

## WORK AND GENDER IN BRAZIL IN THE LAST TEN YEARS

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### ABSTRACT

*Based on official statistics of institutions such as the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, the Ministry of Labor and Employment, and the Ministry of Education, the paper highlights some of the main trends in the participation of Brazilian women in the labor market, which has been marked by progress and challenges. On the one hand, the massive and steady increase of female participation in the labor market, since the mid-seventies, and on the other hand, the prevalence of high unemployment rates among women and the lower quality of female jobs; on the one hand, the access to prestige careers and jobs, and to management and board positions, and on the other hand, the prevalence of female presence in precarious and informal activities. The profile of female workers: older, married, with children displays a new female identity, both work- and family-oriented. The perpetuation of the notion of female responsibility for household chores as well as for child and family care indicates the persistence of traditional family models, which constitute a burden to female workers, especially to mothers of small children.*

**LABOUR – GENDER – WOMEN – BRAZIL**

This article outlines a scenario showing the situation of women in the Brazilian workforce from the last decade of the twentieth century until the first years of the millennium (2005). Based on official statistics<sup>1</sup>, it underlines some of the main trends in the

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insertion of Brazilian women in the workforce, which is spotted with some progresses and some delays. On the one hand, the intense and constant increase of the female participation in the workforce, which is happening since mid 70's and, on the other hand, the high rate of unemployed women and also, the low quality of female work; if we see women with good degrees achieving good jobs, accessing to careers and prestige positions and even to managerial positions and becoming members of the board of directors, we also see the predominance of female work in precarious and informal jobs.

Regarding the profile of female workers we can see that they became older, married and mothers – which reveals a new female identity dealing with work as well as with family – but, the responsibilities for household tasks, children and other family member care remains with them. This points at the continuity of the traditional family models which overburdens these new workers, especially those with young children, as these children demand more time with their care as we have already shown in a recent article about domestic work (Bruschini, 2006).

The first part of the article shows general data proving the growth of the female presence in the Brazilian workforce in the period as well as the main characteristics of this new workforce. In the second part, it underlines the fields – such as Education – and the jobs and professions where these female workers have had considerable progress in the period that goes from 1993-2005; in the third part, conversely, it reveals issues regarding female labor where women had few or no progress at all.

## **GENERAL DATA AND PROFILE OF THE FEMALE WORKFORCE**

The first issue to be considered is the intense and steady growth in the female activities. In this case, the Brazilian indicators show that, in the established period, the

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<sup>1</sup> National Household Sample Survey – PNAD – from Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE –; Annual Report of Social Information from the Ministry of Labor and Employment /MTE –, Data from the National Institute of Studies and Research – INEP –, Ministry of Education – MEC – and others.

female Economically Active Population – (EAP) PEA<sup>2</sup> – jumped from 28 to 41.7 million; the activity rate increased from 47% to 53% and the percentage of women in the whole workforce went from 39.6% to 43.5%. This means that more than half of the female population in the active age searched for a job or had a job in 2005 and that more than 40 in each 100 workers were females, in the same year. In spite of this leap, women are far from reaching the same rate as men in activity, higher than 70%, both in the number of men at work or employed<sup>3</sup>, in the same year, as can be seen in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**  
**MEN AND WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE: INDICATORS OF ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION**  
**BRAZIL, 1993 AND 2005**

Women							
Years	EAP/PEA Economically Active Population			At work		Employed *	
	(Million)	Activity Rate	% of Women in the PEA	(Million)	% of Women among people at work	(Million)	% of Women among employed people
1993	28	47.0	39.6	25.9	39.0	11.1	31.8
2005	41.7	53.0	43.5	36.6	42.1	17.5	36.6
Men							
Years	EAP/PEA			At work		Employed *	
	(Million)	Activity Rate	% of Men in the EAP	(Million)	% of Men among those at work	(Million)	% of Men among those employed
1993	42.8	76.0	60.4	40.5	61.0	23.8	68.2
2005	54.2	74.0	56.5	50.4	57.9	30.4	63.4

Source: FIBGE/PNADs-Microdados (2006).

(\*) excluding domestic workers

<sup>2</sup> According to IBGE classification, the agency that carries out the Demographic Census, the Annual Household Surveys and the official surveys, the Economically Active Population (PEA) includes occupied and unoccupied people. Those occupied are those who are employed, either formally or informally, whereas the unoccupied are those searching for a job by the time of the survey. But, the Economically Inactive Population also includes those who have retired, those in homes for the elderly, students, those who live on their equities and those who are busy with household tasks.

<sup>3</sup> The term “employed” includes: employees with signed working agreements, employees without signed working agreements, military and civil servants. It does not include domestic workers.

During the last decades of the 20th century, the country went through important demographic, cultural and social changes which led to a great impact in the female work. In the first case, we could mention the drop in fertility rate, mainly in the more developed regions and cities in the country until it went down to 2,1 kids per woman in 2005 (FIBGE, 2006, p. 50); the reduction in the size of the families that became of only 3,2 people, in an average, whereas in 1992 there were 3,7 people in the family (FIBGE, 2006, p. 163, chart. 5.2); the aging of the population with a higher life expectancy at birth for women (75,5 years) than for men (67,9 years) (FIBGE, 2006, p.26) and, consequently, a larger number of old women in the population; and, finally, the most meaningful demographic trend, that started in 1980, which is the evident increase of family arrangements<sup>4</sup> headed by women. In 2005, these cases reached 30.6% in the total amount of Brazilian families living in private households. (FIBGE, 2006, p. 163, chart. 5.1).

In addition to these demographic changes, also changes in the cultural patterns and in the value granted to the social role of women affected the feminine identity, more and more steered to paid work. At the same time, by expanding their school years and entering the universities made it possible for them to conquer new job opportunities. All these factors explain not only the increase of the female activity but also the transformations of this activity in the workforce profile. Most female workers, who, by the end of the 70's were young, single and with no children became older, married and mothers. In 2005, the highest female activity rate, 74%, is among women ranging from 30 to 39 years of age, 69% of women ranging from 40 to 49 year and 54% of women ranging from 50 to 59 are also at work. (Table. 2).

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<sup>4</sup> According the e most recent terms adopted by IBGE, incorporating a broad literature on the theme, "family or family arrangements is the group of people bound by kinsman ties, domestic dependence or living rules, living in the same household unit, or a person who lives by him/herself in a household unit" (FIBGE, 2004, p. 398).

**TABLE 2**  
**ACTIVITY RATES ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS AND SEX**  
**BRAZIL**

Age group and sex	1995	2005
<b>Men</b>		
10 to 14 years	26,4	15,6
15 to 19 years	68,8	60,5
20 to 24 years	90,5	89,4
25 to 29 years	95,2	94,2
30 to 39 years	96,3	95,3
40 to 49 years	94,5	93,1
50 to 59 years	83,6	82,3
60 and up	49,4	44,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,3</b>	<b>73,6</b>
<b>Women</b>		
10 to 14 years	14,4	8,3
15 to 19 years	44,1	43,1
20 to 24 years	60,9	68,8
25 to 29 years	62,7	72,6
30 to 39 years	66,4	73,7
40 to 49 years	63,5	69,1
50 to 59 years	48,0	53,8
60 and up	20,4	20,3
<b>Total</b>	<b>48,1</b>	<b>52,9</b>

Source: FIBGE/PNADS - Microdados (2006).

It was not by chance that married women were those whose activity rates went up more steadily when we consider the position women occupy in the family. In 2005, more than 58% of married women were active (Table. 3).

**TABLE 3**  
**ACTIVITY RATE ACCORDING TO POSITION IN THE FAMILY AND SEX**  
**BRAZIL**

Condition in the family	1993*	2002		2005	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Heads	57,3	85,8	56,5	85,5	59,4
Spouses	49,7	83,9	55,5	83,5	58,5
Children	39,1	57,3	42,7	57,0	41,6
Others	31,5	59,5	34,9	57,7	33,7
No blood relation	79,1	82,4	75,9	82,4	76,5
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>47,0</b>	<b>73,2</b>	<b>50,3</b>	<b>73,6</b>	<b>52,9</b>

Source: FIBGE/PNADS-Microdados (2006)  
Special table (available only for Women).

However, despite all the changes, several things remain as usual: women are still the main responsible for the household tasks and for taking care of children and other relatives, which means a double burden for those who also perform economic activities.

### **Household tasks and time consumed in reproductive activities**

In Brazil, the first generation of studies on female work has had its focus exclusively in the productive side without considering the fact that the role of women in the society is also determined by her role in the family. The theoretical debate and the researches on female work take a new path when the focus moves towards the articulation between the productive space and the family or reproductive space. For women, the experience of working always supposes the combination of these two spheres; be it by reconciling or by overlapping the functions - both in the cities and in the rural area.

During 1970 and 1980, a serious criticism over the official statistics was raised considering them to inadequately show the real contribution of women to society. Just to give an example, in the census and in the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Demographics) household survey the household tasks performed by women at home was not even listed as an economic activity. This means that when people were answering the questionnaires distributed by this official agency they would say that their main activity was to perform “household tasks” and, then, they were considered as economically inactive, together with students, pensioners, disabled or those living on their equity (Bruschini, 1998). The data about this category were not even divulged and the knowledge about them was restricted to officers in charge of these official researches or depending on special tables or occasional researches<sup>5</sup>. More recently, based on publication of IBGE research results in microdata, the data about this set of activities – which are energy and time consuming for those who do

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<sup>5</sup> We must mention, though, that the criticism about the limitations to the concept regarding measures of the female work has also been raised by insiders, for decades, in all the main agencies that prepare the official statistics in Brazil. A simple example would be the rephrasing of the concept “work”, based on the 1990 PNAD, where they included activities for self consumption and family consumption as well as volunteer work. This conduced to a main impact on the volume of female activity that was gathered in the following surveys.

them and, therefore, should be considered a non-paid work and not inactivity – were made available. Sorj shares the same opinion when in her recent article (2004) she makes references to non-paid work, mainly performed by women, in their privacy, as one of the dimensions of social work, side by side with paid work. Another recent paper also draws the attention to the ambiguity and variety of terms used to make visible all the services/works performed by women –household tasks, non-paid work, reproductive work, work at home, work taking care of members of the family – and resumes to the proposal of computing the value of these services or works by measuring the time spent to perform them. (Fondo de Desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas para la Mujer – Unifem, 2000, p.23-24). This is what we did in our article “*Trabalho doméstico: inatividade econômica ou trabalho não remunerado?*” (“Household tasks: economic inactivity or non-paid work?”), (Bruschini, 2006). In the mentioned article, we show results of a study carried out based on data from the PNAD (National Household Sample Survey)/2002, regarding the average time spent, per week, doing household tasks. We used data gathered by questions 121 “in the week between September 23 and 29/ 2001 were you doing household tasks?” and 121-a (for those who had answered “yes”) “how many hours did you normally spend per week with household tasks?” which were lately introduced after the 1992 and 2001 PNAD, respectively<sup>6</sup>.

The National Household Sample Survey (PNAD) defines as household tasks all tasks performed in the place of residence. These tasks (which were not included in the concept of work) were: cleaning up all or part of the house; cooking or preparing meals; ironing; dish washing or doing the laundry (either using machines or not); performing these tasks either for one self or for others living in the house; guide or supervise domestic

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<sup>6</sup> This study was inspired by the Research on Population Living Patterns (*Pesquisa de Padrões de Vida da População – PPV – 1996/97*) (FIBGE, 1999) and carried out with the support of the World Bank. It gathered data on factors that determine social well-being and levels of poverty in the population and it covered several topics such as households, families, contraception, health, anthropometrics, Education, Labor, occupational mobility and included, among them, the use of time. The methodology used was that of a long staying of the researchers in the field, followed by visits to the households: this allowed an accurate survey of information about time allocation. The focus was on the time consumed with productive work, household tasks, community work, time spent in the teaching facilities and time spent with transportation. It studied people above five years of age or more.

workers in their duties; taking care of children or minors living in the house; cleaning the backyard or the surroundings. Therefore, the category “household tasks” covers a broad scope of activities which is not properly detailed in the official surveys.

Among participants, 68% answered affirmatively to the question about household tasks. However, when one lists the information according to sex, the gender inequality becomes quite clear because while 90% of women answered “yes”, little less than 45% of men answered the same. Gender differential also clearly showed the time dedicated to household tasks according to the average number of weekly hours. Thus, whereas in the total population this figure was of 21,9 hours, in the female population this meant close to 27 hours and in the male population little more than 10 hours<sup>7</sup>.

Although the number of hours spent by men in household tasks is not high when compared to the time spent by women in these tasks, their presence in doing these tasks is not neglectful. Nevertheless, the researches that analyze in detail the gender division in performing these tasks call the attention to the fact that men get involved in household tasks in quite a selective way. Bruschini (1990), for instance, based on interviews with husbands and women of 25 middle and low middle class families in the city of São Paulo, states that men share women’s domestic duties only in specific activities – such as maintenance and repairs – in very occasional events in the guise of help or cooperation. Sorj (2004) shows that men get involved, preferentially in interactive activities such as taking care of children, in chores that involve the intersection between the private and public space such as shopping in the supermarket, taking the children to the doctor and in intellectual activities – such as helping the children with their homework or, still, in valued domestic tasks – such as preparing a more sophisticated meal. But, not really in the manual and routine tasks – such as doing the laundry or cleaning the house.

The information about the average number of hours spent per week in household tasks, performed by people in the age group of ten years and up was related to variables as sex, age, school level, income, site of the household (urban/rural), region in the country,

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<sup>7</sup> This outcome is different from the one in the 1996/97PPV-IBGE, which showed that women dedicate, in an average, 36 weekly hours and men 14 hours doing household tasks. This discrepancy is not really surprising if we consider the different methodology adopted for this research, as described in the previous note.



family condition, existence of children, age of the youngest child alive, race/skin color and occupation.

The outcomes of this study that is referring only to the share of the population that answered “yes” to the question “did you do household tasks” in the week that the survey was carried out shows that if one considers the position in the family, the women spouses<sup>8</sup> are the ones who work longer periods of time – 33,4 – in household tasks, followed by family heads<sup>9</sup>, the latter with a number of hours much closer to the general average in the female population. Note that more than 97% of spouses and more than 90% of the family heads (category “referential person”) state that they perform household tasks.

Among all the factors related to the reproductive sphere, the one that mostly hinder the female productive activity is raising young children, since taking care of children is the activity that is most time consuming in the household tasks for women. Mothers dedicate almost 32 hours per week to this activity, a number much higher than that found in the general female average and even higher than that of women with no children. Likewise, young children are those who consume a larger number of dedication hours in the reproductive sphere. When we take upon consideration the age of the youngest living child in the house, we see that mothers dedicate almost 35 weekly hours to reproductive activities when the children are less than two years of age and a bit more than 32 hours when they are ranging from 2 to 4 years of age; these figures are much higher than those found in the general female population, which is of 27 hours (Bruschini,2006). Mothers of children younger than two years of age are overloaded in the reproductive sphere and show lower productive activity rates when compared to mothers with older kids with rates ranging from 60% to 70%. Nevertheless, all mothers, even those with young babies, have expanded their presence in the workforce in the mentioned period. That is, although the time consumed in raising young children in the domestic environment, mothers of young children are consistently getting into the labor market during the studied years. However, in 2005, the

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<sup>8</sup> According to IBGE definition, spouse is the person tied to the family referential person, with or without legal bonds in the time of the survey. .

<sup>9</sup> It is worth mentioning that the number of families headed by women has a significant growth in the 1992-2002 period, in Brazil: in 1992 they accounted for 22% of the Brazilian in 2002, this figure reached 28,4% , according to data in the PNAD.

highest activity rate (73%) refers to mother with children older than seven years, an age when, supposedly, the mothers are being helped by school in the care of children (Tab. 4).

**TABLE 4**  
**ACTIVITY RATES OF WOMEN WHO HAD CHILDREN, ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP OF THE LAST**  
**LIVING CHILD \***  
**BRAZIL**

Age of the last living child	1998	2002	2005
	Activity Rates	Activity Rates	Activity Rates
	%	%	%
Up to 2 years	47,1	51,9	54,9
from 2 to 4 years	57,9	64,1	67,5
from 4 to 5 years	61,8	66,9	70,4
from 5 to 6 years	65	68,3	72,6
From 6 to 7 years	63,7	67,7	72,4
from 7 to 14 years	65,2	69,1	72,7
14 years and up	40,1	42,8	45,6
Total	48,3	54,0	57,1

Source: FIBGE/PNAD-Microdados (2006)

\*we considered women at 15 or up who had children and who have their youngest child alive

## AREAS AND OCCUPATIONS WHERE WOMEN HAD A BETTER PROGRESSION 1992-2005

### Education

Brazilian women are more and more expanding their access to schooling and this is one of the factors that causes a strong impact in the entry of women in the workforce. The educational level of women is much higher than that of men<sup>10</sup>, a gender differentiation that can also be seen in the general population. In 2005, 32% of the female workers had more than 11 years of school years against 25% of male workers. (Tab. 5).

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<sup>10</sup> According to the *Síntese de indicadores 2005 (2005 Indicators Synthesis)* the average number of schooling years among the occupied people is lower among men than among women: seven for men and eight for women. (FIBGE, 2006a, p. 139, tab. 4.5).

**TABLE 5**  
**EAP/PEA DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO SEX AND SCHOOLING LEVELS**  
**BRAZIL**

Years of study	1995		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
No school and less than one year	16,3	13,2	10,1	7,6
1 to 3 years	19,0	16,5	12,5	9,4
4 to 7 years	34,1	31,9	28,6	24,3
8 to10 years	13,4	13,6	17,6	17,1
11 to 14 years	12,2	18,1	24,6	31,7
15 years or more	4,8	6,5	6,2	9,5
<b>Total ( % )</b>	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>Million</b>	44,2	30,0	54.290.827	41.741.144

Source: FIBGE/PNADs-Microdados (2006)

At the same time, higher education has a considerable impact on female work because the activity rates of women with more years of school are much higher than the general activity rates in all the studied years. In 2005, whereas more than half of the Brazilian women (53%) were active, those with more than 15 years of schooling had an activity rate that reached 83% (Tab. 6).

**TABLE 6**  
**ACTIVITY RATES ACCORDING TO SEX AND SCHOOLING**  
**BRAZIL**

Years of study	1995		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
None or less than one year	73,5	40,2	68,6	37,2
1 to 3 years	65,6	39,0	61,0	37,9
4 to 7 years	73,9	44,0	66,0	42,1
8 to10 years	82,5	52,8	78,9	55,4
11 to14 years	88,6	69,0	89,2	73,3
15 years or more	90,6	82,3	89,1	82,8
<b>Total ( % )</b>	75,3	48,1	73,6	52,9

Source: FIBGE/PNADs-Microdados (2006)

Higher education among female workers corresponds to that of the general population. Here, one may see the predominance of females occurring when they have 9 to

11 years of study. In 2005, 26% of women, against 24% of men fitted in this range, as shown in Table 7.

**TABLE 7**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLE AGED 10 OR MORE ACCORDING TO SEX AND LEVEL OF STUDY**  
**BRAZIL**

Study level	1999				2005			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
None or less than one year	8.540.987	13,6	8.882.111	13,2	8.003.731	10,8	8.540.883	10,8
1 to 4 years of study	21.677.299	34,4	21.547.950	32,1	20.841.898	28,2	20.401.494	25,8
5 to 8 years of study	17.904.695	28,4	18.492.870	27,6	20.696.292	28,0	21.144.264	26,8
9 to 11 years of study	10.317.438	16,4	12.789.672	19,1	17.541.178	23,8	20.357.372	25,8
12 years and up	4.275.768	6,8	5.056.635	7,5	6.335.833	8,6	8.094.191	10,3
Undetermined in the report	303.546	0,5	306.819	0,5	376.012	0,5	407.254	0,5
Total	63.019.733	100,0	67.076.057	100,0	73.794.944	100,0	78.945.458	100,0

Source: FIBGE/PNADs - microdados (2006)

In technical colleges, the percentage of females concluding the courses are quite high, mainly in the area of services and its specialties, especially in the fields of Health and Arts (FCC, 1998, Database on Women's work, series Brazilian Women, Education and Work). This is the moment when students choose their future professions, a choice that will conduce to further studies in a university and, later on, to a position in the market place where women are predominant in the sector of services. In higher education, women significantly expand their presence in the studied decade surpassing men: in 2005, the female share among those with a university degree reached 62%, as shown in the data collected by the Higher Education Census, carried out by the Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, women's choices remain steered towards traditionally "feminine" fields of knowledge, such as Education (81% of women), Health and Social Welfare (74%), Humanities and Arts (65%), fields that prepare women to get into the so-called female occupational "ghettos". However, it is also true that the female participation in the universities is increasing also in other areas or *male* strongholds, such as Engineering,

Production and Construction, where there is a leap from 26% to 30% in the presence of female students in the studied decade (tab. 8).

**TABLE 8**  
**UNIVERSITY DEGREES: FEMALE STUDENTS WHO CONCLUDED THE COURSE ACCORDING TO**  
**FIELDS OF KNOWLEDGE**  
**BRAZIL**

Fields of Knowledge	Concluded					
	1994			2005		
	Total	Women	Female share (%)	Total	Women	Female share (%)
Brazil	245.887	150.339	61,1	717.858	446.724	62,2
Education	26.158	24.119	92,2	199.392	161.695	81,1
Humanities and arts	26.323	20.630	78,4	24.810	16.108	64,9
Social Sciences, Business and Law	100.979	55.298	54,8	277.572	150.958	54,4
Sciences, Mathematics and IT	30.175	17.657	58,5	56.436	22.061	39,1
Engineering, Production and Construction	19.491	5.081	26,1	36.918	10.892	29,5
Agriculture and Veterinary	5.274	1.671	31,7	11.874	4.834	40,7
Health and Social Welfare	35.687	24.621	69,0	90.610	66.600	73,5
Services	1.435	1.110	77,4	20.246	13.576	67,1

Source: MEC/INEP – Higher Education Census: special tables (Brazil)

### **Prestige Occupations and Professions**

The insertion of women in the Brazilian workforce, as shown in several studies on the topic, has been marked by precariousness along the years and has strongly affected a significant part of the population. Nevertheless, conversely to the precarious occupations, women with education, not only remain quite present in the traditional female ghettos such as Teaching and Nursing, but also are entering in prestigious professional areas such as Medicine, Law, Architecture and even Engineering, a traditional male stronghold. This

could be considered as one of the faces of progress achieved by women regarding their share in the workforce.

The tips that show how the choices for university degrees is clearly making a difference among women comes from a previous study, which analyzed data emerging from the 1980 and 1991 Labor Census. Those censuses showed significant increases in the percentage of women in some careers (Bruschini, 1998). In order to deeper analyze these careers and update this information, we have chosen to consider them in their formalized segment by using data from the Rais<sup>11</sup>, from the Ministry of Labor, from 1990 to 2004<sup>12</sup>, to learn about the evolution of women's participation along the years. A deeper analysis of the female insertion in the choice of university careers was carried out for a more recent year.

The first thing that can be seen regarding these careers is the consolidation of the female presence among these professionals during the 90's. In the category of engineers, for instance, the female share was of 12% in 1993 and comes to 14% in 2004, is quite tangible. During the same year, more than half of the category of architects comprises women (54%), a figure that consolidates the feminization trend in the profession if we consider that women were already occupying 52% of these job positions in 1993. Also among physicians, the progression has been confirmed: 41.3% of the category represented women in 2004 against 36% in 1993. In all the groups in the legal area – lawyers, attorneys, judges, prosecutors and legal advisors – the increment in the number of women was also quite meaningful. This is a business world segmented according to professionals that can fit into two types of careers: the so-called “law professionals” encompassing all the workers linked to the public power to whom it is forbidden the exercise of Law and the other lawyers and legal advisors that practice Law as liberal professionals or are employed by the unions and associations, be it in private or public offices. In all these careers, we noticed the same ascending movement in the percentage of women's share. In all of them, the female sex represents, in 2004, more than 40% of the professional category. The case of

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<sup>11</sup> This source (Annual List of Social Information – RAIS) of data only covers the formal workforce because it comprises managerial records supplied by the companies. It lists employment bonds or job positions and not employees.

<sup>12</sup> Due to technical problems while processing the Rais/2005, we needed to establish the year 2004 as a limit date in this table and in the following tables that display Rais data.

magistracy is also an example: female judges that used to occupy 22.5% of the positions in 1993, reached more than 34% in the last studied date. (Tab. 9).

**TABLE 9**  
**FEMALE SHARE IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS SELECIONADAS**  
**BRAZIL**

Occupation	1993		2004	
	Total	% of Women	Total	% of Women
Physicians	135.089	36,3	202.733	41,3
Lawyers	25.404	35,1	37.682	45,9
Public attorneys	6.508	40,6	6.694	43,3
Judges	10.818	22,5	11.337	34,4
Members of the Public Prosecution Service	–	–	6.159	40,9
Engineers	142.686	11,6	139.300	14,0
Architects	7.118	51,5	8.472	54,1

Source: MTE - Rais: 1993 e 2004

The entry of women in these selected occupations probably occurred thanks to a conversion of factors. On the one hand, a huge cultural transformation that started to happen in the 60's and moreover in the 70's as a result of the social and political movements of those decades, which drew women to the universities in search of a professional life project instead of a merely domestic project. And, the expansion of public and private universities at the same time met this feminine volition. On the other hand, these professions were rationalized and transformed, therefore opening new opportunities for women who had chosen these careers. All this has broaden the professional scope for women who could, then, go beyond their traditional ghettos. Medicine, Architecture and Law have been going through specialization processes and wage differentiations in detriment of the old professional autonomy. Social representations, built not only by society but also by the categories are also being changed, especially regarding their liberal profile, which echoes in the level of prestige and status attributed to these professionals. (Bruschini, Lombardi, 1999; 2000).

The analysis of some characteristics of the profile of theses professionals according to sex for the year of 2004 show, initially, that the women are younger than men in all the

studied professions – 63% in Engineering, 47% in Architecture, 44% in Medicine, 68% in Law (lawyers and more than half of the attorneys and judges are younger than 39 years of age. Another difference compared to the masculine pattern, happening only in Engineering, is the importance of the position in the public sector (17.4% of women and only 10.5% of men); in the other analyzed professions, public service seems to be equal in hiring men and women. Regarding the journey at work, both studied men and women work approximately the same number of hours, except in the case of engineers when men have a longer journey than women but in the other cases, women seem to surpass men in terms of working hours. Finally, in all the careers, the differentiation in wages still exists between the sexes, the only exception being judges and attorneys from both sexes who receive similar wages. As an example, among those who receive more than 20 minimum wages per month: 32% are male engineers but 17% are female engineers; 19% of male architects but 15% are female engineers; 8.4% are male doctors and 7% female doctors; 29% are male lawyers and 24% female lawyers. This same pattern persists since the last decade, as shown in previous studies (Bruschini, Lombardi, 1999; 2000), and in Table 10.

**TABLE 10**  
**SELECTED OCCUPATIONS: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE JOB**  
**BRAZIL, 2004**

Characteristics of the job	OCCUPATIONS											
	Lawyers		Attorneys and legal advisors		Judges		Engineers		Architects		Physicians	
	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
<b>AGE</b>												
Up to 29 years	22,4	32,7	12,2	13,3	6,9	10,8	19,9	29,1	14,0	22,0	5,5	8,2
30 to 39 years	30,0	35,4	31,9	37,7	31,3	42,7	27,8	34,1	23,7	26,6	24,0	35,4
40 years and up	47,6	31,9	55,9	49,0	61,8	46,5	52,3	36,8	62,3	51,4	70,5	56,4
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>WORKING TIES</b>												
CLT for undetermined time	70,5	71,5	5,6	4,7	0,1	0,2	87,7	80,9	63,9	61,8	31,4	32,5
Civil Servant	28,4	27,7	94,1	95,1	99,8	99,7	10,5	17,4	35,0	37,3	65,4	64,6
CLT for a period of time	0,3	0,2	0,05	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,6	0,8	0,7	0,6	1,3	1,0
Other type of ties	0,7	0,6	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,08	1,2	1,0	0,5	0,3	1,9	1,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0



TIME OF STAY IN THE POSITION												
Up to 3 years	43,5	48,6	21,9	20,6	15,3	16,8	43,1	47,3	38,0	39,8	31,9	36,9
More than 3 to less than 5 years	15,0	14,7	13,7	12,2	8,3	9,3	13,5	14,0	10,0	9,4	9,6	10,9
From 5 years to less than 10 years	15,8	15,7	18,2	17,1	25,1	32,2	12,8	12,0	10,8	11,4	15,7	17,6
10 years and up	25,6	20,9	46,2	50,0	51,2	41,7	30,6	26,7	41,2	39,4	42,7	34,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
SIZE OF ESTABLISHMENT												
Up to 99 employees	33,8	31,4	6,2	4,4	0,5	0,5	28,0	27,5	33,0	31,8	5,8	7,0
From 100 to 499 employees	28,3	25,6	33,3	30,7	4,4	3,1	27,9	27,9	23,1	22,9	13,3	11,2
500 and more	37,9	43,0	60,5	64,9	95,1	96,5	44,1	44,6	43,9	45,2	80,9	81,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
WORKING HOURS PER WEEK												
Up to 30 hours	18,9	15,6	19,4	17,4	31,5	24,4	6,4	9,8	16,6	16,6	71,7	70,3
From 31 to 40 hours	39,0	41,5	72,7	75,9	60,4	66,4	35,9	38,5	38,3	39,4	19,0	22,2
From 41 to 44 hours	42,1	42,9	7,9	6,7	8,0	9,2	57,7	51,8	45,1	44,0	9,3	7,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
AVERAGE MONTHLY WAGE												
Up to 10 SM	42,8	45,9	24,6	22,6	0,7	0,5	29,4	43,2	46,1	53,6	62,7	67,2
More than 10 to 20 SM	28,6	30,4	16,0	18,0	2,0	1,7	38,4	39,9	34,6	31,4	28,7	25,9
More than 20 SM	28,6	23,5	59,3	59,3	97,3	97,7	32,0	16,8	19,1	14,9	8,4	6,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: MTE-Rais, 2004

- M = Men, W= Women, CLT = registered working agreement, SM = Minimum wage

### Executive women in board of directors' positions in companies in the formal sector

A study by Bruschini and Puppini (2004), based on data for the year 2000 has shown that 24% of the 42,276 positions in high management (board of directors) listed by the Rais were occupied by women, quite a surprising datum when, by the time, the difficult access of female workers to high management positions was exposed in other studies about female work about. The information received for the year 2004 made public that, in that year, close to 31% of the 19,167 positions for CEOs in companies from the formal sector were occupied by women. However, when analyzing the female presence in such positions according to sectors of activity, it was possible to see that the female positions were more

predominant in public administration, in Education – more than 50% - and in other social welfare areas such as Health and Social Services when 46% of management positions were occupied by women.

**TABLE 11**  
**FEMALE PRESENCE AS CEOs ACCORDING TO THE COMPANY'S SECTOR**  
**BRAZIL, 2004**

Activity sectors *	General Directors (CEO)**		
	Total	Women	
	Absolute N	Absolute N	(%)
Agriculture, cattle raising, silviculture and forestry	229	30	13,1
Fishing	9	0	0,0
Extracting Industry	62	6	9,7
Transformation industry	3.417	407	11,9
Power, gas and water production and distribution	259	49	18,9
Construction	348	34	9,8
Commerce, vehicles, personal and domestic objects repair	3.399	914	26,9
Lodging and food	237	74	31,2
Transportation, storing and communication	848	125	14,7
Financial brokerage, insurance, private pension and related services	812	118	14,5
Real state activities, renting and services	1.985	463	23,3
Public administration, social defense and social security	5.010	2.659	53,1
Education	847	436	51,5
Health and social services	316	144	45,6
Other collective, social and personal services	1.384	377	27,2
International bodies and other extraterritorial institutions	4	2	50,0
Total	19.167	5.839	30,5

Source: MTE-Rais, 2004

Sectors of Activity according to the National Economic Activity classification – CNAE/1995.

Brazilian Occupation Classification – CBO/2002, Occupational Family 1210.

When considering the positions in the board of directors in their specificity, we could see that most of them, in Health, Education and Culture services companies were occupied by women (75%), whereas among operational and production directors, or even in supporting areas, the percentage of positions occupied by women is significantly low: 21% in the first case and 30% in the second case (Tab. 12).

**TABLE 12**  
**FEMALE PRESENCE IN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATIONAL FAMILIES**  
**ADOPTED BY THE BRAZILIAN OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATION /CBO 2002**  
**BRAZIL, 2004**

Occupational families	Directors	Total	Women	Female share
	<b>Production and Operation Directors</b>	<b>8.117</b>	<b>1.714</b>	<b>21,1</b>
1221	Production and Operation Directors in forestry, fishing, water and agricultural companies	382	60	15,7
1222	Production and Operation Directors in extraction industries, transformation industries and public utility services	1.417	137	9,7
1223	Operation Directors in construction companies	675	58	8,6
1224	Operation Directors in trading companies	788	171	21,7
1225	Operation Directors in tourist, lodging and food service companies	499	132	26,5
1226	Operation Directors in storing, transportation and telecommunication companies	3.470	993	28,6
1227	Operation Directors in financial brokerage institutions	886	163	18,4
	<b>Supporting area Directors</b>	<b>38.957</b>	<b>11.489</b>	<b>29,5</b>
1231	Administration and Financial Directors	28.779	9.402	32,7
1232	Human Resources and labor relations Directors	1.349	600	44,5
1233	Commercial and marketing Directors	5.762	964	16,7
1234	Supply and procurement Directors	543	129	23,8
1236	IT Directors	922	126	13,7
1237	R&D Directors	532	86	16,2
1238	Maintenance Directors	1.070	182	17,0
	<b>Directors in health services, educational or cultural services or personnel institutions</b>	<b>39.534</b>	<b>29.600</b>	<b>74,9</b>
1311-05; 1311-10	Operation Directors in personnel, social and cultural services companies	2.368	1.154	48,7
1312-05	Operation Directors in health service companies	4.969	2.949	59,3
1313-05; 1313-10	Directors in educational services institutions	32.197	25.497	79,2
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86.608</b>	<b>42.803</b>	<b>49,4</b>

Source: MTE - Rais, 2004.

The research by Bruschini and Puppini (2004) reveals that women directors have similar profiles as those described in the above topic. They are younger than their male colleagues in similar positions and are in the job for lesser time than them. According to the

data in that research, more than 80% of the female directors were under 50 years of age and only 64% of the male directors were in the same age group; but, 47% of female directors and 44% of male directors were in the job for less than three years. As in all the other professions previously analyzed, and in the workforce as a whole, also the female directors from the formal sector companies have lower salaries than their male colleagues occupying the same level. We must recall that the wages in higher level positions, as the ones we are analyzing in this topic, are usually much higher than those paid to workers in other lower positions and that is why 50% of the male directors against 30% of the female directors analyzed by Bruschini and Puppini were earning, in 2000 more than 15 minimum wages or did not report their salaries (category “unknown”). Gender differentiation in the salary range of these professionals remains the same as in 2004, although it is still very high. In that year, 41% of the male directors were earning more than 15 minimum wages whereas only 16% of female directors (Tab.13).

**TABLE 13**  
**POSITIONS AS CEOs ACCORDING TO SEX AND MONTHLY WAGES**  
**BRAZIL, 2004**

Wages ranges	Men		Women		Total	
	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Up to 3 SM*	3.670	27,5	2.323	39,8	5.993	31,3
More than 3 to 7 SM	2.022	15,2	1.521	26,0	3.543	18,5
More than 7 to 15 SM	1.717	12,9	1.043	17,9	2.760	14,4
More than 15 SM	5.476	41,1	919	15,7	6.395	33,4
Unknown	443	3,3	33	0,6	476	2,5
Total	13.328	100,0	5.839	100,0	19.167	100,0

Source: MTE - RAIS, 2004.

\* SM – minimum wages

## RECURRENT TRACES IN WOMEN'S WORK

### Gender Differentiation in the Brazilian workforce

When we observe the Brazilian work force in the 90`s and in the first years of the millennium<sup>13</sup>, data from the PNADs point at the persisting and known patterns of gender differentiation insertion according to sex or group of economic activities: in a sequence, the sectors in the workforce where women still find better job opportunities and employment are in services, agribusiness, the social sector<sup>14</sup>, trade of goods and the industry. The male workforce, on its turn, kept its significant presence, still following a sequence, in the industry, in jobs linked to agribusiness in the trade of goods and in services. In 2005, thanks to the new classification of economic activities adopted by the IBGE since the 2000 Census, we can better see how women are distributed in the sector of services. In that year, this sector had most of the female workers (almost 40%) in three sub-sectors: “Education, Health and Social Services”, “domestic work” and “other collective, personal or social services”. These structural patterns in women’s and men’s occupation suffer no changes during the period analyzed although some conjunction oscillations could be perceived due to economic and political instability that affected the country in the previous decade<sup>15</sup> (Tab. 14).

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<sup>13</sup> In the concept of occupation used by the IBGE, they included people who had worked in the week of reference of the survey and people who did not work because either they were on vacations, on strike or in a medical leave, etc.

<sup>14</sup> The services included in the Social Sector, according to IBGE definitions are: community and social services, medical services, dentistry services, veterinarian services and teaching.

<sup>15</sup> The 90`s were marked by important economic, political and social events. The period that goes from 1986 to 1994 was especially troubled: the country went through nothing less than six different plans to stabilize the Economy. Following, the nineties and the first years of the millennium can be identified by the reduction in the formal workforce and the respective increase in more precarious means of hiring people such as payment without legal papers, autonomous work, increase in the unemployment rates and drop in salaries. During the studied period, there is the consolidation of the “outsourcing” process in the Economy and the consequent loss in the capacity of generating employment in the transformation industry sector (Dieese, 2001).

**TABLE 14**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPIED PEOPLE ACCORDING TO SEX AND ACTIVITY SECTOR**  
**BRAZIL, 2005**

Activity groups	2005	
	MEN	WOMEN
Agriculture	23,68	16,02
Other industrial activities	1,17	0,23
Transformation industry	15,22	12,67
Construction	10,88	0,40
Trading and Repairing	18,94	16,18
Lodging and food	3,14	4,36
Transportation, storing and communication	6,82	1,43
Public Administration	5,22	4,45
Education, Health and social services	3,44	16,14
Domestic work	0,90	16,93
Other collective, social and personal services	2,71	5,26
Other activities	7,51	5,88
Poorly define or unreported activities	0,36	0,04
<b>Total %</b>	100,00	100,00
<b>Million</b>	50.436.228	36.653.748

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados (2006)

Regarding the position in the occupation – a term used by the IBGE to several types of working ties that have been established in the market – we see that, both in 1993 as in 2005, there is a prevalence in both sexes of those called “employees”, a category where it is included not only the formal jobs share (with legal papers signed by the employer, statutory employees and those with other types of agreements) as well as the informal share (employed with no legal protection). In the studied period, there has been a higher increase in the number of female employees than in the number of male employees. (Tab. 15).

**TABLE 15**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPIED ACCORDING TO SEX AND POSITION IN THE OCCUPATION**  
**BRAZIL**

<b>Brazil</b>				
<b>Position in the occupation</b>	<b>1993</b>		<b>2005</b>	
	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
Employees	58,6	42,7	60,4	47,9
Domestic workers	0,7	16,6	0,9	16,9
Autonomous	25,4	15,8	25,5	16,2
Employers	4,9	1,5	5,4	2,6
Unpaid jobs	8,6	13,5	5,2	9,0
Self consume ***	1,9	9,9	2,7	7,3
<b>Total ( % )</b>	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>Million</b>	40,6	26,0	50.436.228	36.653.748

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados

\*\*\* construction and consume for the family group or for the individual him/herself

However, we must point out that the insertion of Brazilian women in the workforce has, along the times, been characterized by precariousness affecting a large number of female workers. In 2005, no less than 33% of the women's workforce or 12 million of women were placed in precarious niches, or in a lesser quality job position either as domestic workers (more than 6.2 million) or doing unpaid work (3.3 million) or, still, working for self consume production or for the family group (2.7 million), as shown in Table 16<sup>16</sup>.

Domestic work, that is, paid domestic work is, in fact, the main occupational niche for women: more than 90% of workers in these services are females. This type of job has remained as an important source of occupation, practically stable in 2005, absorbing 17% of the workforce. This percentage has been dropping along the years since that, in 1970, it was absorbing more than 1/4 of female labor (Bruschini; Lombardi, 2000). The occupation

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<sup>16</sup> We must enhance that the categories “domestic workers”, “workers for self consume of for family's consume” emerged in the PNADs from 1992 on. The first category, which has been separated from the category “employees” and the second one separated from the “unpaid”. Therefore, this refinement in the classification allows a better vision on the female occupation, especially thanks to the separation of the “domestic workers” from the category of the employees, although it ends up causing some problems in the longitudinal analysis of the series referring to women's work.

of domestic worker still represents, nowadays, a job opportunity for more than 6 million of women in the Brazilian workforce and it is considered precarious due to the long hours of work, the low number of workers with registered working agreements (only 25% of them have the signed legal papers) and to the low salaries (96% of them earn up to 2 minimum wages).

Other means of occupation even more precarious, that is, unpaid work and work done for the production of self consume or for the family consume are predominantly performed in the agricultural sector, in small farms, ranches or dwellings in the outskirts of towns. Also in agriculture, 10% of women worked for their self consume or for the family group consume in 1993 and, in 2005, the percentage dropped to 7% of women. Although there is predominance in the agricultural sector, a non neglectful share of 30% of the unpaid female workers occupied in other sectors in 2005 is distributed as follows: 16% in commerce; 9% in services and 8% in the transformation industry. Note that the participation of the unpaid female workers in the commerce, in services and in the industry grew between 1993 and 2005, which may be considered as an indicator of an ascending precariousness in the female labor relations that is spreading to beyond the agriculture sector. By analyzing the ages of these women, we may shed some light about their profile. Both among the unpaid workers and those who work for self consume, we see the predominance of older and more mature women. In 2005, 59% of the unpaid female workers were older than 30 years and 77% of those working for self consume were in the same age group. (Tab. 16).



**TABLE 16**  
**SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN'S OCCUPATION IN MORE PRECARIOUS POSITIONS**

<b>BRAZIL</b>		
Position in the occupation/indicators	1993	2005
<b>DOMESTIC WORKERS *</b>	<b>16,6</b>	<b>16,9</b> (N: 6.206.202)
<b>&gt;AGE</b>		
up to 19 years	27,0	10,4
20 to 29	27,4	24,5
30 to 49	36,2	50,6
50 and up	9,4	14,5
<b>&gt;no legal working papers</b>	83,9	74,8
<b>&gt;activity sector</b>		
services	100,0	100,0
<b>&gt; earn more than 2 minimum wages</b>	96,5	96,4
<b>UNPAID *</b>	<b>13,5</b>	<b>9,0</b> (N: 3.310.119)
<b>&gt; age</b>		
Up to 19 years	31,5	22,2
20 to 29	18,4	18,7
30 to 49	34,1	37,1
50 and up	15,9	22,0
<b>&gt;activity sector</b>		
agriculture	71,2	64,0
commerce	14,0	15,5
services (1)	8,0	9,2
Transformation industry	3,9	8,4
<b>SELF CONSUME *</b>	<b>9,9</b>	<b>7,3</b> (N: 2.676.778)
<b>&gt;age</b>		
Up to 19 years	10,4	8,5
20 to 29	18,5	14,8
30 to 49	35,4	34,5
50 and up	35,6	42,1
<b>&gt; activity sector</b>		
agriculture	100,0	99,4

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados (2006)

\* Percentage of share in the total women's labor in each year: food; services  
Domestic work; other collective, personal or social work; other activities

## Formal Market and occupational framework

The formal occupational share, that is, the jobs where there is some type of formal agreement between the parts, is traditionally reduced in the country and even smaller among women. In 2005, formal occupation – considering the employees with legalized working agreements (CLT), the military and the statutory workers – represented 37% in the total occupation in the country: 39% of male occupation and 35% of female occupation. Nevertheless, when we add the domestic workers with signed working agreements (1/4 of them) to that contingent of workers, the formal male and female occupation becomes more equal, close to 39% (Tab.17).

**TABLE 17**  
**FORMAL OCCUPATION\* AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL OCCUPATION**  
**BRAZIL**

	2002			2005		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
<b>Total of occupied (NA)</b>	78.179.622	45.877.459	32.302.163	87.089.976	50.436.228	36.653.748
<b>A – Employees with signed CLT (legal papers)</b>	22.929.780	14.838.263	8.091.517	27.046.296	17.386.185	9.660.111
<b>B – Military and statutory workers</b>	4.991.101	2.208.416	2.782.685	5.490.792	2.380.455	3.110.337
<b>C - Domestic workers with signed CLT (legal papers)</b>	1.558.970	171.238	1.387.732	1.746.856	181.831	1.565.025
<b>A+B+C (formalized occupation)</b>	29.479.851	17.217.917	12.261.934	34.283.944	19.948.471	14.335.473
<b>Proportion of formal occupation, excluding domestic workers (%)</b>						
<b>A</b>	29,3	32,3	25,0	31,1	34,5	26,4
<b>B</b>	6,4	4,8	8,6	6,3	4,7	8,5
<b>A+B</b>	35,7	37,2	33,7	37,4	39,2	34,8
<b>Proportion of formal occupation, including domestic work (%)</b>						
<b>A</b>	29,3	32,3	25,0	31,1	34,5	26,4
<b>B</b>	6,4	4,8	8,6	6,3	4,7	8,5
<b>C</b>	2,0	0,4	4,3	2,0	0,4	4,3
<b>A+B+C</b>	37,7	37,5	38,0	39,4	39,6	39,1

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados (2006)

(\*) Formal occupations are considered as so when the workers have signed working agreements (CLT), the military and the statutory workers and domestic workers with signed working agreements (CLT)

It is important to underline that the dwindling in formal job positions, which happened more intensively in the 90's, seems to have affected more men than women: during the period 1985/2004, the share of women in the formal market increased from 32.4% to 40%, whereas the share of men declined in that same period. (Tab. 18).

**TABLE 18**  
**WOMEN'S SHARE IN THE FORMAL JOB POSITIONS**  
**BRAZIL**

Years	Total of formal ties	Women's share	
	(million)	(million)	%
<b>1985</b>	20,4	6,6	32,4
<b>1988</b>	23,3	7,9	33,9
<b>1992</b>	22,3	8	35,9
<b>1995</b>	23,6	8,8	37,3
<b>1998</b>	24,5	9,4	38,4
<b>2002</b>	28,7	11,4	39,7
<b>2004</b>	31.407.576	12.561.859	40,0

Source: MTE - Rais; 1985/1988 Anuário Rais tab.I.4; FROM 1992 ON CD-ROM

The framework of these jobs, however, suffers minimum changes during the period. In other words, the nature of the working ties shows a regular pattern across the analyzed period. Most of the jobs, both for males and females, are ruled by the CLT (Consolidation of Labor Laws); nevertheless, the weight of this type of ties is clearly declining in the set of female jobs from 1995 to 2004. The percentage of female positions in the public service, so-called statutory worker, remained unchanged in the same period, showing the persistent importance of this sector in absorbing female labor, most probably in the fields of Education and Health: in 1995, 31% of the female positions were hired under this status and in 2004 this percentage did not suffer any change, as seen in the following table. (Tab. 19).

**TABLE 19**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES ACCORDING TO SEX AND NATURE OF THE WORKING TIES**  
**BRAZIL**

Nature of working tie	1995		2004	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
CLT**	83,7	68,3	77,8	67,1
Statutory	15,2	31	15,2	30,6
Others*	1,2	0,7	6,9	2,3
<b>Total ( % )</b>	100	100	100,0	100,0
<b>Milhões</b>	14,8	8,8	18.845.717	12.561.859

Source: MTE - Rais 1995 and 2004

- Included temporary and occasional workers, minors, apprentices, trainees, directors without working ties but with severance payment (FGTS) deposited by the company; other agreements with specific timelines and ignored types of ties (the latter in the first years of the series).
- \*\* CLT – signed legal working papers

The occupational framework in the Brazilian market has shown recurrent trends that have not changed much in the last 30 years. In formal employment, as shown for 2002, in the database from the female work from Fundação Carlos Chagas (series Workforce and Educational Framework, sub-series Formal Market) there is continuity in the pattern of women's occupations; a strong feminine presence in occupations in the traditional sectors of the industry, as in the case of seamstresses in the cloth making business as well as a persistent contingent of women in occupations dealing with personal care, hygiene and food services, which is the case of hairdressers and aesthetic specialists, cleaning ladies, domestic workers in homes and hotels (washing attendants, dry cleaning workers and cooks). Also, the traditional feminine ghettos still exist: Nursing (89% among nurses, 84% nurse assistants, and 82% of personnel in nursing were females in 2002); Nutrition (93% of nutritionists were women; Social Assistance (91%), Psychology (89%); Teaching in pre-school years (95%), Teaching in elementary school (88%) and Teaching in high school (74% in addition to secretaries (85%), accounting clerks and cashiers (75%).

## Unemployment and work earnings

Women have been greatly affected by unemployment. Since middle 90's, unemployment rates have been increasing more among women than among men. According to scholars, one of the factors that has contributed to this outcome is the steady increase of the economically active female population, that is, women who get into the market searching for jobs<sup>17</sup>. Ramos and Brito (2003), using data from the Monthly Employment Survey (*Pesquisa Mensal de Emprego – PME*) – by IBGE, for six metropolitan regions in the country, showed that between 1991 and 2002 the participation of women among the unemployed increased: according to these authors, the feminine share among the unemployed jumped from 39% in 1991 to 46% in 2002. More recent data, also extracted from the PME/IBGE, for six metropolitan regions in the country, reveal that gender differentiation persists in the Brazilian population as seen in the unemployment rates: in 2005, from January to April, whereas the rate of unemployment among men was of 13.5 the rate for men was of 8.3 (*Boletim Mercado de Trabalho*, 2006)

The level of earnings in Brazil is known to be quite low and the Brazilian women – as women all over the world – earn even less than men<sup>18</sup>. The progression in the distribution of earnings from work in Brazil, during the period studied in this article, is shown by an increase in the proportion of workers receiving lower earnings reflecting the drop in earnings from work among the occupied population: whilst in 1993, 48% of the men were earning up to two minimum wages, in 2005 this percentage goes up to 58%. Women rates, on the other hand, went from 55% in 1993 and 63% in 2005. Moreover, in this year, 36% of women were earning less than one minimum wage. (Tab. 20).

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<sup>17</sup> This reasoning makes sense when we consider that unemployment is defined as “unsuccessfully searching for a job during a determined period of time” and that the economically active population (PEA) comprises occupied and unoccupied people, that is, those who are still searching for a job as well. Once there is a massive entry of women in the PEA statistics, there is also a larger number of women searching for a job or unoccupied.

<sup>18</sup> And, women earning lower salaries than men is a recurrent situation not only in Brazil but all over the world. In Japan, in 2000, as an example, women were earning 65.5% of men's salaries; in France, in 1999, the percentage was of 75.2% (United Nations, 2005).

**TABLE 20**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPIED ACCORDING TO SEX AND EARNING LEVELS**  
**BRAZIL**

Classes of monthly earnings	1993		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Up to 1 SM	25,5	35,7	27,7	35,9
More than 1 to 2 SM	22,3	18,9	30,1	26,8
More than 2 to 5 SM	25,1	14,3	22,7	14,2
More than 5 SM	15,0	6,4	10,2	5,6
No earnings	10,9	23,8	8,1	16,5
<b>Total ( % )</b>	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>Million</b>	40,5	25,9	50.436.228	36.653.748

Source: FIBGE/PNADs 1993 (tab. 4.27); 2005 - microdados

The lowest earnings among women, when compared to men's are confirmed when one considers the economic sectors, the groups of working hours, the position in the occupation and the years of study. In 2002, for instance - in the transformation industry, where working relations are more formalized - 46% of the occupied men received up to two minimum wages and 73% of the occupied women were in that same wage range. In the sector "education, health and social services" where work is quite feminized, 49% of women were receiving up to 2 minimum wages against only 35% of the occupied men; in public administration, another traditional feminine ghetto, 46% of the female workers and 32% of the male workers were earning up to two minimum wages. The subordination of women in the workforce is also exposed by the significant share of female workers in the agricultural sector who do not receive payment (81%) against only 27% of male workers. (FCC, 1998, *Série Ganhos de Homens, Ganhos de Mulheres* -.Series Men's earnings, Women's earnings)

The same gender differentiation appears when we analyze the earnings according the position in the occupation or the type of working ties. In 2005, 68% of the female workers earn up to two minimum wages but only 63% of the male workers; 96% of the female domestic workers but only 89% of the male domestic workers; 81% of women who are autonomous but 69% of autonomous men. Gender inequality is also perceived in better

positions: 36% of female employers earned more than five minimum wages in 2005 whereas 45% of male employers earned the same. (Tab. 21).

**TABLE 21**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPIED WITH A MAIN JOB ACCORDING TO SEX AND POSITION IN THE**  
**OCCUPATION**  
**BRAZIL**

Position in the occupation and levels of monthly earnings in the main job	2002		2005	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<b>Employees (NA)</b>	27.225.147	15.175.531	30.445.871	17.540.117
%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Up to 2 SM	56,6	61,0	63,2	68,2
More than 2 to 5 SM	29,8	26,5	26,2	22,5
More than 5 SM	12,5	11,4	9,5	8,2
No earnings	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1
<b>Domestic workers (NA)</b>	428.242	5.617.858	452.425	6.206.202
%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Up to 2 SM	84,5	93,8	89,4	96,4
More than 2 to 5 SM	12,1	5,2	7,5	2,6
More than 5 SM	0,9	0,1	0,6	0,01
No earnings	1,3	0,6	1,6	0,5
<b>Autonomous(NA)</b>	12.172.296	5.228.884	12.880.631	5.950.880
%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Up to 2 SM	61,4	76,7	69,4	81,2
More than 2 to 5 SM	25,0	14,8	19,9	12,2
More than 5 SM	10,7	6,4	8,1	4,7
No earnings	0,8	0,4	0,7	0,4
<b>Employers (NA)</b>	2.456.473	860.471	2.713.703	969.652
%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Up to 2 SM	13,6	16,6	20,3	22,8
More than 2 to 5 SM	31,0	35,2	32,2	38,6
More than 5 SM	51,7	43,5	45,4	35,7
No earnings	0,4	0,8	0,2	0,4
<b>Self consume(NA)</b>	986.771	2.257.971	1.339.814	2.676.778
%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
No earnings	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>Unpaid(NA)</b>	2.598.687	3.157.219	2.603.784	3.310.119

	%	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
No earnings		100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
<b>No record(NA)</b>					
		2.149	475	–	–
	%	100,0	100,0	–	–
Unknown		100,0	100,0	–	–

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados

Considering remuneration according to groups of weekly working hours, once again we see that both in 1993 and in 2005, women always received less than men even while working the same number of hours. Taking as an example the full time journey – 40 to 44 weekly working hours – we observed that in 1993, 56% of women, but only 48% of men received less than two minimum wages. This differential became even worse in the studied period: in 2005, 64% of the occupied women were earning up to two minimum wages against 58% of the occupied men. In the same table, earnings differentiation between sexes, according to years of study, clearly show the discrimination suffered by women although women have longer years of study as we have already mentioned in this article. Among those with better schooling in both sexes, gender inequality is even more apparent: in the range of 15 years and more of study – which corresponds to university degrees – 62% of the men but only 35% of the women earned more than five minimum wages in 2005. (Tab. 22).

**TABLE 22**  
**EARNINGS OF THE OCCUPIED ACCORDING TO SEX, WORKING HOUR PERIODS AND YEARS OF STUDY (IN %)**  
**BRAZIL**

Levels of monthly earnings	1993		2005	
	Full journey (40 to 44 working hours)	Higher Education (15 years and more of study)	Full journey (40 to 44 working hours)	Higher Education (15 years and more of study)
<b>Men</b>				
Up to 2 SM	48	4,2	57,6	8,1
More than 2 to 5 SM	27,2	14,7	25,5	26,1
More than 5 SM	17,7	76,9	12,4	61,6
No earnings	5,9	0,9	3,3	1,1
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0



Women				
Up to 2 SM	56,3	12,3	64,4	19,1
More than 2 to 5 SM	23,7	32,2	20,7	41,3
More than 5 SM	11,5	51,4	9,6	35,3
No earnings	7,7	1,8	4,2	1,9
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: FIBGE/PNADs – Microdados

In the same table, when observing the period, one can see the drop in the earnings from work among workers with higher education, especially among men: in 1993, 77% of them had received a university degree (15 years of study and more) and were earning five minimum wages or more and, in 2005 this percentage drops to 62%. The drop in the earnings of women with higher education, on its turn, was weaker: 51% of women with 15 years of study and more earned more than five minimum wages in 1993 against 35% of them in 2005.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As this article intended to show, in the last 10 to 15 years (1992/2005) the Brazilian female workers achieved some advances in the workforce although, during the same period, several adverse conditions still persisted. In the first case, driven by schooling levels – both in the elementary school years, when women surpass men and in the higher education level, women consolidated their presence more than men – the higher educated female workers started to occupy positions in prestige professions such as Medicine, Law, Architecture, Magistracy and even Engineering and in executive positions in the formal sector companies as well. However, in the second case, a larger contingent of female workers, more than 30% of the female workforce, still remains in the group of more precarious occupations: domestic workers (75% of them without signed legal agreements), unpaid workers and those who work for self or family consume, mainly in the agricultural sector. The persistent existence of segregation traces also appears in other dimensions: in the occupational sphere, female workers remain in traditionally feminine sectors, occupations and fields of work such as services, social services and public administration; in courses, professions and companies dealing with cultural, social and humanities work; in a higher rate of unemployment and wage differentiation between sexes in all the studied situations even

when the working conditions, the schooling years and the journey are similar between the sexes. But inequality between women and men is also exposed in the persisting responsibility of women and mothers for the household tasks for raising the children and taking care of family members as could be seen in the high number of hours spent with these activities. The article disclosed the maintenance of a profile of the female workforce that was being forged since the 80's in the twentieth century: older women, married women and mothers do work even when their children are babies although it may be difficult to reconcile domestic, professional and familial duties. The activity rates of mothers have increased in the studied decade, even when the children are babies, but the rates are even higher when the children reach seven years of age and the mothers can count on the help of the school.

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