

Chapter 5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF WOMEN

In the preceding chapters of this report, various differences between males and females in labour force have already been described. But, there is a part we have not yet discussed in preceding chapters. That is an issue related to a family or a household.

In many countries, women's labour has been affected by their marital status or family responsibility. Sometimes, they inhibit female labour participation or determine employment status of females and so on. Because only women can deliver a child and can give breast milk to a baby, women cannot but help spending different working life from men. Furthermore, it is common that most domestic work such as cooking, cleaning is primarily done by women.

Family responsibility varies by women's marital status. Moreover, whether she is a head of the household, and whether she has a child or not do influence her economic activities. The number of her children may affect her economic activity, too. This chapter focuses this issue.

5.1 MARITAL STATUS AND EMPLOYMENT

5.1.1 Marital Status

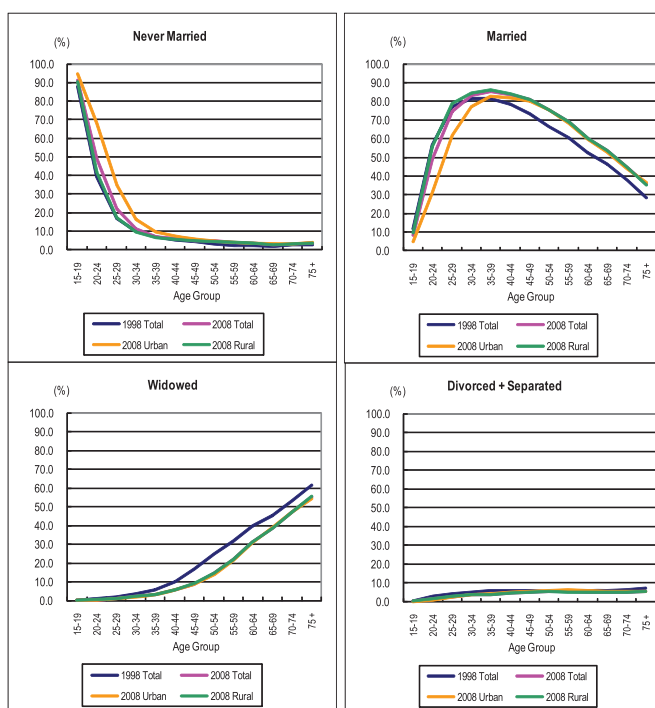
Before looking into the relationship between marital status and employment of women, let's see the marital status of Cambodia in Figure 5.1.

'Never married' females who aged 15 and over, who are perceived to have less family responsibility than 'Married' females, have increased its proportion from 1998 to 2008. This trend clearly appears in urban areas. Two out of three females with the age of 20 - 24 in urban areas have never been married. One out of three females with the age of 25 - 29 has never been married, either. At the same time, in rural areas the proportion of 'Never married' females who aged 20 - 24 falls below 50 percent (42 percent), and women who aged 25 - 29 falls below 20 percent. Urban-rural difference becomes moderate at the age of late 30s.

The proportion of 'Married' females, who are currently married, has increased on the whole during the decade. The proportion of 'Married' females in 2008 exceeds that of 1998 at their late 30s, and keeps well above at their 40s and over. The proportion of being 'Widowed' has decreased from 1998 to 2008.

As previously mentioned, women's labour market of Phnom Penh has a particular structure, compared with other regions. Figure 5.2 depicts that marital status of females in Phnom Penh differs from other regions. The proportion of 'Never married' females in Phnom Penh is much higher than that in any other areas at the age of their 30s. The proportion of 'Married' females is lower than that in other areas regardless of age. This trend has been already seen in 1998 more clearly. The characteristics of female labour market of

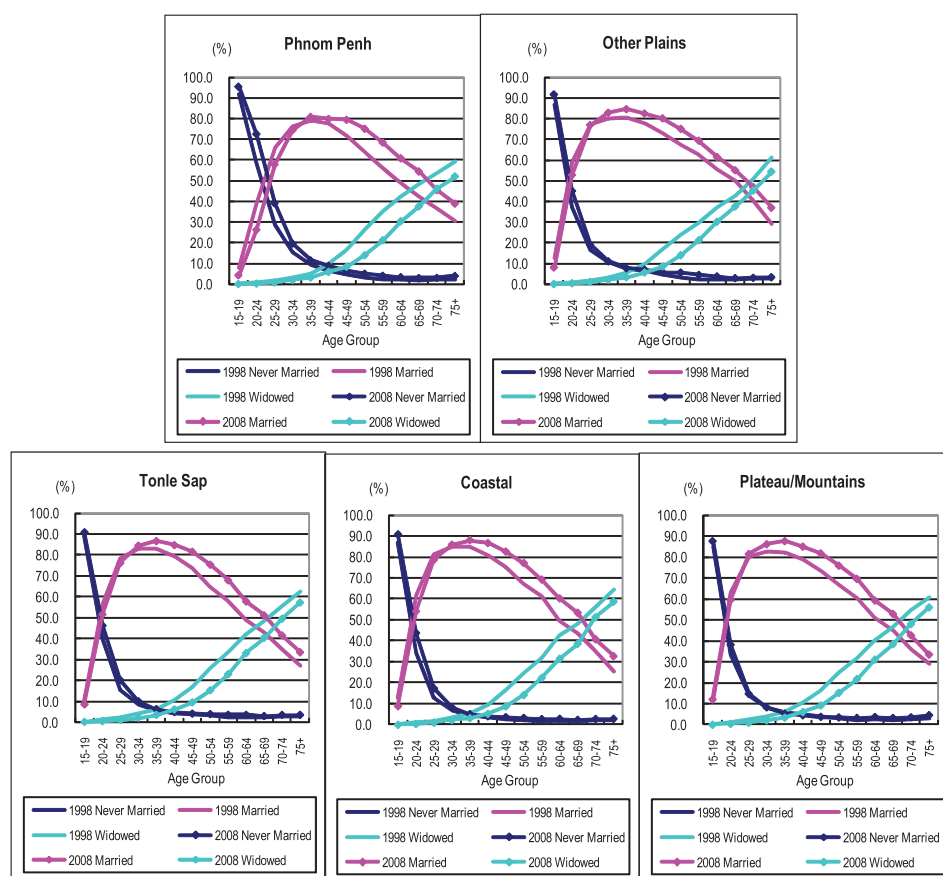
Figure 5.1 Marital Status of Females Aged 15 and over by Age Group: 1998, Urban/Rural 2008



Note) Original figures are shown in ANNEX

Phnom Penh are strongly affected by marital status of females.

Figure 5.2 Marital Status of Females Aged 15 and over by Age Group: Region, 1998 and 2008



Note) Original figures are shown in ANNEX

5.1.2 Employment

EMPLOYMENT RATE

The number of females who aged 5 and over has increased 1 million during the decade. The number of employed females who aged 5 and over has increased by approximately 1 million, too. Among the increased employed females, nearly 0.3 million females are ‘Never Married’, and 0.75 million are ‘Married’ in 2008. (Table 5.1)

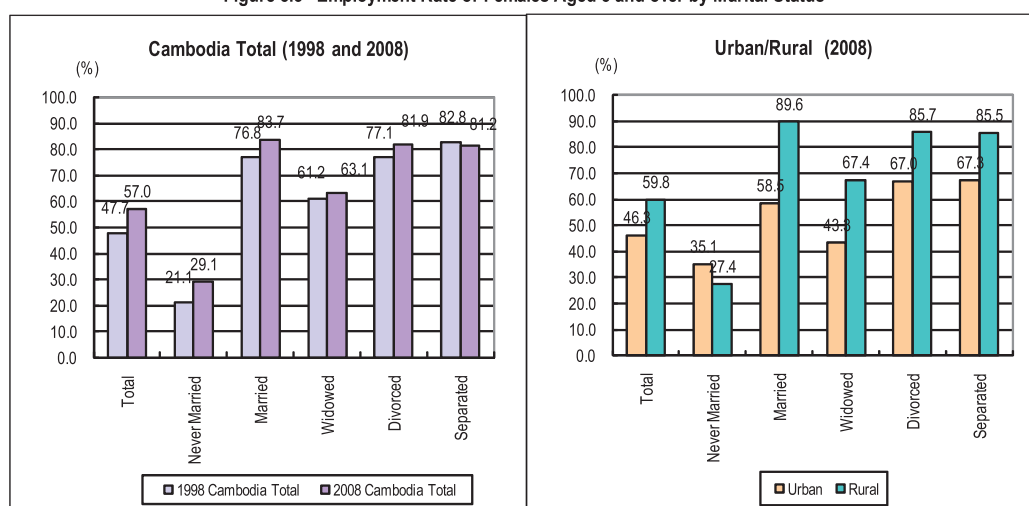
The employment rate of females in 1998 was 47.7 percent. Ten years later, it became 57.0 percent. The increased number of employed ‘Never Married’ females and ‘Married’ females contribute to this increase of 10 percentage points. (Figure 5.3)

**Table 5.1 Number of Employed Females Aged 5 and over and
Employment Rate by Marital Status, 1998 and 2008**

Marital Status	Number of Female			
	1998 Cambodia Total	2008		
		Cambodia Total	Urban	Rural
Female Population	5,206,748	6,210,071	1,257,835	4,952,236
Never Married	2,611,963	2,877,888	623,227	2,254,661
Married	2,065,133	2,790,852	532,841	2,258,011
Widowed	380,311	389,699	70,467	319,232
Divorced	130,186	143,974	29,497	114,477
Separated	19,155	7,658	1,803	5,855
Employed Female	2,485,655	3,542,609	581,877	2,960,732
Never Married	550,954	836,663	218,625	618,038
Married	1,585,632	2,336,025	311,773	2,024,252
Widowed	232,888	245,807	30,503	215,304
Divorced	100,324	117,896	19,763	98,133
Separated	15,857	6,218	1,213	5,005
Marital Status	Employment Rate			
	1998 Cambodia Total	2008		
		Cambodia Total	Urban	Rural
Female Population	47.7	57.0	46.3	59.8
Never Married	21.1	29.1	35.1	27.4
Married	76.8	83.7	58.5	89.6
Widowed	61.2	63.1	43.3	67.4
Divorced	77.1	81.9	67.0	85.7
Separated	82.8	81.2	67.3	85.5

Urban-rural difference is greater than changes during the decade observed in the whole country. On the whole, the employment rate is higher in rural areas than that in urban areas, and the difference is 13.5 percentage points (59.8 percent in rural areas and 46.3 percent in urban areas). As for the breakdown by marital status, the employment rate of women in every marital status in rural areas except 'Never Married', is much higher than that in urban areas. Especially, the employment rate of 'Married' females in rural areas is 31 percentage points higher than in urban areas (89.6 percent and 58.5 percent, respectively). The employment rate of 'Never Married' females is higher in urban than in rural areas, and the difference is 8 percentage points. (Figure 5.3)

Figure 5.3 Employment Rate of Females Aged 5 and over by Marital Status



INDUSTRY

Cambodia is an agricultural country and the majority of the population who aged 15 and over is working in agricultural sector. Comparing males with females, there are many females working in agricultural sector, and most of them are working as ‘Unpaid family workers’ (see chapter 2 for detail).

The proportion of women working in agricultural sector has decreased 8 percentage points during the decade (83.1 percent in 1998 and 75.1 percent in 2008). On the other hand, manufacturing sector has most increased the employment of females. This change mainly depends on the increase of ‘Never married’ females. Cambodian manufacturing labour force is characterized by dominance of ‘Never married’ females. (Table 5.2)

Table 5.3 shows urban-rural difference of industry in which females are working. The distribution of females by industrial category shows very different picture between urban areas and rural ones (Figure 5.4). Because approximately 80 percent of females live in rural areas, any features of the whole country are affected by features of rural areas. Main industry in urban areas is ‘Wholesale and retail trade’, followed by ‘Manufacturing’.

Table 5.2 Employed Females aged 5 and over by Marital Status and Industrial Category, 1998 and 2008

Urban/Rural Industrial Category	Percentage to Total Employed Females					
	Total	Marital Status				
		Never Married	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
1998						
Total Employed Females (persons)	2,485,655	550,954	1,585,632	232,888	100,324	15,857
(Percentage)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	82.8	77.5	84.9	82.8	77.8	81.1
2. Mining, quarrying	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
3. Manufacturing	3.1	7.6	1.8	1.8	3.0	2.8
4. Electricity, gas and water supply	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
5. Construction	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2
6. Wholesale & retail trade, repair of motorcycle, etc.	9.0	7.4	9.1	10.4	12.7	10.8
7. Transportation & storage	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.7	0.5
8. Hotels and restaurants	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.7
9. Finance & insurance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10. Other services	3.1	3.9	2.8	3.2	3.5	3.2
11. Other industries not elsewhere classified	0.4	0.9	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.3
Un known	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4
2008						
Total Employed Females (persons)	3,542,609	836,663	2,336,025	245,807	117,896	6,218
(Percentage)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	75.1	60.4	79.9	80.9	72.6	68.4
2. Mining, quarrying	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
3. Manufacturing	8.2	20.2	4.5	2.8	6.7	6.4
4. Electricity, gas and water supply	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
5. Construction	0.6	1.1	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.6
6. Wholesale & retail trade, repair of motorcycle, etc.	9.6	7.7	10.1	10.3	12.0	13.8
7. Transportation & storage	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.5
8. Hotels and restaurants	1.1	2.0	0.7	0.9	1.7	2.1
9. Finance & insurance	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1
10. Other services	4.5	7.2	3.5	4.2	5.2	7.5
11. Other industries not elsewhere classified	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3
Un known	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0