and women in the age group 30-34 years. It then begins to decrease among men up till the age of 50-54 to increase again slowly. In contrast, among women, the only substantive rise in disability prevalence is noted at the onset of old age. This stage in woman's life can be considered to be critical, especially in case of bereavement caused by widowhood.

Figure 4.3 Prevalence of disability by age and gender; 1996

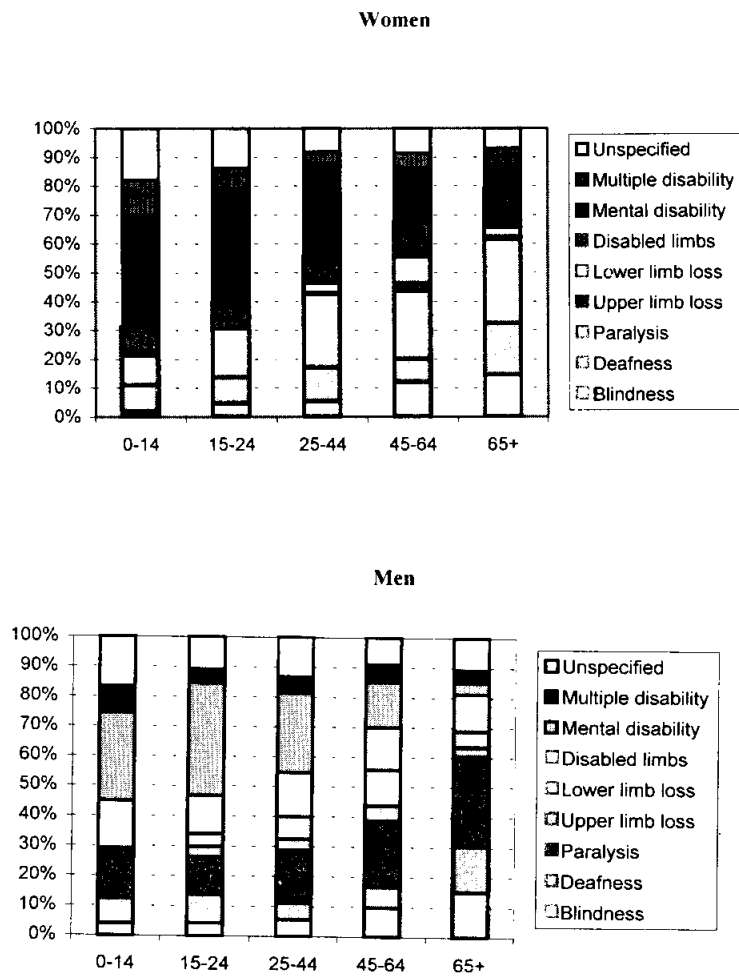


Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Further analysis has shown that among disabled women and men in Lebanon, similar patterns are noted in terms of reported types of disability across different age groups. Whereas most of the youth and young adults (0-4, 15-24 and 25-44) usually suffer from mental retardation, the older segment of the disabled population suffers from paralysis, blindness and deafness. According to **Figure 4.4**, whereas most of disabilities among women are caused by chronic conditions (36.1%) or congenital malformation (39.3%), a relatively high proportion of disabled men reported the underlying cause to be an external injury that was either triggered by war events (17.4%) or by a vehicle accident (15.3%)⁽¹⁷⁾.

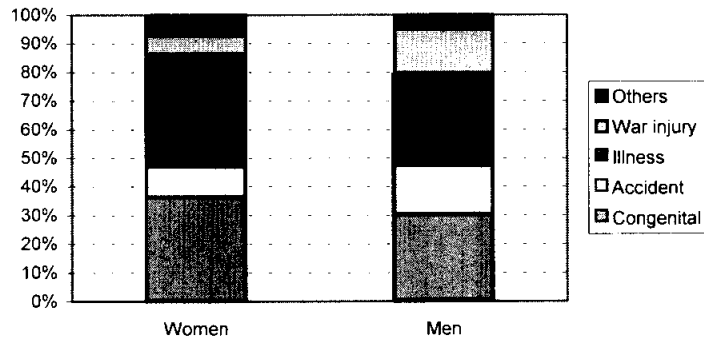
⁽¹⁷⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Figure 4.4 Types of disability by broad age groups and gender; 1996



Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Figure 4.5 Causes of disability among men and women; 1996



Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

VII. Causes of death

The Population and Housing Survey data provides a means to estimate the cause of death structure in Lebanon, based on reported causes in each household over the period of two years prior to the survey. Although this data may lead to underestimation of the real number of deaths in our population and may lack accuracy and validity due to a larger proportion of deaths caused by old age or unknown causes, it may be useful for comparison with future studies. According to **Table 4.11**, 43.7% of total deaths had missing or ill-defined causes, and this proportion was higher among women (50.9%). It may be noted that a higher proportion of deaths among men were reported to be caused by cardiovascular disease (35.0% vs. 23.7%), while a higher proportion of deaths among women was reported to have a neoplasm as the main underlying cause (12.1% vs. 8.3%). Similarly, gender differentials were noted in the case of injuries (11.3% among men and 3.1% among women), suggesting that

men are at a higher risk of dying as a result of car accidents, especially among the youth⁽¹⁸⁾.

Table 4.11 Causes of death in the past two years by gender, 1996

Cause of death	Gender		Total (%)
	Women	Men	
Communicable/Reproductive			
Infections	0.4	0.1	0.2
Pregnancy/perinatal	2.0	0.9	1.3
Congenital	0.2	0.6	0.4
Non-Communicable disease			
Cardiovascular/blood disease	23.7	35.0	30.5
Neoplasms	12.1	8.3	9.8
Endocrine	3.0	1.0	1.8
Mental	0.2	0.2	0.2
Nervous	0.2	0.1	0.1
Eye diseases	0.2	0.0	0.1
Ear diseases	0.0	0.1	0.1
Respiratory diseases	1.0	2.0	1.6
Gastrointestinal	0.8	0.6	0.7
Musculo-skeletal	0.5	0.1	0.3
Genitourinary	1.7	0.9	1.2
Injuries	3.1	11.3	8.0
Old age /Ill-defined	50.9	38.8	43.7
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (N)	6,231	9,241	15,472

Source: Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

⁽¹⁸⁾ Population and Housing Survey, Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

Chapter V

WORK AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

WORK AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

I. Economic activity

The number of economically active individuals in Lebanon was estimated at around 1,362,231 in 1997. Hence, 34% of the total population and 49.3% of the 15-64 years age segment are economically active⁽¹⁾.

The economic activity rate among women has reached the value of 14.7% by the year 1997 as compared to 53.1% among men. Although this rate has increased among women over the past two decades with a value that did not exceed 9.5% in 1970, it is reflecting a poor participation of women in the labour force. As for the activity rate in the age group 15-64 years, it has attained a value of 21.7% among women and 77.3% among men⁽²⁾.

Geographical variability in economic activity was noted and was more pronounced among women, since it ranged between 25.7% in Beirut and 8% in the Bekaa region (**Figure 5.1**).

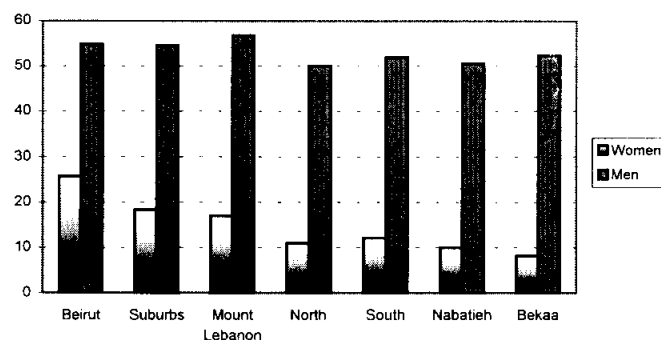
Available data indicates that economic activity among women in the Arab world does not exceed 20% of all women aged 15 years and above. In addition, women represent only 17% of the total active population⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽²⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics

⁽³⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators, UN-ESCWA, 1998

Figure 5.1 Economic activity rates among women and men by governorate; 1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

A. Economic activity and age

Women's participation in the country economy is mainly concentrated in the age group 25 to 39 years, with an activity rate ranging between 30 and 35%. On the other hand, younger women are the least likely to be contributing to the workforce, since their activity rate does not exceed 5%. After the age of 55, only 8% of women are active. Among men, the peak of economic activity is noted among those between the ages of 25 and 45 years (around 95%). This activity rate among men remains elevated and exceeds 70% even when they reach the age of 60 (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.2).

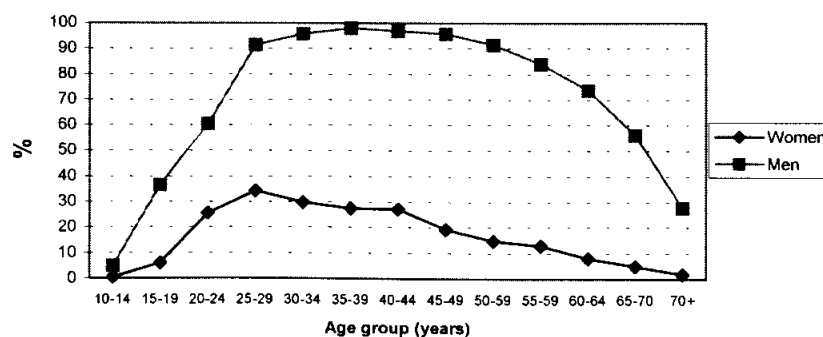
The rapid decline in economic activity that is witnessed by women starting from the age of 35 can primarily be attributed to their overtaking of additional responsibilities in the household resulting from marriage and childbearing.

Table 5.1 Economic activity rates among women and men by age groups; 1997

Age group (years)	Women (%)	Men (%)	Total (%)
10-14	0.4	5.0	2.8
15-19	5.8	36.6	21.6
20-24	25.5	60.4	44.1
25-29	34.4	91.4	62.8
30-34	29.9	95.8	60.8
35-39	27.4	97.9	60.0
40-44	27.2	96.9	59.6
45-49	19.3	95.7	56.1
50-54	14.7	91.5	52.8
55-59	12.8	84.0	49.1
60-64	8.0	73.9	41.9
65-70	4.9	56.1	31.2
70+	1.9	27.8	14.9
Total	14.7	53.1	34.0

Sources: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Figure 5.2 Economic activity rates among women and men by age groups; 1997



Source: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Studies have shown that a woman's status as married negatively affects her degree of participation in the labour force. Her economic activity rate decreases with age, especially when she is between 40 and 44 years of age. At the same time, economic activity among single women also decreases with age although at a much slower pace than their married counterparts. However, these studies suggest that age is not the only factor that affects economic activity among women, since their participation in the labour force also increases because of widowhood. This reflects the economic crisis that our country is encountering which created a responsibility among widowed women to earn additional income in order to provide the basic needs for their families⁽⁴⁾.

It is observed that the activity rate among women in the younger age group (15-19 years) decreased from 15.8% in 1970 to 5.8% in 1997 (**Figure 5.3**). Hence, women tend to delay their entry into the labour market with time and opt to stay active for a longer period. In fact, whereas women began to restrict their participation in economic activity by the age of 24 in 1970, in 1997 the decline in their activity rates was more gradual and did not start before the age of 29⁽⁵⁾.

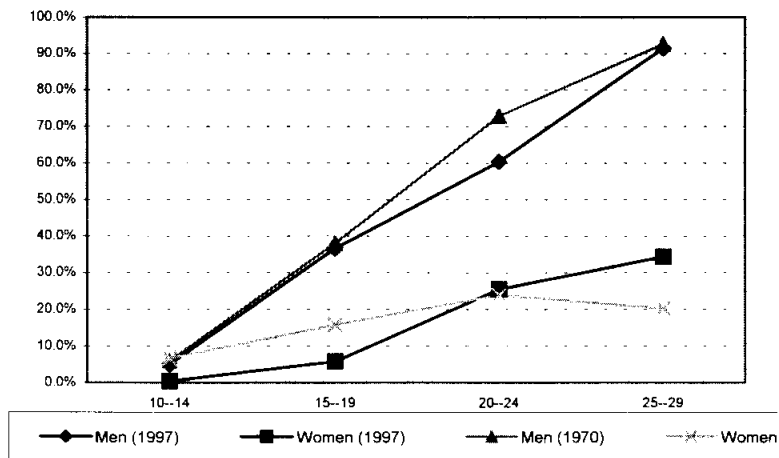
Whereas activity rate remained almost constant over the years among men in the younger age category (15-19 years), with a slight decline from 38% in 1970 to 36.6% in 1997, this rate in the older age group 20-24 years has decreased from 72.7% in 1970 to 60.4% in 1997⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁴⁾ Lebanese Women in the Labour Force, Lebanese American University, and Consulting and Research Institute, Beirut, 1998

⁽⁵⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁶⁾ Ibid

Figure 5.3 Economic activity rate by gender and selected age groups; 1970-1997

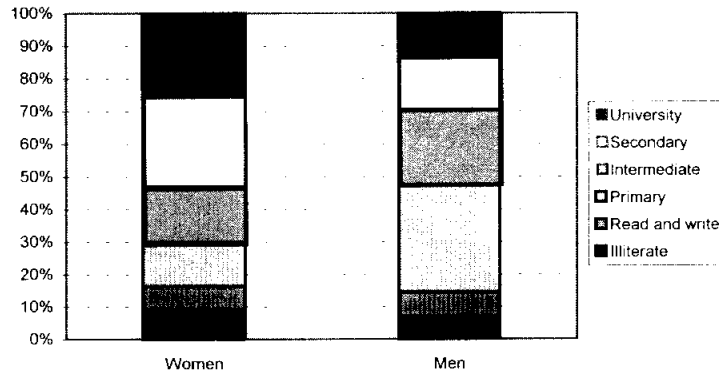


Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

B. Economic activity and educational level

The 1997 living conditions study indicates that 56% of working women have at least a secondary level of education (29% with a university degree and 27% with a baccalaureate degree). This suggests the importance of education that can act as a window of opportunities for women to join the labour force. In contrast, more than half of working men in 1997 (55%) had not acquired more than a primary or intermediate level of education (**Figure 5.4**).

Figure 5.4 Economic activity rate by gender and educational level; 1997



Sources: Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Over the past two decades, a major change has occurred with respect to the composition of the active population by educational attainment. Among working men, the proportion illiterate decreased from 29.4% in 1970 to 7.2% in 1997. Moreover, the proportion of active men with a university degree has increased from 4.3% to 16.7% during the same period of time⁽⁷⁾. On the other hand, working women had also improved their educational level with time, since illiteracy among them decreased from 40.6% to 7.5% and the proportion with a university degree had increased from 3.4% to 29.1% between 1970 and 1997⁽⁸⁾.

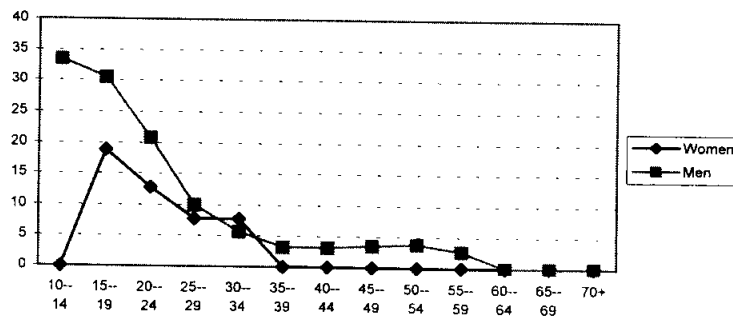
⁽⁷⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁸⁾ The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1996-1997: Facts and Figures, Beirut, 1998

II. Unemployment

By the year 1997, the rate of unemployment in Lebanon reached the value of 7.2% among women and 8.9% among men aged 15 years and above. Whereas the highest levels of unemployment were noted among men in the age groups 10-14, 15-19 and 20-24 (33.5%, 30.5% and 20.8%, respectively), unemployment among women was nil among the very young (10-14 years) and reached its peak among those aged 15-19 years with a rate of 18.8%. This rate then started to decrease gradually with age to reach again a zero value among those aged 35-39 years. This gradual decline with age was also noted among men whose unemployment rate reached 2.7% in the age category 55-59 years and a zero value in later ages (**Figure 5.5**)⁽⁹⁾.

Figure 5.5 Unemployment rates among women and men by age groups; 1997



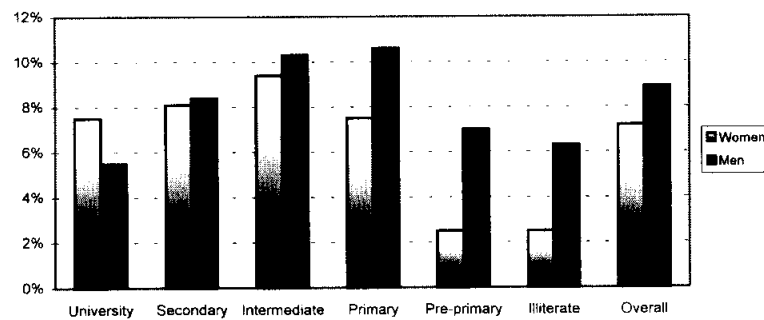
Source: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽⁹⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

A small variation in unemployment was noted across different educational levels, whereby rates were the highest among those with primary education (10.2%) and the lowest among the illiterates (5.2%). Moreover, unemployment rates among women were in general lower than among men in all educational groups, except for the university level whereby women were more likely to be unemployed with a gender gap of 1.36% (Figure 5.6)⁽¹⁰⁾.

Whereas unemployment for both women and men remained stable over the past two decades (8.1% in 1970 and 8.5% in 1997), unemployment rate among women has increased from 5.2% to 7.2% during the same period⁽¹¹⁾.

Figure 5.6 Unemployment rate among women and men by educational level; 1997



Source: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

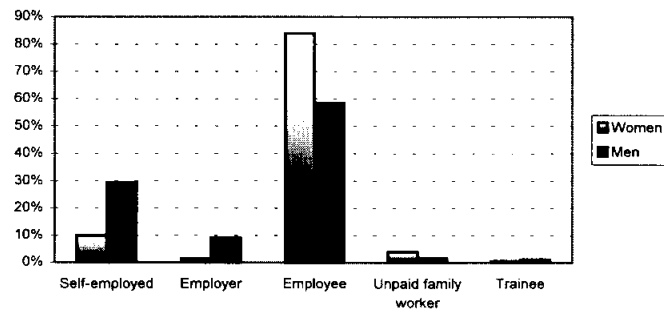
⁽¹⁰⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹¹⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

III. Employment status

- Whereas the majority of working women are employees (84.0%), men employees do not exceed 58.4%. Women employers do not constitute more than 1.5% of the female workforce, as compared to 9.2% among working men. On the other hand, self-employment accounted for 11.6% and 29.6% of the female and male workforce, respectively (**Figure 5.7**)⁽¹²⁾.

- **Figure 5.7** Distribution of working women and men by employment status; 1997



Source: Household Living Conditions in 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹²⁾ Household Living Conditions in 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Trend analysis over the past two decades indicated that self-employment among women did not significantly change, with estimated proportions of 11.8% in 1970 and 11.6% in 1997. Similarly the proportion of working women who were employers remained constant at 1.4% in 1970 and 1.5% in 1997. In contrast, women working as family helpers decreased in proportion from 19.4% in 1970 to 4.6% in 1997. On the other, the proportion of wage-earning employees among working women has increased drastically over the years from a value of 51% in 1970 to 72.5% in 1997.

On the other hand, the proportion of self-employed among working men has increased significantly during the same period, from 26.6% in 1970 to 29.6% in 1997, whereas the proportion earning wages remained almost constant at around 58%. Moreover, the proportion of unpaid family workers among men has decreased from 4% to 1.9% between 1970 and 1997 (**Table 5.2**)⁽¹³⁾.

Table 5.2 Economically active population by employment status and gender: 1970-1997

Employment status	Year			
	1970		1997	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Self-employed	11.8	26.6	11.6	29.6
Employer	1.4	8.9	1.5	9.2
Wage-earning permanent worker	51.0	35.0	72.5	39.6
Wage-earning employee on a daily basis	14.7	23.5	9.1	18.5
Unpaid family worker	19.4	4.0	4.6	1.9
Trainee/other	1.7	2.0	0.7	1.3

Sources: Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹³⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Household Living Conditions in 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

In Lebanon a higher proportion of working women are wage-earning employees as compared to the Arab region. In contrast, the proportion of those working with their families was lower in Lebanon, where the regional average proportion was estimated at 19%. Finally, the self-employed proportion among working women was found to be similar between Lebanon and the Arab region as a whole (around 12%)⁽¹⁴⁾.

IV. Sector of economic activity

The majority of working women in Lebanon work in the services sector (64.7%). Their second highest contribution is in the commercial sector (15.9%), which is followed by the industrial sector and that of construction and public works (12.2%). Only 5% of working women contribute to the agricultural sector. In contrast, the latter proportion is doubled among men, and their proportions in the industrial (29.1%), commercial (24.1%) and public (29.1%) sectors supersede those of women⁽¹⁵⁾.

Geographical differences do exist however in terms of women's contribution to different economic sectors of activity. For instance, a high proportion of women in the Bekaa governorate are involved in agriculture (21%), and this pattern is similar in the North and South governorates (around 17% in each area). In contrast, and due to the lack of arable land in Beirut and its suburbs as well as in Mount Lebanon, women are not involved in agricultural activities.

⁽¹⁴⁾ The Arab Woman 1995: Trends, Statistics and Indicators. UN-ESCWA, 1998

⁽¹⁵⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

In contrast, working women in these governorates, and particularly in the Beirut area, contribute mostly to the services sector (74.5%), a proportion that is reduced to 28.8% in the governorate of Nabatieh, which is predominantly a rural area; **(Table 5.3)**⁽¹⁶⁾.

The same pattern was observed among working men, even though the services sector seems to be less attractive to men than to women. For similar reasons, the proportion of men in the services sector was found to be more elevated in Beirut (42.7%) as compared to that in Nabatieh (19.8%).

The proportion of working women in the agricultural sector has decreased over the past 25 years from 26% in 1970 to 5% in 1997. This decline is primarily attributed to the widespread urbanization trend that has affected the role of agriculture in the Lebanese economy. In addition, it is possible that women report to a lesser extent their work in the agricultural field.

On the other hand, women's participation in the industrial sector has significantly decreased over the same period of time, from 20.2% in 1970 to 2.3% in 1997. In contrast, women have become more and more involved in the services sector as was shown earlier⁽¹⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Active Population in Lebanon. 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹⁷⁾ Survey of Active Population in Lebanon 1970. Central Administration of Statistics: Active Population in Lebanon. 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Table 5.3 Distribution of working women and men by sector of economic activity and governorate; 1997

	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa	Total
Women								
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.5	13.9	19.1	16.1	5.0
Industry	7.0	16.6	13.0	9.0	7.5	13.5	8.3	12.3
Commerce	13.6	17.9	17.6	15.6	16.0	12.7	12.9	15.9
Hotels/restaurants	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Services	74.5	62.0	60.1	52.6	47.7	28.8	51.0	64.7
Others	4.9	3.5	9.3	14.3	14.9	25.9	11.7	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men								
Agriculture	0.0	0.7	6.3	17.2	17.0	16.8	21.0	10.6
Industry	22.7	32.8	32.0	26.8	29.6	31.6	21.7	29.1
Commerce	29.4	26.5	21.3	22.2	25.4	23.8	21.5	24.1
Hotels/restaurants	3.8	3.4	3.7	2.5	2.5	0.0	3.5	3.2
Services	42.7	35.4	36.2	29.0	22.1	19.8	27.0	33.0
Others	1.4	1.2	0.5	2.3	3.4	8.0	5.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

V. Occupational groups and income

Women's representation in top management positions is still poor and their proportion does not exceed 5% of the total female workforce. It was also found to be low in agricultural and fishery work (2%), in the machinery operation category (4%) as well as in various other skilled types of occupations (5%). On the other hand, around 21% of working women are professionals in different areas, primarily education and health. In addition, 15% work in clerical positions while 14% are administrative employees.

As for men, most of those who work have skilled occupations (26%), while 10% operate machinery and 12% hold unskilled occupational positions⁽¹⁸⁾.

Also, the vast majority of skilled workers are men (95%) and the same pattern applies to top management (91%) as well as agriculture and fishery (91%). The proportion of women is relatively high in administrative positions (50%) and in the professional categories (45%)⁽¹⁹⁾ (**Table 5.4**).

A number of other studies prove that the female workforce is mostly involved in professional work (24.6%) as well as in medium-level occupations (24.8%). Among professional women, teaching is the most common type of occupation, constituting a proportion of 62.2%. The remaining segment of professional women includes lawyers, office workers, social scientists, political and human scientists, as well as doctors and other health sector workers. On the other hand, around 44% of women in medium-level positions work in the educational sector, while the remaining 56% are vendors and administrative employees. In addition, most women working in the services sector are vendors in small boutiques (69.2%).

All these observations prove that most of the female workforce is concentrated in the areas of teaching, health services (nurses and doctors), vending and office work (secretaries and receptionists)⁽²⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽¹⁹⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽²⁰⁾ Lebanese Women in the Labour Force. Lebanese American University and the Consulting and Research Institute. Beirut, 1998

Table 5.3 Distribution of working women and men by sector of economic activity and governorate; 1997

	Beirut	Suburbs	Mount Lebanon	North	South	Nabatieh	Bekaa	Total
Women								
Agriculture	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.5	13.9	19.1	16.1	5.0
Industry	7.0	16.6	13.0	9.0	7.5	13.5	8.3	12.3
Commerce	13.6	17.9	17.6	15.6	16.0	12.7	12.9	15.9
Hotels/restaurants	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2
Services	74.5	62.0	60.1	52.6	47.7	28.8	51.0	64.7
Others	4.9	3.5	9.3	14.3	14.9	25.9	11.7	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men								
Agriculture	0.0	0.7	6.3	17.2	17.0	16.8	21.0	10.6
Industry	22.7	32.8	32.0	26.8	29.6	31.6	21.7	29.1
Commerce	29.4	26.5	21.3	22.2	25.4	23.8	21.5	24.1
Hotels/restaurants	3.8	3.4	3.7	2.5	2.5	0.0	3.5	3.2
Services	42.7	35.4	36.2	29.0	22.1	19.8	27.0	33.0
Others	1.4	1.2	0.5	2.3	3.4	8.0	5.3	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Active Population in Lebanon, 1997, Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

Trend analysis indicates that a Lebanese woman's access to top level managerial positions has been enhanced over the years, since the proportion of women in such positions has increased from 2.3% in 1970 to reach 8.5% in 1996. Similarly, the proportion of working women in the educational sector has also increased from 51.7% in 1970 to 68.2% in 1996⁽²¹⁾.

⁽²¹⁾ Survey of Active Population in 1970, Central Administration of Statistics; Population and Housing Survey. Ministry of Social Affairs, 1996

It is worth noting that the majority of working women occupy permanent positions (89.7%) to a greater extent than working men (80.3%). In contrast, 6.3% of men occupy seasonal positions as compared to only 4.3% of working women⁽²²⁾.

A study conducted by the National Association for Employment in 1997 indicates that the average monthly basic salary is estimated at 561 thousand Lebanese Pounds (LP) and differs significantly by gender (606 thousand among men and 466 thousand among women), age, educational attainment, occupation and work experience. **Table 5.5** shows the distribution of these income levels by type of occupation⁽²³⁾.

On the other hand, the "Lebanese Women in the Labour Force" study indicates that around half of working women earn salaries ranging between 300 and 500 thousand LPs (49.8%), whereas 11% of them gain 1 million LPs or more. This study has also shown that most of the higher income earners are concentrated in urban areas, whereas women earning lower levels of income are mostly those residing in the areas of South Lebanon and the Bekaa (**Table 5.6**)⁽²⁴⁾.

⁽²²⁾ Active Population in Lebanon, 1997. Central Administration of Statistics, 1998

⁽²³⁾ Labour market study: results of enterprise survey. National Association for Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 1997

⁽²⁴⁾ Lebanese Women in the Labour Force, Lebanese American University and the Consulting and Research Institute, Beirut, 1998

Table 5.5 Average monthly income by gender and type of occupation
(in 1000 LPs), 1997

Occupational group	Women	Men
Top managers	874	1179
Small size enterprise managers	605	808
Scientists	609	932
Professors	464	702
Medium-level technical workers	651	721
Medium-level health-related workers	440	545
Medium-level teachers	368	476
Office workers	504	580
Vendors/sales representatives	430	535
Skilled agricultural workers	568	493
Handicrafts workers	375	488
Unskilled services workers	347	438
Unskilled workers	325	443
Total	477	606

Source: Labour market study: results of enterprise survey, National Association for Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 1997

Table 5.6 Average monthly income among working women by governorate (%), 1998

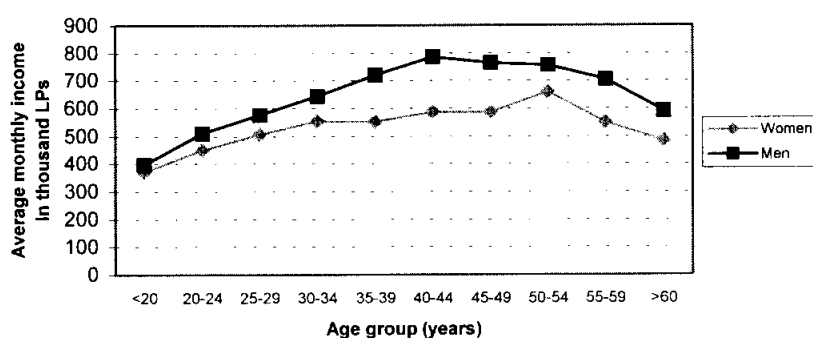
Average monthly income (LP)	Beirut	Mount Lebanon	Bekaa	North	South	Total
< 300,000	1.4	2.7	10.9	4.5	19.7	5.4
300,000 - 500,000	34.5	49.2	67.4	61.7	49.7	49.8
500,000 - 1,000,000	43.5	36.2	19.5	27.7	27.5	33.9
1,000,000 - 1,500,000	0.11	8.0	2.2	4.1	2.2	6.8
> 1,500,000	9.6	3.9	0.0	2.0	0.9	4.1
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (N)	405	896	161	339	240	2,041

Source: Lebanese Women in the Labour Force, Lebanese American University and the Consulting and Research Institute, Beirut, 1998

Note: The Suburbs governorate is included in Beirut and Nabatieh governorate is included in that of the South.

The proportion of women and men earning a monthly income below 500 thousand LPs decreases with age and is highest among those aged 20 years and below (**Figure 5.8**). This pattern can be attributed basically to higher educational attainment as well as to advances in experience and working skills, with the first factor being the most important. For instance, whereas the average basic salary of an illiterate individual is estimated at 396 thousand LPs in 1997, it is found to be as high as 791 thousand LPs among those having a university degree (**Figure 5.9**)⁽²⁵⁾.

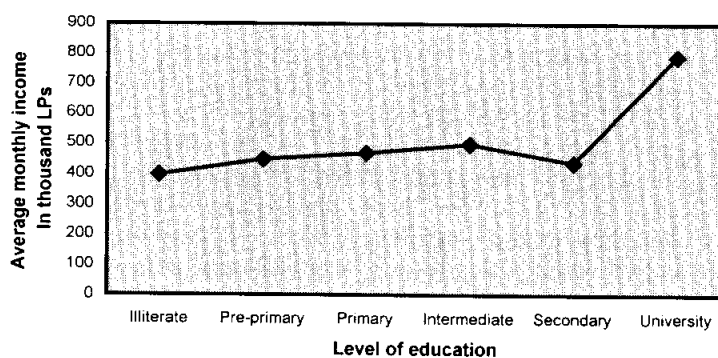
Figure 5.8 Average monthly income by gender and age group (in thousand LPs), 1997



Source: Labour market study: results of enterprise survey. National Association for Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 1997

⁽²⁵⁾ Labour market study: results of enterprise survey. National Association for Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 1997

Figure 5.9 Average monthly income (in 1000 LPs) by level of education, 1997



Source: Labour market study: results of enterprise survey, National Association for Employment, International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 1997

In addition, differentials in the mean income level by type of work seem to exist, with those in the professional occupation earning less income than other occupational categories. The reported range of income among women employees was between 300 thousand LPs and one million LPs. In contrast, monthly income among self-employed women had a much wider range of less than 300 thousand LPs to more than 1.5 million LPs. This is due to the fact that those women are either entrepreneurs in small businesses (gaining small average revenues) or are into larger types of enterprises (gaining more revenue than wages earned by regular employment)⁽²⁶⁾.

⁽²⁶⁾ Lebanese Women in the Labour Force, Lebanese American University and the Consulting and Research Institute, Beirut, 1998

Some strategic actions undertaken at the national level for the Lebanese women in the area of economic activity:

- Creation of public and private financing organizations that offer women shortcuts to become integrated into income-generating types of work.
- Creation of committees that would monitor and follow-up on Ministerial actions to prevent discrimination against women in appointment, training and opportunities for promotion.
- Simplify competing roles at work and in the family for both women and men through the development of special support services such as nurseries, especially in rural areas as well as in deprived urban sectors.

Research conducted by the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab world was able to prove that active women in our region face numerous obstacles in their work; the lower level of income is the principal hurdle that must be overcome, followed by the lack of promotion opportunities and bonuses. However, the extent to which such obstacles affect a working woman depends largely on her marital status. In fact, the study has shown that working women who happened to be single complained of such impediments more than their married counterparts.

In addition, the type of barriers that women face in terms of economic activity is very much associated to their educational attainment, since the more educated a woman is the less serious is the impact of family pressures on her work and performance.

VI. Work in the informal sector

- Data on work in the informal sector is not available in Lebanon, even though there is reason to believe that this sector is of primary importance and provides a source of income to a large number of families living in deprived conditions. In addition, a number of studies suggest that this sector is principally composed of wage-earning employees.

- The results of the research conducted in our region by the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab world in 1997 suggest also that the majority of self-employed women work in small-size family businesses, in which no more than five individuals are employed. However, this study also proved that the income earned by self-employed women is significantly lower than the average monthly wage earned by women employees, and this is primarily due to the fact that self-employed women are mostly working in small-size informal businesses. It is worth noting that the majority of these women who are in the agricultural sector are self-employed (69.4%). In addition, the rate of self-employment of women in commerce and services sectors was estimated at 34.1% and 31.8%, respectively.

Chapter VI

PUBLIC LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

PUBLIC LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

- The prevailing socio-political climate may have a direct impact on the status of women in a society and the degree of her participation in decision-making processes at the national level.
- In addition, it may affect the development of her situation as a woman in general. In spite of major improvements that the status of the Lebanese woman has witnessed at all levels (health, education, and productive workforce participation), her input into public life and leadership is still deficient. This chapter will briefly discuss the extent to which Lebanese women participate in political life and in society as a whole, through a selected number of social indicators.

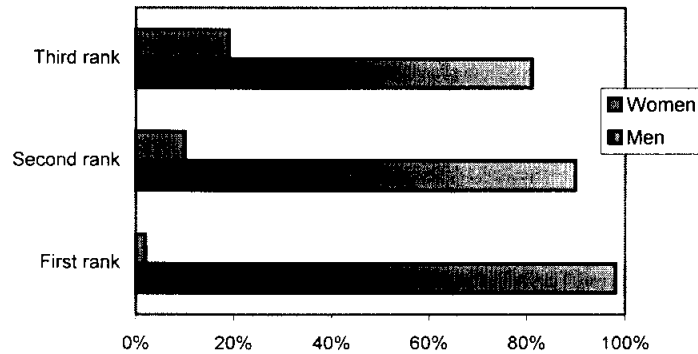
I. Women and men in legislative/decision-making positions

Women's representation in Lebanese legislative and executive authorities is almost non-existent. In fact, the Lebanese parliament is composed of 128 seats, out of which only 2.3% are occupied by women (i.e. three seats). Moreover, no woman occupies the position of a Minister. It was also observed that the proportion of women in the first and second administrative ranks in the government does not exceed 2% and 10%, respectively. In contrast, their representation in the third rank positions is more significant reaching 19% of the total.

Only two women occupy first rank positions in the government, one of them being the director general of the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the other having the rank of an ambassador.

As for second rank positions among women, they are mostly concentrated in the general secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (a total of 10 positions). Statistics derived from the civil service council indicate that the proportion of women in second rank governmental positions has increased from 6.6% in 1992 to 10% in 1998 (Figure 6.1)⁽¹⁾.

Figure 6.1 Percent distribution of governmental employees by gender and administrative rank: 1998

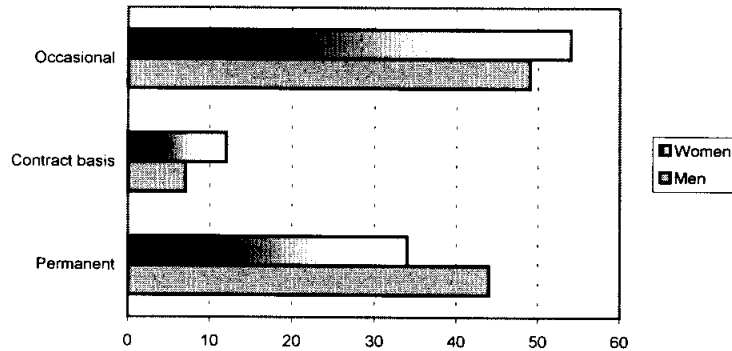


Source: 1998 Statistical report, National Civil Council.

The majority of public sector employees, whether men or women, are either salaried (50.5%) or permanent (42.0%), and only 8% are employees on contractual basis. It is worth noting that the proportion of permanent governmental employees among men is higher than that among women (44% and 34%, respectively). In contrast, the proportion of outworkers (on contract basis) was higher among women than among men (12% and 7%, respectively) (Figure 6.2).

⁽¹⁾ National report of the 4th Conference on women in Beijing, 1995

Figure 6.2 Distribution of governmental employees by gender and type of contract; 1992



Source: 1998 Statistical report, National Civil Council.

At the level of local authorities, recent municipal elections that took place in 1997 gave the opportunity for 353 women to become candidates all over the Lebanese six governorates, out of whom 139 were elected. **Table 6.1** presents the number of candidates and elected members for local municipalities and their proportion across different geographical areas of Lebanon. However, it is worth noting that the number of women who were candidates for these elections was the lowest in Beirut and Nabatieh, and the highest in Mount Lebanon and the North.

Table 6.1 Number of candidates and elected women in local municipality elections, and rate of success by governorate; 1997

Governorate	# of women candidates	# of women elected	Rate of success
Beirut	17	1	6
Mount Lebanon	142	48	34
North	130	63	48
Bekaa	25	13	52
South	23	5	12
Nabatich	16	9	68
Total	353	139	39

Source: National report of non-governmental organizations in Lebanon on the progress made in the implementation of Beijing Platform of Action; 1999

We note that women's participation in influential and decision-making authorities is still relatively poor in most Arab countries. In fact, only 16 Arab countries gave the right for women to be eligible for parliamentary elections and to vote at the same time, out of which 12 countries actually have women representatives in the parliament. Even though the regional average proportion represented by women in the parliament of these countries was 5%, women's participation in ministries in the Arab world remains very modest.

II. Women and men in the media

The role of women in the media has encountered major developments over the years, since the majority of students enrolled in the Faculty of Information and Documentation at the Lebanese University were women between the years 1990 and 1995 (80%). Data obtained from the Press Syndicate in 1992 indicates that women possess 12% of the Lebanese printed non-political periodicals issued in Arabic.

In addition, 32% of editors in chief of Lebanese journals are women⁽²⁾.

The Press Syndicate is composed of 18 members out of whom only one is a woman. Similarly, the union of editors is constituted of 12 members with only one woman⁽³⁾. The Ministry of Information did not include women in first and second rank positions, although it incorporated two female employees in a third rank positions (out of nine employees in total), and 18 women in fourth rank positions, constituting 40% of the total employees in that rank⁽⁴⁾.

Women constitute 35% of total employees in the Lebanese radio station, which was composed in 1995 of 550 employees in total, and this proportion did not vary according to departments, whether technical or administrative. Nevertheless, women are almost absent when it comes to upper level positions (first and second rank) where they did not constitute more than 30% of employees in audiovisual media, during 1995⁽⁵⁾

⁽²⁾ National report of the 4th Conference on women in Beijing, 1995

⁽³⁾ Ibid

⁽⁴⁾ 1998 Statistical report, National Civil Council

⁽⁵⁾ National report of the 4th Conference on women in Beijing, 1995

III. Women in professional occupations and syndicates

The role of women in professional occupations and syndicates is relatively important in Lebanon, especially when we consider their representation in the syndicates of physicians, engineers and lawyers. The former two incorporate a high percentage of women in the area of Beirut. Women also are largely represented in the syndicate of pharmacists. **Table 6.2** shows how the number of women varied across years of enrollment in each syndicate whether located in Beirut or North Lebanon. It can be noted that newly enrolled women were the most numerous between the years 1995 and 1997 in almost all syndicates. In addition, the rate of women's enrollment into these syndicates has increased considerably over the past few years, which indicates that women are increasingly choosing a professional carrier path. For instance, the number of women enrolled in the union of engineers (in Beirut and the North) has increased from 24 before 1970 to 739 by the year 1995. Similarly, these figures amounted to 102 and 1342 in the case of the pharmacist syndicate ⁽⁶⁾.

In addition, further analysis of the data at hand indicated that most of the women who are currently enrolled in the engineers' syndicate belong to the 1960 age cohort and beyond (82% in the North and 81% in Beirut). Hence, this shows the increasing rate of new enrollments among women over the past two decades.

⁽⁶⁾ The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures. the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

Table 6.2 Number of women enrolled in professional syndicates by year of enrollment; 1997

Syndicate (governorate)	Year of enrollment				NS*	Total
	Before 1970	Before 1980	Before 1990	Before 1997		
Engineers (North)	2	5	85	277	--	277
Engineers (Beirut)	21	47	55	452	925	1377
Physicians (North)	8	16	41	113	2	115
Physicians (Beirut)	49	112	317	1065	--	1065
Dentists (North)	5	7	34	98	--	98
Dentists (Beirut)	12	28	169	491	3	494
Pharmacists	102	280	743	1342	132	1474
Lawyers (North)	6	11	102	313	5	318
Lawyers (Beirut)	--	--	--	--	--	1404
Accountants	--	--	--	--	--	128

Source: The Status of the Lebanese Woman, 1970-1995: Facts and Figures, the National Committee on Lebanese Women's Affairs, 1997

* Not Specified

HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on what was discussed earlier, a number of essential points must be emphasized. The following sections include recommendations pertaining to each area of interest on its own.

First: concerning the legal status of women

In spite of the major development that Lebanon has witnessed over the past few decades in the area of women's legal status, it is important to initiate further changes in order to grant women their right to legate their own citizenship to their children, among other civil status laws and basic legislation. It is thus important to mobilize all concerned parties who should attempt to convince the Lebanese government to alleviate its reservation when ratifying the convention on eliminating all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW).

In particular, it is recommended that a committee should be organized, grouping experts from various governmental and non-governmental sectors in order to revise these laws.

In what concerns legal illiteracy among women, specialized non-governmental organizations have already launched programs that would alleviate this problem and enhance women's awareness about their legal rights. This action must be further encouraged and adopted by all non-governmental organizations as well as United Nations agencies.

It is worth listing some of the recommendations that came out of the second national workshop for producers and users of gender statistics (29-30 June, 1999):

- Inclusion of a clear sentence expressing equality between women and men in all constitutional items that point out to such equality.
- Lowering the minimum age of voting to 18 years.
- Re-examining cooperative systems for public sector employees and social security rules and regulations as well as deficits that prevail in the Lebanese Labour Law.
- Re-examining the law of citizenship, majority and penal codes.

Second: concerning population and population growth

Rates of urbanization have increased rapidly in Lebanon during the pre-war period. However, during the war, an inverse trend was noted whereby the urban segment of the population became forced to immigrate towards rural areas outside the capital city Beirut. During the post-war, urbanization movements became more dominant, a phenomenon that created an inflated population in certain area and resulted in pockets of poverty. In that framework, it is essential for national policy plans to examine more closely the phenomenon of urban growth and its consequences and set policies for a sustainable development process and create productive work opportunities in rural areas for both women and men and especially for the youth.

On the other hand, the change in the age structure and the resulting demographic ageing, may result in many outcomes including increased demand for health and social services. Hence, this must be taken seriously into consideration when setting future policies and plans.

Moreover, it is important to focus our interest on the environment as well as on the environmental health awareness, in order to limit the deterioration that has occurred in our basic infrastructure, and this by pooling efforts between specialized governmental and non-governmental organizations.

In addition, connection of households to safe water and sewage system is considered to be a right to all Lebanese citizens, women and men. Even though our government has rapidly initiated the implementation of a number of projects related to that issue, it is essential to improve the management aspect of these projects and direct the consumption of water, since it is nowadays considered to be a scarce resource.

Third: concerning education and training

In general, the status of women in the area of education is relatively acceptable, particularly with respect to her enrollment rate in basic education (primary level). However, it is important for the Ministry of Education and its affiliated educational establishments to examine the dropping out of school phenomenon, among both boys and girls, which essentially occurs after completion of basic education. In fact, the proportion with a secondary degree is still below the desired level. Hence, the ministry must set a general policy that would lower the proportion of drop outs after the primary and intermediate stages and increase the level of enrollment in secondary schools, generally, and in vocational training, particularly.

As for illiteracy, it is expected that gender gaps will narrow down significantly in the coming few years, though currently the illiteracy rate among women is as twice as that among men.

This improvement will occur primarily as a fruit of the efforts spent to increase enrollment of boys and girls in basic education. Such efforts must be sustained and enhanced by increasing the level of coordination between concerned parties.

As for higher education, in spite of the major improvements that have marked the past two decades, it is essential to strive further in order to increase enrollment levels at university levels and in vocational training programs among both women and men on an equal basis. The most essential element that remains is the diversification of specialties in order to match market supply with demand. Hence, a community-based survey must be conducted in order to assess needs of the labour market.

Fourth: concerning health and reproduction

In spite of marked improvements in health and reproduction-related indicators over the past few years, there is still a need to organize the role of governmental health institutions in providing pre- and post-natal care. Implementing such a policy requires augmenting health inspection on hospitals and other health centers, ensuring that the cost of health services remains within the reach of the majority, expanding the margins of primary health care, and finally decentralizing the administration of the health sector.

Efforts to immunize our population, to provide them with basic medicinal drugs and to increase their general awareness about health risks have a positive impact on mortality and morbidity rates. Finally, the Ministry of Public Health has marked its success by bringing about a partnership with non-governmental organizations and providing health services through a network of active health centers scattered all over Lebanon.

Fifth: concerning work and economic activity

In spite of the marked improvements that were witnessed with respect to women's participation in labour force, it is essential to enhance coordination between educational policies and the needs of the labour market as well as the demand for investment. This would create additional work opportunities and diversify women's work by freeing it from all traditional stereotypes.

On the other hand, the adverse effects of marriage and motherhood on women's opportunities to join the labour force must be alleviated by making relatively affordable daycare centers.

Given the current differentials between women and men that were observed in terms of income and wages, complete gender equality in that respect must be achieved and recognized as a first priority.

Finally, it is important to conduct a community-based study on work in the informal sector, which provides opportunities for women living under the poverty line and those who do not possess basic productive skills.

Sixth: concerning public life and leadership

In that area, institutional frameworks must be developed that would have a positive and direct impact on women's role in public life, decision-making processes and policies. These frameworks must also ensure all constitutional rights of women to participate in public life and to be effective in their participation through the provision of adequate socio-political climate. The non-governmental sector may have a primary role in such an endeavor, through increasing general awareness on the importance of women's participation in various aspects of public life.

Finally, it is important to ensure woman's participation in politics as a first step by securing her a minimum number of seats in the parliament as well as in the government.

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