

**WOMEN IN  
FIJI**  
*A COUNTRY PROFILE*



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**WOMEN IN FIJI**  
*A COUNTRY PROFILE*



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The profile has been prepared under project BK-X20-3-214 on improving statistics on women in the ESCAP region.

## FOREWORD

The call for the development of statistics and indicators on the situation of women has, for some time, been voiced in various global and regional forums. It was first recommended by the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year, adopted in 1975. The recommendations of the World Plan of Action were reaffirmed and elaborated in the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. On various occasions, the Commission, stressing the importance of social and human development, has recognized the need for improved statistics and indicators on women. It has noted that better indicators are required to monitor the situation of women and to assess the effectiveness of strategies and programmes designed to address priority gender issues.

The secretariat initiated the project on improving statistics on women in the ESCAP region in 1994. The project aims to support governments in their efforts to promote the full integration of women in development and improve their status in line with the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women adopted in 1985. The project has been implemented by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) through its subprogramme on statistics, with funding assistance from the Government of the Netherlands.

As a major component of its activities, the project commissioned experts from 19 countries in the region to prepare country profiles on the situation of women and men in the family, at work, and in public life, by analysing available statistical data and information. The profiles are intended to highlight the areas where action is needed, and to raise the consciousness of readers about issues concerning women and men. The 19 countries are Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand in Asia; and Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu in the Pacific.

The secretariat hosted two meetings each in Asia and in the Pacific as part of the project activities. In the first meeting, the experts discussed and agreed on the structure, format and contents of the country profiles, based on guidelines prepared by the secretariat through Ms C.N. Erieta, consultant. The second meeting was a workshop to review the draft profiles. Participants in the workshop included the country experts and invited representatives from national statistical offices of Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia and Viet Nam in Asia; of Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu in the Pacific; and representatives of United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and international organizations.

The original draft of the present profile, *Women in Fiji*, was prepared by Mr Epeli T. Waqavonovono, Acting Deputy Government Statistician (Population Household Surveys and Administration). It was technically edited and modified by the ESCAP secretariat with the assistance of Mr S. Selvaratnam, consultant. The profiles express the views of the authors and not necessarily those of the secretariat.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the Netherlands for its generous financial support, which enabled the secretariat to implement the project.



Adrianus Mooy  
Executive Secretary

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**PART I**

**DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS**

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## INTRODUCTION

Until the early 1980s, Fiji women had very little share in power and decision-making at all levels. This was evident from the fact that there was only one woman in the 70-member House of Representatives; there were no female mayors and no females heading any of the government ministries or statutory bodies. Lack of power-sharing at public and community levels largely reflected the continuing low status of women at the household level, dictated largely by cultural and religious norms.

There was also no adequate institutional arrangement to take care of women's problems and needs. The Women's Interests Office (WIO) within the Ministry of Rural Development was mainly engaged in promoting family health, nutrition, and small-scale income-earning activities for women. The National Council of Women coordinated the work of non-governmental organizations and advocated national action to enhance the status of women in the country.

Recognizing the critical role that women can play in the national development process, the government established the Ministry of Women and Culture in 1987. This Ministry, assisted by various women's organizations, has been engaged in sensitizing decision makers and members of the public to the need for policies and programmes which would help promote women's development. Recent changes in the government have, however, resulted in the location of the women's office as a Department for Women and Culture within the Ministry of Education, Women and Culture, Science and Technology.

With a modest annual budgetary allocation supplemented by grants from multinational and bilateral sources, the Department for Women and Culture has plans to influence the policies and programmes formulated by other ministries and departments and to ensure that such programmes are consistent with and supportive of the objectives of promoting the role of women in the development process. At the local and

regional planning levels, the departmental staff and local women's organizations are acquiring skills in project formulation and policy analysis in efforts to ensure that local and regional policies conform to the main objective of enhancing the status of women throughout the country. The Department also supports a wide range of women's development projects and training activities and, in conjunction with non-governmental organizations, had launched extensive education programmes to increase political awareness and meaningful political participation of women.

The Constitution of Fiji establishes the rights of women within the country. The government has ratified 17 conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), one of which is Convention No. 45 on Underground Work (Women) 1935. There are 13 other conventions that the government has not ratified, but observes. These include Convention No. 111 on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation 1958, and Convention No. 122 or Employment Policy 1964, both of which are important for women in paid employment. The government also recognizes the need to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women of 1993, which was published within the country by women non-governmental organizations with the support of the Ministry of Women and Culture. The Department for Women and Culture is examining those international conventions not yet ratified with a view to urging early ratification.

The government also recognizes the need to review a range of legislation that has a bearing on women's welfare, particularly those laws relating to family (divorce, maintenance, rights of unmarried mothers and de facto wives, as well as custody laws) and employment (maternity protection, night work and underground work). There is also a need to pay attention to the rights of workers not currently protected by legislation, including domestic or household workers who are almost entirely women and are not legally defined as workers. The

application of wage council legislation also needs review to ensure equal treatment of men and women and to remove unfair gender differentials in wages. The Department for Women and Culture proposes to examine all relevant legislation with a view to updating it.

The revision and updating of various legislative enactments and regulations concerning women, as well as the formulation and implementation of comprehensive plans and projects for enhancing the welfare and status of women in the country, requires adequate and up-to-date statistical data and information relevant to women's concerns and issues. In Fiji, attempts have been made over the years to collect the necessary data through censuses, registration systems, sample surveys and other sources. However, in most cases the available data have not been processed and analysed with a view to highlighting the differentials that exist between men and women in regard to their socio-cultural, economic and political status.

There is, thus, a need for systematizing the process of data collection and analysis to ensure a regular and continuous flow of information on the changes that are taking place in regard to the solution of problems and issues concerning women in Fiji. The present profile, while highlighting the gaps in available statistical data, attempts to provide a model for analysing and presenting the relevant data in a form that will be easily comprehended by planners and policy makers.

## A. HIGHLIGHTS

### *The setting*

1. The Fijian archipelago, with a total land area of 18,272 square kilometres spread among two large and over 300 small islands and islets, is among the largest of the Pacific small island countries. The Republic enjoys a tropical oceanic type of climate.

2. The government of the country is based on the British parliamentary system. The national legislature is composed of two chambers: the House of Representatives, consisting of 70

elected members, and the Senate, consisting of 34 appointed members. Although the President is the Head of State, the day-to-day administration of the country is carried out by the Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister.

3. The Fiji land-tenure system is a complex one, with about 83 per cent of the land being communally owned by indigenous Fijians, and about 25 per cent of this communal land being leased to non-Fijians.

4. According to the last census, held in August 1986, the population of Fiji numbered 715,375, and official estimates for 1994 give a total population of 771,104, with an average growth rate of 1.1 per cent a year. More than 70 per cent of the country's population reside in the four main islands of Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, Taveuni and Kadavu.

5. There are two main ethnic groups in the country: the indigenous Fijians, who are of Melanesian origin; and Indians, who are descendants of indentured labourers brought into the country since 1879 to work on the sugar cane and coconut plantations. The other smaller ethnic groups include Rotumans, Europeans, and other Pacific islanders. About 53 per cent of the people are Christian, 38 per cent Hindu and 8 per cent Muslim.

6. The national economy is dependent on agriculture, which includes subsistence crop production and commercial cultivation of sugar cane, coconut and ginger. The manufacturing sector is small and largely confined to the processing of agricultural products. Fiji is one of the wealthiest small island countries of the Pacific, with a per capital gross national product (GNP) estimated at US\$ 2,010 in 1990-1992.

7. Fiji has a well developed education system, with about 700 primary and 140 secondary schools, and several vocational and technical institutions. The health system is capable of providing curative and preventive health services. The expansion in health services that has occurred in recent decades has resulted in the country's health standards being higher than in other Pacific small island nations.

## **Women's profile**

1. Males have consistently outnumbered females at all census counts. The excess of males over females has also been reported at practically all ages, in rural as well as urban areas, and among all ethnic groups in the country. There has, however, been an increase in the proportionate share of women in the total population, from 47.3 per cent in 1946 to 49.3 per cent in 1986, when there were 97 females for every 100 males.
2. The preponderance of males in the total population has been attributed to a male-favoured sex ratio at birth, high mortality rates among females compared with males in the past, and relatively higher under-reporting of females in the censuses.
3. There were changes in the age structure of the population between 1976 and 1986, with a decline in the proportionate share of children aged 0-4 years and a concomitant increase in the share of persons in the working ages 15-59 years. These changes affected males and females alike.
4. Among the population aged 15 years and over, more females than males were reported to be married. The incidence of widowhood, as well as divorce/separation, was also higher among females than among males.
5. In-patient data from hospitals indicate that complications of pregnancy and cancer of the breast and reproductive organs accounted for a large portion of female morbidity around 1990. Anaemia was also reported to be increasing among women of both major ethnic groups. Nevertheless, the overall health status of women has improved over the years, as reflected in the considerable decline in maternal and infant mortality and increases in life expectancy.
6. There have been progressive increases in female school participation and, according to the 1986 census data, 95 per cent of all girls aged 6-11 years were attending school as against 94 per cent among boys of the same age group. The primary school completion rates were also reported to be higher for girls

than for boys in all ethnic groups. However, females are very much under-represented in various vocational and training courses. About 85 per cent of females compared with 88 per cent of males aged 15 years and over were deemed to be literate in 1986.

## **Women in family life**

1. Significant changes have taken place in the marriage patterns of the people, with an increasing number and proportion of young males and females refraining from early marriage and entering into wedlock at a later stage. This trend is attested to by the increasing proportion remaining single or unmarried at prime marriage ages.
2. Over the years, there have also been changes in the reproductive behaviour of married couples, as reflected in the substantial reduction in the total fertility rate (TFR) or average number of children born to a woman during her entire reproductive life. United Nations estimates indicate that TFR in the country had declined from 6.62 births in 1950-1955 to 2.98 in 1990-1995. Studies also show that this decline had occurred at a faster pace among Indo-Fijian women than among ethnic Fijian women. In 1986, an Indo-Fijian woman had on the average 1.3 births fewer than an ethnic Fijian woman.
3. The decline in fertility has been facilitated by the increasing acceptance of family planning. However, the 1986 family planning acceptance rate among Indo-Fijians was almost twice the rate among ethnic Fijians, although the latter are more literate, more economically active and enjoy higher life expectancy. The most popular contraceptive method is female sterilization, followed by IUDs and pills.
4. Although the incidence of marital disruption through widowhood and divorce/separation is relatively low in Fiji compared with most other countries, females are more likely than males to live in a state of marital disruption in practically all age groups. This is largely due to the fact that widowed or divorced/separate males have better chances of remarriage

and thus ending their state of marital disruption than their female counterparts.

5. In 1986, nearly 49 per cent of all households in the country were extended households, while another 46 per cent were of the nuclear type. A higher proportion of ethnic Fijian than Indo-Fijian households were of the extended type, while the majority of Indo-Fijian households were nuclear.

6. The average household size, or number of persons per household, was 5.71 for the country as a whole, but varied between urban (5.50) and rural (5.85) areas as well as between various ethnic groups.

7. While data on domestic violence *per se* are not available, a significant increase in violence committed against women and children has been reported in recent years.

### ***Women in economic life***

1. Despite the fact that there is an almost equal number of men and women in the working ages 15 years and over, the female labour-force participation is about one fourth the male rate. This disparity is largely due to the use of definitions and concepts that do not adequately recognize women's economic contributions.

2. Labour-force participation rates for both males and females vary across age groups, between rural and urban areas, and between various ethnic groups in the country. In 1986, the labour-force participation rate for ethnic Fijian women (27.8 per cent) was considerably higher than the rate for Indian women.

3. More than four fifths of all employed males and females were engaged in work mainly for cash, and the proportion of females engaged in work for cash was substantially higher among Indo-Fijians (91.5 per cent) than among ethnic Fijians (73.9 per cent).

4. There are significant gender differentials in the proportion of employed persons engaged in various economic sectors. A high percentage of employed females were engaged in community and social services, and the trade sectors. There is also a predominance of women

in low wage-earning occupations, particularly agricultural, forestry and fishing occupations.

5. The majority of employed males and females were reported to be in paid employment, receiving either wages or salaries in the government or private sector; this proportion for females (61.4 per cent) was nearly one and a half times that for males (41.8 per cent). In the private sector, women tended to serve as secretaries, waitresses, receptionists and cleaners, while in the government sector they were mostly employed as teachers, nurses and stenographers.

6. The participation of women in the formal economy increased during the 1980s owing to the establishment of tax-free manufacturing zones, expansion of the service sector, and enlightened recruitment policies. A 1989 survey also showed that a higher proportion among females than males were employed in partnerships, private companies and non-profit organizations. However, the average salary of a female employee was about 88 per cent of that of a male employee.

7. The proportion of women among those reported as unemployed has increased in recent years, and the female unemployment rate in urban areas (16.9 per cent) is significantly higher than in rural areas (13.5 per cent). Unemployment is also a more serious problem among females aged 15-19 and 20-24 years.

8. While, in theory, men and women have equal access to credit facilities, available data indicate that in 1993 only 14 per cent of all loans approved by the Fiji Development Bank were granted to women. An increase in the number of female moneylenders has been reported in recent years.

### ***Women in public life***

1. Fiji women enjoy only a very minor share in power and decision-making at the national as well as local levels of the government. At present, there are only three women among the 70 elected members of the House of Representatives, and three among the 34 appointed members of the Senate.

2. The participation of women in decision-making at the local government level is somewhat better, although so far only two women have been elected mayor and three deputy mayor.

3. Lack of awareness and confidence among women, as well as entrenched socio-cultural values which discourage women from assuming decision-making roles, are the main difficulties in promoting women's participation in the political arena.

4. Although women constitute about 44 per cent of all positions in government or public service, they are mostly employed as lower-level cadres; only 8 per cent of upper-level jobs are held by women. Currently, women hold positions as Secretary to the House of Representatives, Secretary to the Senate and Director of Public Prosecutions.

5. Women constitute the majority of primary school and special teachers but hold no positions of responsibility within the primary schools.

6. Male employees tend to be promoted more frequently than female employees. In 1994, the average number of years since the last promotion was 8.9 years for females compared with 6.0 years for male employees in public service.

## B. THE SETTING

### 1. Location and physical features

The Republic of Fiji lies in the south-west Pacific Ocean between 15° and 20° south latitude and 177° and 174° east longitude, and is approximately 1,770 kilometres north of Auckland, New Zealand and 2,730 kilometres north-east of Sydney, Australia.

The Fijian archipelago consists of about 332 islands, islets and reefs totalling 18,272 square kilometres, or 7,095 square miles. The two largest islands, Viti Levu (10,389 square kilometres) and Vanua Levu (5,534 square kilometres), together account for about 87 per cent of the total land area. Two other large

islands, Taveuni and Kadavu, are each about the same size, at just over 400 square kilometres. The island of Rotuma, which is 386 kilometres north of Vanua Levu, and the eight smaller islands of the group also constitute part of the Republic. Only about 100 of the islands and islets are permanently occupied, while most of the remaining islands are used for temporary residence or for occasional plantations. The capital, Suva, is on the largest island of Viti Levu.

While the majority of the islands are high islands, there are also a few atolls. The interior of Viti Levu is dominated by a mountain range running in a north-south direction and dividing the climatic conditions into east and west. The highest peak is Mt. Victoria, at 1,424 metres; several other peaks are nearly 1,000 metres high. The other large islands of Vanua Levu, Taveuni, Kadavu and the Lomaiviti group are also mountainous, rising to heights of 1,300 to 1,400 metres. The main islands and most of the more distant island groups are of volcanic origin; the smaller islands are mainly of coral or limestone origin. Most islands have fringing coral reefs, many with openings permitting access to safe deep-water harbours. The undulating coastal hills and lowland plains contain most of the human settlements.

The climate of Fiji is of the tropical oceanic type but with the tempering influence of the prevalent south-east trade winds. The hottest months are from December to April, when humidity is highest. The country is well-watered; the eastern and south-western portions of the large islands, the windward sides, receive 2,800-3,500 millimetres of rainfall per year, while the drier, leeward sides average about 1,800-2,000 millimetres.

### 2. Government

In 1858, Fiji came under British colonial rule. A constitutional conference in 1970 resulted in the declaration of independence, and Fiji became independent within the British Commonwealth on 10 October 1970.

The country's Constitution, framed at talks in London in April 1970, provided for a

bicameral parliamentary system based on the Westminster model, with a popularly elected House of Representatives and an appointed Senate. Under the terms of the new Constitution promulgated on 25 July 1990, the House of Representatives has 70 elected members, while the Senate has 34 members appointed by the President of the Republic. The maximum duration of a parliament is five years. The executive power is vested in the Cabinet led by the Prime Minister, who selects the other members of the Cabinet.

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into four divisions (central, eastern, northern and western) and 15 provinces. Each of the divisions has administrative jurisdiction over the various provinces which fall within its limits. Within the provinces are districts; the number of districts within each province varies according to the size of the province. The government machinery in each division is headed by a Commissioner, who is supported by district officers in the provinces.

The third level of government constitutes local town and village councils. Nominated village leaders have responsibility for the immediate community. These leaders, in turn, form larger groups up to the level of provinces, and make regionally based decisions. Ten larger urban areas have town councils and mayors elected from the common electoral roll. The island of Rabi has a special status and is administered by the Rabi Island Council.

The judiciary is independent, and comprises the High Court, the Fiji Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The High Court and the Supreme Court are the final arbiters of the Constitution. The establishment of Fijian courts is provided for, and decisions of the Native Lands Commission (relating to ethnic Fijian customs, traditions and usage, and disputes over the headship of any part of the Fijian people, with the customary right to occupy and use any native lands) are declared to be final and without appeal.

### 3. Land use

The land-tenure system in Fiji is more complex than in several other Pacific island

countries, and in its present form dates mainly from the Native Lands Commissions of 1912-1917. Currently, 83 per cent of the land is Fijian communally owned (table 1), and approximately 25 per cent of this is leased to non-Fijians. The Native Land Trust Board (NLTB), which controls all communal land on behalf of the Fijians, has as its main objectives the protection of the interests of native owners by reserving ample land for their present and future needs; the provision of suitable land for settlement; and ensuring the continuity of policy and security of tenure. The Native Land Development Corporation, founded by NLTB in 1975, develops Fijian land and participates in business ventures for the maximum advantage and involvement of Fijian landholders, managers and businessmen.

**Table 1. Land ownership patterns**

Type of ownership	Extent owned	
	Hectares	Percentage
Fijian communal land	1 520 775	83.0
Freehold (other than crown)	181 035	9.9
Crown freehold	35 640	1.9
Crown schedule A	59 940	3.3
Crown schedule B	31 185	1.7
Rotuman communal	4 455	0.2
Total	1 833 030	100.0

*Source:* Norman Douglas and Nagire Douglas, eds., *Pacific Islands Yearbook*, 17th edition (Fiji Times Ltd., 1974).

Crown lands, administered by the Department of Lands, Mines and Surveys, constitute about 7 per cent of the total land. These lands have been purchased by the Crown from time to time. Some of this land reverted to the Crown when the *mataqali* or Fijian landholding unit died out; some other Crown land is land in respect of which no Fijian owners could be found at the time of cession to the United Kingdom.

### 4. Population growth and distribution

According to the latest census taken in August 1986, the population of Fiji was 715,375, compared with 198,379 enumerated at the census held in April 1936. In other words,

the country's population increased almost four-fold during the five decades within 1936-1986. However, the population did not grow at a uniform pace during those 50 years. The average annual growth rate of 2.7 per cent during the 1936-1946 intercensal period gradually rose to a high of 3.3 per cent during the period 1956-1966, thereafter declining to 2.0 per cent during the period 1976-1986 (table 2).

The decline in the average annual growth rate of the population from 3.3 to 2.0 per cent between 1966 and 1986 is largely attributed to a decline in fertility rates. Estimates indicate

that TFR declined by 26 per cent from 5.8 children per woman in 1966 to 4.14 in 1986. The acceptance of modern methods of birth control and family planning by some 38 per cent of married women in childbearing ages as of 1977 has helped to lower the fertility rate. At the same time, both the crude death rate and the infant mortality rate have been well below those of countries with a similar level of economic development (table 3).

In April 1994, official estimates put the total population at 771,104, giving an average annual growth rate of 1.1 per cent for

**Table 2. Enumerated population, intercensal increase, percentage increase and average annual growth rate: censuses of 1936 to 1986**

Year and date of census	Enumerated population	Intercensal increase		
		Numerical increase	Percentage increase	Average annual growth rate (%)
26 April 1936	198 379	—	—	—
2 October 1946	259 638	61 259	30.9	2.7
26 September 1956	345 737	86 099	33.2	2.9
12 September 1966	476 727	130 990	37.9	3.3
13 September 1976	588 068	111 341	23.4	2.1
31 August 1986	715 375	127 307	21.6	2.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical News*, No. 28, 1987.

**Table 3. Trends in components of population growth: 1950-1955 to 1990-1995**

Period	Fertility		Mortality		Population growth rate (%)
	Crude birth rate <sup>a/</sup>	Total fertility rate <sup>b/</sup>	Crude death rate <sup>a/</sup>	Infant mortality rate <sup>c/</sup>	
1950-1955	46.3	6.62	12.5	88	3.01
1955-1960	46.7	6.79	10.7	75	3.19
1960-1965	42.0	5.95	8.9	66	3.27
1965-1970	36.5	5.00	7.4	55	2.29
1970-1975	32.5	4.20	6.2	45	2.03
1975-1980	33.2	4.00	5.8	37	1.91
1980-1985	31.9	3.80	5.3	31	1.97
1985-1990	26.4	3.20	4.6	27	0.76
1990-1995	23.7	2.98	4.5	23	1.52

Source: United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 1994 Revision* (Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, Population Division, New York, 1995) (ST/ESA/SER.A.145).

<sup>a/</sup> Per 1,000 population.

<sup>b/</sup> Per woman.

<sup>c/</sup> Per 1,000 births.

1986-1994. The decline in the growth rate between 1986 and 1994 owed much to emigration, particularly of Fijian Indians. Estimates indicate that between May 1987 and December 1989, over 22,000 Fiji citizens, of whom more than 80 per cent were Indians, left the country. The rate of emigration peaked in 1990, with an average of 487 residents leaving each month. In the first quarter of 1994, this figure had fallen to 409, but 92 per cent of these emigrants were still Fijian Indians. In addition, fertility also continued to decline from 1986 onwards, contributing to a drop in the population growth rate.

The population of the country is unevenly distributed across the 15 provinces. In 1986, the largest concentration of the population was

in Ba Province (27.6 per cent) followed by Naitasiri (14.0 per cent), Rewa (13.6 per cent) and Macuata (10.4 per cent). In all the other provinces, the proportionate share of the total population ranged from 0.4 per cent in Rotuma to 6.2 per cent in Tailevu (table 4).

Although about two thirds of the population live in rural areas, Fiji is witnessing the same urban/rural drift that has affected many countries in the past few decades as people move from their traditional rural and agricultural communities to seek paid employment in the manufacturing and service sectors, which are located in the urban areas. The percentage share of the total population living in urban areas increased from 37.2 per cent in 1976 to 38.7 per cent in 1986 (table 5). Suva,

**Table 4. Numerical and percentage distribution of the enumerated population by province: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Province	1976		1986	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Ba	167 095	28.4	197 633	27.6
Bua	11 457	1.9	13 986	2.0
Cakaudrove	34 251	5.8	40 433	5.7
Kadavu	8 699	1.5	9 805	1.4
Lau	14 452	2.5	14 203	2.0
Lomaiviti	13 568	2.3	16 066	2.2
Macuata	57 414	9.8	74 735	10.4
Nadroga and Navosa	45 929	7.8	54 431	7.6
Naitasiri	65 111	11.1	100 227	14.0
Namosi	3 292	0.6	4 836	0.7
Ra	25 523	4.3	31 285	4.4
Rewa	87 257	14.8	97 442	13.6
Serua	11 263	1.9	13 356	1.9
Tailevu	39 952	6.8	44 249	6.2
Rotuma	2 805	0.5	2 688	0.4
Fiji	588 068	100.0	715 375	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical News*, No. 28, 1987.

**Table 5. Numerical and percentage distribution of the enumerated population by urban/rural residence: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Census year	Total		Urban		Rural	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1976	588 068	100.0	218 495	37.2	369 573	62.8
1986	715 375	100.0	277 025	38.7	438 350	61.3

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Statiscal News*, No. 28, 1987.

the capital, accommodates over 72,000 persons, but when the nearby centres of Nausori and Lamai, which are really commuter areas for Metropolitan Suva, are added, the figure approaches 90,000. Other major urban areas are Lautoka (10,500), Nadi (7,500), Vatukoula (4,700), Ba (4,000), Sigatoka (2,700), all in Viti Levu, and Labasa (11,600) on Vanua Levu. Squatting remains a major problem in urban areas, with an estimated 68,600 people residing in informal dwellings which are predominantly of the squatter type.

### 5. Ethnicity and religion

The people of Fiji are Fiji citizens, but the term Fijian may only refer to ethnic Fijians, the indigenous inhabitants. Other inhabitants are identified in certain official documents by their respective ethnic origin, such as Indian, Rotuman, European, or part-European. However, the two major ethnic groups in country are Fijians and Indians.

Although basically Melanesians, the indigenous Fijians have an admixture of Polynesian physical and cultural characteristics. The traditional systems of social organization, hierarchical, patrilineal and elaborately ceremonial, are akin to those of Polynesia and are much more homogenous from area to area than are those elsewhere in Melanesia. The Indians are, by and large, descendants of indentured labourers who first went to Fiji in 1879 to work on the sugar plantations. Although the Indians

have, over the years, become an integral part of the country's economic fabric, there has been very little blending of the two communities in most aspects of social life. Each maintains largely separate education systems, lives in predominantly uni-racial communities, marries within the ethnic group and adheres to different forms of religion.

According to census data, Indians had constituted the largest component of the country's population from 1946 to 1986, although their proportionate share in the total population had fluctuated during these four decades. In 1986, Indians accounted for 48.7 per cent of the population, and indigenous Fijians came a close second at 46.0 per cent. The remainder consisted of Rotumans (1.2 per cent), part-Europeans (1.4 per cent), Europeans (0.6 per cent), other Pacific islanders (1.2 per cent) and Chinese and other ethnic groups (table 6 and figure 1).

Since 1986, the proportionate share of the Indians in the total population has declined, and in April 1994 they constituted 44.8 per cent and Fijians 50.0 per cent of the then officially estimated population of 771,104. The decline in the number as well as proportionate share of the Indians is largely attributed to their substantial emigration following the 1987 political changes as well as to the higher fertility rate of the indigenous Fijians.

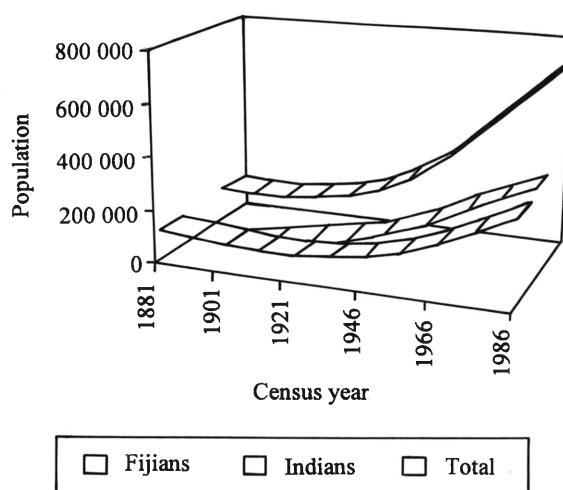
The Fijian language belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian group, but there are several dialects

**Table 6. Distribution of the enumerated population by ethnic origin: censuses of 1946 to 1986**

Ethnic groups	1946		1956		1966		1976		1986	
	Number	%								
Fijians	118 070	45.5	146 134	42.3	202 176	42.4	259 932	44.2	329 305	46.0
Indians	120 414	46.4	169 403	49.0	240 960	50.5	292 896	49.8	348 704	48.7
Part-Europeans	6 142	2.4	7 810	2.3	9 687	2.0	10 276	1.7	10 297	1.4
Europeans	4 594	1.8	6 402	1.9	6 590	1.4	4 929	0.8	4 196	0.6
Rotumans	3 313	1.3	6 422	1.9	5 797	1.2	7 291	1.2	8 652	1.2
Others islanders	3 717	1.4	5 320	1.5	6 095	1.3	6 822	1.2	8 627	1.2
Chinese	2 874	1.1	4 155	1.2	5 149	1.1	4 652	0.8	4 784	0.7
Others	514	0.2	91	—	273	0.1	1 270	0.2	810	0.1
Total	259 638	100.0	345 737	100.0	476 727	100.0	588 068	100.0	715 375	100.0

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*, vol. I, Parliament Paper No. 13 of 1977; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. I, *General Tables*.

**Figure 1. Population of major ethnic groups: 1881-1986**



Source: Bureau of Statistics.

spoken in various parts of the country; the most widely used one is based on the dialect of the island of Bau off the coast of Viti Levu. English is the official language and is widely spoken. Hindi (which is not identical to its equivalent on the Indian subcontinent) is spoken by the majority of the Indians.

Fiji is a crossroad of the religions of the east and the west, the only Pacific island nation to have this distinction. Principal religious affi-

liations at the time of the 1986 census were Christianity, Hinduism and Islam; the minority religious groups include Sikhs and Confucians. According to the 1986 census, about 53 per cent of the people reported themselves as being Christian, among whom Methodists were the largest group followed by Roman Catholics; about 38 per cent were Hindu, with the majority being Sanathan Hindu; Muslims constituted about 8 per cent of the total population, with the vast majority identifying themselves as belonging to the Sunni sect (table 7).

## 6. The economy

Fiji is one of the wealthiest island countries of the Pacific, with a per capita GNP estimated at US\$ 2,010 in 1990-1992. The national economy continues to be heavily dependent on the sugar industry and tourism, both of which are very much influenced by external forces beyond the control of the country and the government. As one of the larger nations among the Pacific islands, the economy of Fiji is also more diverse than that of many other States in the region.

Agriculture, including subsistence food production, is an important sector, contributing about 22 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP),

**Table 7. Distribution of the population by religious affiliation and sex: 1986 census**

Religious affiliation	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Christianity</b>	<b>378 452</b>	<b>52.9</b>	<b>192 431</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>186 021</b>	<b>52.7</b>
Methodists	262 661	36.7	134 551	37.1	128 110	36.3
Catholics	62 699	8.8	31 772	8.8	30 927	8.8
Other Christians	53 092	7.4	26 108	7.2	26 984	7.6
<b>Hinduism</b>	<b>273 088</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>137 813</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>135 275</b>	<b>38.3</b>
Sanathan	240 912	33.7	121 593	33.5	119 319	33.8
Others	32 176	4.5	16 220	4.5	15 956	4.5
<b>Islam</b>	<b>56 001</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>28 162</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>27 839</b>	<b>7.9</b>
Sunni	46 836	6.5	23 556	6.5	23 280	6.6
Other Muslims	9 165	1.3	4 606	1.3	4 559	1.3
<b>Other religions<sup>a/</sup></b>	<b>7 834</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>4 162</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>3 672</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>715 375</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>362 568</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>352 807</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. I, General Tables.

<sup>a/</sup> Including Sikh, Confucian, other religious groups and religion not stated.

earning about 70 per cent of the export revenue and engaging 37 per cent of the economically active population (table 8). Sugar cane is the principal cash crop; other important export crops are coconut and ginger. The rich soil and good rainfall favour the production of a wide variety of vegetables and fruit, mostly for domestic consumption. Maize is grown throughout Fiji at subsistence or semi-subsistence level for both human and livestock consumption. Other crops grown in significant volume include a variety of traditional root crops, which constitute the most important staples of the diet and are sold largely on the domestic market.

With extensive timber reserves, forestry has become important as an export trade since the mid-1980s. There is no large-scale fishing activity in Fiji, but the local industry is an important supplier of fish for domestic consumption. In recent years, however, commercial fish-farming has become an increasingly important economic activity. Fiji also benefits from the sale to foreign interests of licences to fish in its exclusive economic zone.

In 1994, manufacturing contributed 12.5 per cent of GDP; this sector is dominated by sugar-cane processing and the processing of agricultural products, notably copra, coconut oil and

timber. Other manufactures of some importance include cement, beer and other beverages, cigarettes and tobacco, various food products, paints and soap. The garment subsector has developed into an important industry since 1988.

Over the years, tourism has become the mainstay of the Fijian economy, with total tourism earnings rising from 104 million Fijian dollars in 1980 to 392 million Fijian dollars in 1994. Fiji ranks as the most important tourist destination among the South Pacific islands, despite competition offered by New Caledonia, Tahiti and Vanuatu. Visitor arrivals have well exceeded the quarter million mark annually; most visitors come from Australia, Europe, Japan, New Zealand and the United States of America.

The physical infrastructure is fairly well developed in Fiji. There are about 4,777 kilometres of roads, of which 600 kilometres could be called all-weather roads. A highway circles the main island of Viti Levu, and the country is well supplied with public transport. There are three main harbours and about a dozen international shipping lines serving the country. Fiji is also well serviced by international airlines through its two international airports. There are telephone and radio telephone links to almost all the inhabited islands.

**Table 8. Sectoral distribution of gross domestic product: 1987 and 1994**

(*Thousand Fijian dollars; constant 1997 prices at factor cost*)

Major sectors	1987		1994	
	Value	Percentage	Value	Percentage
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	173 128	24.4	207 468	22.1
Mining and quarrying	1 272	0.2	1 528	0.2
Manufacturing	83 870	11.8	116 739	12.5
Electricity, gas and water	8 858	1.2	13 290	1.4
Construction	29 100	4.1	32 271	3.4
Wholesale and retail trade etc.	117 155	16.5	193 472	20.6
Transport and communications	87 700	12.3	142 346	15.2
Finance, insurance etc.	95 017	13.4	116 581	12.4
Community and personal services	134 766	19.0	145 912	15.6
Imputed service charges	-21 953	-3.1	-32 679	-3.4
Total, including "others"	710 625	100.0	936 928	100.0

*Source:* Economist Intelligence Unit, *Pacific Islands: Fiji, Solomon Islands, Western Samoa, Vanuatu, Tonga, and Other Islands, Country Profile, 1994/95*.

## **7. Social infrastructure**

### **(a) Education**

Fiji is a leading centre for education in the Pacific islands, with a well developed education system. Primary education begins at 6 years of age and lasts for six years. Secondary education, beginning at the age of 12, lasts for a further six years. In 1992, there were 693 primary schools with a total enrolment of 146,324 pupils, and 142 state secondary schools with an enrolment of 58,690 students. The great majority of the schools are operated by local committees and tend to be uni-racial. In addition, there were 41 vocational and technical schools, a school of medicine, a nursing school, and four teacher training colleges.

Although education is not compulsory, a very high proportion of children of school-going age are enrolled in the country's schools. According to the 1986 population census, primary enrolment amounted to almost 100 per cent of the eligible population group, while 60 per cent of children aged 15 years were attending school. The government provides free education for the first eight years and state subsidies are available for secondary and tertiary education.

The University of the South Pacific, which serves 12 Pacific island countries, including Fiji, has its main campus in Suva. Disciplines are organized into four schools which operate core programmes for degree, diploma and certificate students. There are approximately 200 holders of Fiji government scholarships at the University of the South Pacific.

### **(b) Health**

High levels of expenditure on health services over the years have resulted in Fiji being a regional leader in developing a health service system that is capable of providing adequate basic health care as well as many preventive health services. The country's health delivery system consists of two components: services administered and operated by the government, and privately owned and operated services.

The government health services are structured pyramidally, and organized administratively into three geographic divisions. Health services are maintained by major base hospitals in the larger urban areas, and by health centres and nursing stations in the more remote and rural areas. Curative medical services are available at three divisional hospitals, each with over 100 beds and a range of specialist services, and 15 subdivisional hospitals, which have between 12 and 16 beds and serve as primary referral locations for the 54 district-level health centres and 84 nursing stations. Three specialized hospitals, all located in Suva, provide care for psychiatric, tuberculosis and leprosy patients. Four additional area hospitals serve smaller populations. The family planning programme in Fiji is an important component of primary health care and is well integrated into health facilities throughout the country. Fiji does not have a free national health service, but the fees levied on patients have been highly subsidized.

The government facilities are complemented by two small privately operated hospitals. Village communities themselves are supporting 12 nursing stations and there are roughly 3,000 village health workers trained by the government to provide primary services to villagers and their families. These workers do not constitute an official part of government health services but are supported by the village leadership. There are about 100 general private practitioners in the major centres, in addition to 16 dentists, 6 acupuncturists and several chiropractors. Many traditional birth attendants and other traditional health workers operate primarily in isolated rural areas.

The expansion in the health services which has taken place over the years, and particularly during the 1980s, resulted in the health care standards in Fiji being higher than those of other Pacific island nations. Significant improvements in the health status of the people have also been achieved during the past two decades. Several tropical diseases have been almost eradicated; Fiji has been malaria-free for many years, while filariasis, tuberculosis and leprosy are well under control. The im-

provements are reflected in two broad-gauge indicators of health status, life expectancy and infant mortality.

Nevertheless, the majority of Fiji's most prevalent health problems are chronic non-communicable diseases: heart diseases, cancer and diseases of the respiratory and circulatory systems. The shift in the disease pattern is largely due to new diets and a more sedentary lifestyle. Fiji is also experiencing an increase in alcoholism, malnutrition, diabetic and sexually transmitted diseases – problems that seem to be inseparable from increasing urbanization, modernization and what is generally referred to as "economic development".

### (c) Water supply and sanitation

Fiji has developed an appropriate capacity and regulatory framework for maintaining sanitary standards in urban areas and villages in the two main islands where over 90 per cent of the country's population reside. According to the 1986 census, 73.4 per cent of all conventional dwellings in the country had access to piped water supplies, while a further 17.4 per cent obtained their water from roof tanks or wells and boreholes. Only about 8 per cent of the dwellings had to depend on rivers and creeks or other sources for their supply of water. A higher proportion of the dwellings in the urban areas (92.6 per cent) than in rural areas (61.1 per cent) had access to piped

water, while the proportion of dwellings depending on wells/boreholes for their water was higher in rural (22.1 per cent) than in urban areas (2.6 per cent) (table 9).

The 1986 census also revealed that about 54.3 per cent of all dwellings in the country had pour flush or water-sealed toilet facilities, while a further 42.1 per cent had pit latrines. The proportion of dwellings with pour flush or water-sealed latrines was considerably higher in the urban areas (71.3 per cent) than in the rural areas (42.9 per cent). In the rural areas, more than half the dwellings had pit latrines (table 10).

Estimates for recent years indicate that about 70 per cent of households in rural townships and villages are provided with reticulated or protected sources of drinking water, and that an equal proportion have pour flush or other water-sealed seal type latrines. Unsanitary disposal of human wastes is therefore uncommon in Fiji. In most villages, health committees actively monitor and improve the village sanitary environment. Further, public health nurses visit the villages at least once a month and, together with the village health workers, review sanitary arrangements and report defects to village councils. When necessary, subdivisional health inspectors assess serious environmental or water supply problems and recommend measures for remedying these problems.

**Table 9. Conventional dwellings by major source of water supply: 1986 census**

Major source of water supply	Fiji		Urban		Rural	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Piped water	91 501	73.7	45 930	92.6	45 571	61.2
Roof tanks	4 206	3.4	621	1.3	3 585	4.8
Wells/boreholes	17 734	14.3	1 274	2.6	16 460	22.1
River/creek	6 386	5.1	296	0.6	6 090	8.2
Other <sup>a/</sup>	4 271	3.4	1 458	2.9	2 813	3.8
All sources	124 098	100.0	49 579	100.0	74 519	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. 6, *Housing and Services*.

<sup>a/</sup> Including "not stated".

**Table 10. Distribution of conventional dwellings by type of toilet facility: 1986 census**

Type of toilet facility	Fiji		Urban		Rural	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Pour flush	39 540	31.9	30 361	61.2	9 179	12.3
Water-sealed	27 831	22.4	4 994	10.1	22 837	30.6
Shared toilet	2 072	1.7	1 028	2.1	1 044	1.4
Pit latrine	52 393	42.1	12 769	25.8	39 624	53.2
Other	369	0.3	51	0.1	318	0.4
None	1 219	1.0	59	0.1	1 160	1.6
Not stated	674	0.5	317	0.6	357	0.5
Total	124 098	100.0	49 579	100.0	74 519	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. 6, *Housing and Services*.

## C. WOMEN'S PROFILE

### 1. Demographic characteristics

#### (a) Sex balance

In Fiji, as in many other countries in the region, males outnumber females in the total population. The excess of males over females is not an accident of any one census but has been a demographic phenomenon reported by successive censuses, although the numerical gap between the two sexes has been narrowing over the years. At the 1946 census, females constituted 47.3 per cent of the total enumerated population; in other words, there were 89.9 females for every 100 males in the country at that time. According to the 1986 census, females accounted for almost half (49.3 per cent) of the total population and there were 97.3 females per 100 males (table 11).

The preponderance of males in the total population has been attributed to several factors, such as a male-favoured sex ratio at birth, higher female than male mortality, and relatively greater under-enumeration of females at the censuses. The experience of many countries throughout the world suggests that annually more male than female babies are born in these countries, and Fiji is no exception to this globally observed phenomenon. For example, data available for the years 1981 to 1985 show that in all these years the number of male births has exceeded female births among all ethnic groups in the country (table 12).

Data from the 1976 and 1986 censuses also indicate that males outnumber females for all ages except for a few age groups. At the 1976 census, there was an excess of females over males at ages 20-24, 25-29, 35-39 and 65 years

**Table 11. Enumerated population by sex, percentage of females and sex ratio: 1946 to 1986 censuses**

Census year	Enumerated population			Percentage female	Sex ratio	
	Both sexes	Male	Female		Males/ 100 females	Females/ 100 males
1946	259 638	136 731	122 907	47.3	111.2	89.9
1956	345 737	178 475	167 262	48.4	106.7	93.7
1966	476 727	242 747	233 980	49.1	103.7	96.4
1976	588 068	296 950	291 118	49.5	102.0	98.0
1986	715 375	362 568	352 807	49.3	102.8	97.3

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*, vol. I; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 12. Sex ratio at birth by ethnic group: 1981-1985**

Ethnic group	(Male births per 100 female births)				
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Fijians	108.3	108.5	109.2	107.3	110.7
Indians	105.4	102.4	103.9	105.9	104.2
Others	104.8	114.3	113.5	117.5	109.1
All groups	106.6	105.5	106.7	107.2	107.5

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Vital statistics in Fiji (Statistics of Births, Deaths and Marriages): A Report for the Year 1985* (Suva, 1986).

and over, and at the 1986 census females outnumbered males at ages 20-24, 30-34 and 65 years and over (table 13). The slight excess of females, particularly in the older age groups, 65 and over, could be attributed to the higher female than male life expectancy at those ages.

The sex balance of the population also varies with residence. Data from the 1976 and 1986 censuses show that females outnumber males in the urban areas, while in the rural areas males predominate (table 14 and annex table C.1). The excess of females in the total urban population may be due to a preponderance of females in the rural-to-urban migra-

tion streams, as well as to a more complete enumeration of females in urban areas.

Males also outnumber females among all ethnic groups to varying degrees (table 15 and annex table C.2). In 1986, the proportionate share of females in the population varied from 47.9 per cent among "other" ethnic groups to 49.5 per cent among the Indians.

#### (b) Age structure

The numerical and percentage distribution of the total population as well as the male and female population by conventional age groups

**Table 13. Percentage of females and sex ratios by five-year age group: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males
0-4	48.9	104.4	95.7	48.6	105.7	94.6
5-9	49.1	103.8	96.3	48.6	105.6	94.7
10-14	49.6	101.4	98.6	48.9	104.4	95.8
15-19	49.7	101.3	98.7	49.6	101.4	98.6
20-24	51.0	96.1	104.1	50.2	99.3	100.7
25-29	50.2	99.1	100.9	49.6	101.7	98.3
30-34	49.8	101.0	98.9	50.7	98.4	101.6
35-39	50.2	99.2	100.8	49.6	101.7	98.3
40-44	48.8	104.8	95.4	49.4	102.2	97.9
45-49	49.0	104.2	95.9	49.8	100.7	99.3
50-54	48.0	108.4	92.3	49.2	103.0	97.0
55-59	49.8	107.6	92.9	48.7	105.2	95.1
60-64	47.4	110.8	90.2	48.5	106.0	94.3
65+	50.2	99.1	100.9	50.2	99.2	100.9
All ages	49.5	102.0	98.0	49.3	102.8	97.3

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*, vol. I, Parliamentary Paper No. 13 of 1977; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fijian Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 14. Percentage of females and sex ratios by residence: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Residence <sup>a/</sup>	1976 census			1986 census		
	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males
Urban centres	50.1	99.4	100.6	50.1	99.4	100.5
Urban localities	49.4	102.3	97.7	49.7	101.4	98.6
Rural areas	49.2	103.4	96.8	48.8	104.8	95.4
Fiji	49.5	102.0	98.0	49.3	102.8	97.3

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

<sup>a/</sup> See annex table 1 for a definition of urban centres and urban localities.

**Table 15. Percentage of females and sex ratios by ethnic group: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Ethnic group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males	Percent-age female	Males/100 females	Females/100 males
Fijians	49.4	102.3	97.8	49.2	103.2	96.8
Indians	49.7	101.0	99.0	49.5	101.7	98.3
Other ethnic	47.9	108.6	92.1	47.9	108.9	91.8
All groups	49.5	102.0	98.0	49.3	102.8	97.3

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

for 1976 and 1986 are given in annex tables C.3 and C.4. The percentage distribution of the population by broad age groups, that is, 0-14 (child population), 15-59 (working age population) and 60 and over (elderly population), is shown in table 16.

It is clear from table 16 that there were changes in the age structure of the population

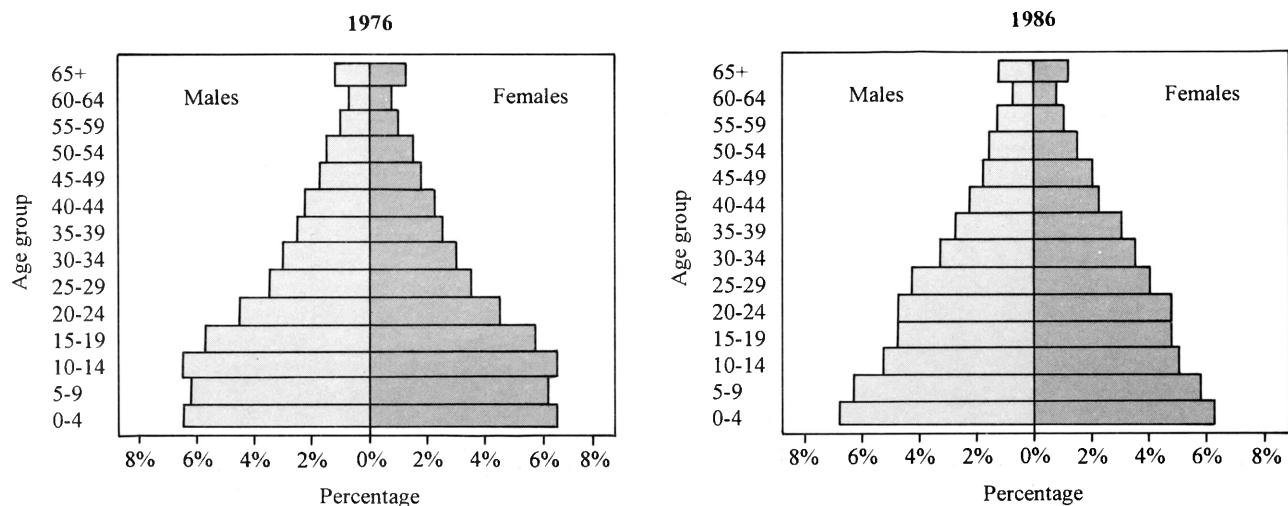
between 1976 and 1986. The proportionate share of children aged 0-14 years in the total population had declined from 41.1 per cent in 1976 to 38.2 per cent in 1986. This decline, which had occurred in respect of both males and females, was largely brought about by a decline in fertility during this period. Consequently, the share of persons in the working age group 15-59 years had increased from

**Table 16. Percentage distribution of the population by broad age group and dependency ratio: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
0-14	41.1	41.4	40.9	38.2	38.7	37.8
15-59	54.7	54.4	55.0	56.9	56.4	57.3
60+	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.9	4.9	4.9
Dependency ratio	82.8	83.8	81.8	76.0	77.4	74.6

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

**Figure 2. Age structure of the population: 1976 and 1986**



Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

54.7 to 56.9 per cent, with similar increases being recorded for both males and females.

Estimates indicate that the median age of the population had increased from 18.2 years in 1976 to 19.7 years in 1986. Thus, in 1986 the population was still young, with exactly half the people being aged below 20 years. Further, the increasing proportion of those in the working age group 15-59 years had resulted in declining dependency ratios, or the ratio of persons in the "dependent" ages (below 15 and 60 years and over) to those in the working or economically active ages (15-59 years). It will also be noted from table 16 that since the proportionate share of the working-age population was higher for females than for males, the total dependency ratio for females was lower than that for males in both 1976 and 1986.

### (c) Marital status

The numerical and percentage distribution of persons aged 15 years and over, classified by marital status and sex in 1976 and 1986, is given in table 17. According to the censuses, people living together as man and wife were deemed to be married whether or not they had been through any civil or religious ceremonies. A person who had been married earlier but whose spouse had died and who had not remarried by the time of the census was considered to be widowed. A separated

or divorced person was one who had been married but had divorced or separated and was living as such at the time of the census.

It will be noted from table 17 that, between 1976 and 1986, the proportions never married had remained almost unchanged and the proportions married had increased by approximately two percentage points for both males and females aged 15 years and over. In both censuses, the proportion reported as married was higher for females than for males. In 1986, 63.4 per cent of females compared with 61.4 per cent of males aged 15 years and over were married.

It is also evident from table 17 that the incidence of widowhood was considerably higher among females than among males in both census years; in 1986, the proportion widowed among females (7.4 per cent) was nearly five times that among males. The higher incidence of widowhood among females could be explained in terms of the higher life expectancy for females, particularly at the older ages, and the higher rate of remarriage of widowers compared with widows.

The marital status of the 1986 population 15 years and over, by ethnic group and sex, is shown in annex table C.5. It will be noted that, both among males and females, the proportions married were substantially higher and

**Table 17. Numerical and percentage distribution of the population aged 15 years and over<sup>a</sup> by sex and marital status: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Sex and marital status	1976		1994	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>346 091</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>441 912</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Never married	109 673	31.7	138 054	31.2
Married	208 697	60.3	275 840	62.4
Widowed	16 380	4.7	19 930	4.5
Divorced/separated	6 489	1.9	7 741	1.8
Not stated	4 852	1.4	347	0.1
<b>Males</b>	<b>174 036</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>222 316</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Never married	62 492	35.9	79 357	35.7
Married	103 238	59.3	136 530	61.4
Widowed	3 372	1.9	3 642	1.6
Divorced/separated	2 374	1.4	2 588	1.2
Not stated	2 560	1.5	199	0.1
<b>Females</b>	<b>172 055</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>219 596</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Never married	47 181	27.4	58 697	26.7
Married	105 459	61.3	139 310	63.4
Widowed	13 008	7.6	16 288	7.4
Divorced/separated	4 115	2.4	5 153	2.3
Not stated	2 292	1.3	148	0.1

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

<sup>a</sup> Including persons not stating their age.

the proportions never married considerably lower for Indians compared with Fijians and other ethnic groups. In 1986, nearly 67 per cent of Indian women aged 15 years and over were reported as married, the corresponding proportions for indigenous Fijians and "other" groups being 59.8 and 58.7 per cent. Among all ethnic groups, a higher proportion of females than males were married (table 18).

## 2. Health status

As noted in section B, there was considerable expansion of public health services during the 1980s, and this expansion was particularly pronounced in the area of primary health care, with obvious benefits for women and children. Family health, including environmental health, was promoted through national women's non-

**Table 18. Percentage distribution of persons aged 15 years and over by marital status, ethnic group and sex: 1986 census**

Marital status	Both sexes			Male			Female		
	Fijians	Indians	Other	Fijians	Indians	Other	Fijians	Indians	Other
Never married	35.0	27.3	35.4	39.8	31.4	39.6	30.1	23.2	31.2
Married	58.3	66.8	57.3	56.7	66.4	56.0	59.8	67.2	58.7
Widowed	4.6	4.4	4.3	1.9	1.3	1.9	7.3	7.6	6.9
Divorced/separated	2.0	1.4	2.6	1.5	0.8	2.3	2.7	2.0	3.0
Not stated	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

governmental organizations; Fiji has had a particularly successful experience in mother and child health care, and significant improvements were achieved in regard to the health of women and children.

Although comprehensive information on the patterns of morbidity are not available, hospital-based data indicate that complications of pregnancy, including abortion, and cancers and other diseases of the breast and reproductive organs account for a large portion of female morbidity. Non-communicable diseases due to changes in diet and lifestyle, such as heart diseases and diabetes, are also gaining importance among women. For instance, in 1990, complications of pregnancy accounted for 37.9 per cent, and diseases of the genital organs a further 7.7 per cent, of all female hospital admissions. Diabetes, cancer and diseases of the heart constituted about 11 per cent of female in-patient morbidity in 1990 (table 19).

**Table 19. Major causes of female in-patient morbidity: 1990**

Major causes	Number of cases	% of total
Complications of pregnancy	7 889	37.9
Diseases of genital organs	1 598	7.7
Pneumonia	509	2.4
Bronchitis, emphysema, asthma	617	3.0
Intestinal infections	556	2.7
Skin/subcutaneous infections	475	2.3
Diabetes mellitus	687	3.3
Malignant neoplasms	384	1.8
Benign neoplasms	276	1.3
Ischaemic heart disease	300	1.4
Other heart disease	423	2.0
Cerebrovascular disease	201	1.0
Other	6 895	33.1
Total	20 810	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health.

Available data also suggest that anaemia is increasingly becoming a serious problem among Indo-Fijian as well as ethnic Fijian women. Since cash-cropping has impaired the cultivation of traditional foods and the cost of fresh food is often high, there has been a growing tendency among consumers to purchase manufac-

tured convenience foods of poor nutritional value. According to a 1985 survey, the preference for such fast foods is stronger among ethnic Fijian women than among Indo-Fijian women, although both groups appear to have very little knowledge of the nutritional property of such food items.

Despite the various problems, the health standards of women in Fiji have improved over the years, reaching a fairly high level compared with that in most developing countries, particularly other small island Pacific nations. The progress achieved is reflected in the levels and trends in relevant indicators, particularly maternal mortality, infant mortality and life expectancy.

The maternal mortality rate is reported to have declined from 119 per 100,000 live births in 1976 to about 53 in 1980 and further to 27 in 1990, with a slightly higher rate among ethnic Fijian women (26 per 100,000) compared with 27 for Indo-Fijian women. The decline in maternal mortality to comparatively low levels has been attributed to two factors. First, an increasingly high proportion of pregnant women receive antenatal care; pregnant women in Fiji visit antenatal clinics an average of seven times in the course of their pregnancy, the average attendance of ethnic Fijian women (6.9 times) being lower than that of Indo-Fijian women (7.5 times). Second, almost all births are attended by trained medical personnel; the proportion of deliveries taking place in medical institutions or under the care of district nurses increased from 96.4 per cent in 1982 to 98.3 per cent in 1990 (table 20).

The improved health of mothers is reflected in an improvement in the infant mortality rate; estimates based on data from health facilities indicate a decline in the infant mortality rate of 26.6 per 1,000 live births in 1982 to 16.8 in 1990 (table 20). However, estimates based on census data indicate that the infant mortality rate had declined from a level of 59 per 1,000 live births in the mid-1960s to 40 by the mid-1970s and further to around 24 by the early 1990s. The decline in infant mortality has largely been due to the successful

**Table 20. Trends in maternal and child health: 1982-1990**

Indicators	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<b>Maternal health</b>									
Maternal mortality rate <sup>a/</sup>	46.8	32.5	43.7	42.6	68.5	71.0	60.4	92.1	26.8
Percentage delivery in hospitals	92.0	93.0	93.2	93.2	93.4	93.9	93.7	94.2	95.3
Percentage delivery by nurses	4.4	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.2	3.8	3.0
Percentage delivery by traditional birth attendant	2.8	2.9	2.4	2.4	1.8	1.8	2.1	2.0	1.7
<b>Child health</b>									
Infant mortality rate <sup>b/</sup>	26.6	22.0	22.5	17.4	19.8	15.5	19.7	17.2	16.8
Neonatal mortality rate <sup>c/</sup>	9.1	13.9	11.0	9.6	10.6	8.9	9.8	9.8	9.4
Post neonatal mortality rate <sup>d/</sup>	17.5	8.1	10.6	7.8	9.2	6.6	9.9	7.3	7.3
Perinatal mortality rate <sup>b/</sup>	16.6	15.5	13.1	12.5	13.8	11.9	13.1	9.9	10.8

Source: Ministry of Health annual reports, as reported in World Bank, *Health Priorities and Options in the World Bank's Pacific Member Countries*, Report No. 11620-EAP (October 1994).

<sup>a/</sup> Per 100,000 live births.

<sup>b/</sup> Per 1,000 live births.

<sup>c/</sup> Mortality among infants aged 0-27 days.

<sup>d/</sup> Mortality among infants aged 28 days to one year.

These data are reported by various health facilities and should be interpreted with care.

implementation of the immunization programme. The coverage rate for BCG (tuberculosis) administered at birth is complete, while the rates for polio, DPT and measles have increased since 1985 (table 21). Further, diarrhoeal disease in infancy has been fairly well controlled, so that it is no longer a major cause of infant death.

creased from 63.1 to 65.2 years, while male life expectancy increased from 60.1 to 61.0 years (table 22). Thus, in 1986, female life expectancy exceeded male life expectancy by 4.2 years in the total population. However, the gender gap in life expectancy was more marked among Indo-Fijians (5.5 years) than among ethnic Fijians (2.2 years).

**Table 21. Crude immunization coverage rates for infants aged 0-11 months: 1985 and 1990**

Type	1985		1990	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
BCG	20 683	97.8	18 770	100.7
Polio I	18 789	88.8	18 313	98.2
Polio II	17 122	81.0	16 440	88.2
Polio III	14 370	67.9	16 247	87.1
Polio IV	—	—	15 844	85.0
DPT I	18 723	88.5	16 368	87.8
DPT II	17 168	81.2	16 236	87.1
DPT III	14 376	68.0	15 241	81.8
Measles	10 925	51.7	13 527	72.6

Source: Ministry of Health, annual reports.

The reductions in various mortality rates are reflected in the increase in life expectancy over the years. Between 1976 and 1986, female life expectancy is estimated to have in-

According to recent estimates made by the United Nations, the life expectancy of all females in the country averaged 73.7 years, compared with 69.5 years for males during the period 1990-1995.

### 3. Educational background

With the progressive reduction in gender inequality in access to education, the educational status of women in Fiji has continued to improve over the years. Relevant indicators clearly show that women's participation in education, as well as their levels of educational attainment, are not significantly different from those of men.

#### (a) Educational participation

During the 1980s, there was a progressive increase in enrolment of both boys and girls at the primary level of education at an almost

**Table 22. Life expectancy by sex and ethnic group: 1976 and 1986**

(Years)

Ethnic groups	1976				1986			
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Female/male difference	Both sexes	Male	Female	Female/male difference
Ethnic Fijians	62.1	60.7	63.9	3.2	64.2	63.1	65.3	2.2
Indo-Fijians	60.9	59.5	62.4	2.9	62.3	59.6	65.1	5.5
All ethnic groups	61.6	60.1	63.1	3.0	63.1	61.0	65.2	4.2

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 1976 and 1986 population censuses.

equal pace. Data for selected years show that, between 1982 and 1992, girls constituted between 48 and 49 per cent of the primary school enrolment. At the secondary level, the number enrolled fluctuated for both boys and girls between 1980 and 1988, but in some years female enrolment had exceeded that of males (table 23).

As noted earlier, the number of females is less than the number of males at school-going ages 5-19 years (annex table C.3). Hence one could expect female enrolment in terms of numbers as well as proportion of total enrolment to be less than male enrolment at the primary and secondary levels of education. A more realistic assessment of the participation levels of males and females in the education system is given by the enrolment ratios or the ratio of total enrolments at a particular educational level to the total number of persons in the appropriate ages.

Since the six-year primary education course starts at age 6 and the six-year secondary cycle at age 12, the relevant age groups which mostly serve as the pool for pupil enrolment are 6-11 years for primary education and 12-17 years for secondary education. The enrolment rates for these two age groups, based on the data of the 1986 census in respect of major ethnic groups and by sex, are given in table 24.

It will be noted from table 24 that 94 per cent of all males and 95 per cent of all females aged 6-11 years, corresponding to the primary-level education cohort, were reported to be attending school in 1986; this would suggest that Fiji had then almost achieved the goal of universal primary education. The proportion of persons aged 12-17 years, corresponding to the secondary-level education cohort, attending school was slightly higher for females (65.4 per cent) than for males (65.0 per cent). The 1986 census data also show that the reported

**Table 23. Primary and secondary school enrolment by sex: 1980-1992**

Year	Primary level				Secondary level			
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Percent-age female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Percent-age female
1980	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	47 119	23 372	23 747	50.4
1982	117 522	60 219	57 303	48.8	44 659	22 070	22 589	50.6
1985	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	41 505	20 816	20 689	49.8
1988	137 918	71 583	66 335	48.1	44 448	22 614	21 834	49.1
1992	145 630	74 917	70 713	48.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Sources: Ministry of Education, annual reports; and Australian National University, Regional Data Bank.

n.a. = data not available.

**Table 24. School attendance by broad age group, major ethnic group and sex: 1986 census**

Ethnic and age group	Male			Female		
	Population	Attending school	Attendance rate (%)	Population	Attending school	Attendance rate (%)
<b>All ethnic groups</b>						
6-11 years	54 197	50 950	94.0	51 694	48 881	94.6
12-17 years	46 505	30 313	65.2	44 919	29 363	65.4
6-17 years	100 702	81 263	80.7	96 613	78 244	81.0
<b>Fijians</b>						
6-11 years	25 201	23 524	93.3	23 797	22 327	93.8
12-17 years	21 308	13 452	63.1	20 572	13 104	63.7
6-17 years	46 509	36 976	79.5	44 639	35 431	79.9
<b>Indians</b>						
6-11 years	26 350	24 925	94.6	25 288	24 087	95.3
12-17 years	22 735	14 991	65.9	22 122	14 496	65.5
6-17 years	49 085	39 916	81.3	47 410	38 583	81.4
<b>Other ethnic groups</b>						
6-11 years	2 646	2 501	94.5	2 609	2 467	94.6
12-17 years	2 462	1 870	76.0	2 225	1 763	79.2
6-17 years	5 108	4 371	85.6	4 834	4 230	87.5

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

proportions of boys as well as girls in the relevant age groups attending primary and secondary schools was lower for ethnic Fijians than for Indo-Fijians or "other" ethnic groups.

Although almost all children in the eligible age group are reported to be attending primary schools, available data for the period 1985-1992 indicate that only about 79 per cent of those enrolled at the primary level complete the full course of education at this level. Data from the Ministry of Education also indicate that the completion rate among females (82.9 per cent) is significantly higher than that for males (75.2 per cent) for all ethnic groups combined, and that Indo-Fijian females had a completion rate which was five percentage points higher than ethnic Fijian females (table 25).

Although the participation rates for males and females are almost equal at the primary and secondary levels of education, females are very much under-represented at various vocational and technical training courses at the tertiary level, other than teacher training. In 1992, for instance, females comprised only about 26 per cent of total enrolment at the Fiji Institute of Technology. Besides the low participation

**Table 25. Crude completion rates for primary-level education by major ethnic group and sex: 1985-1992**

Ethnic group	Both sexes	(Percentage)	
		Male	Female
Fijians	75.6	75.2	80.2
Indians	82.1	79.3	85.2
All ethnic groups	79.1	75.2	82.9

Source: Ministry of Education, annual reports.

level, women tend to be concentrated in traditional female areas of study, such as business administration and hotel/catering; females constituted 76.4 per cent of total enrolment in business/secretarial courses and 56.3 per cent of all students pursuing hotel/catering training. The enrolment of women in non-traditional areas such as engineering and maritime training courses is very low (table 26).

In 1985, no female was enrolled in the training course in agriculture; but of the 105 students following the Diploma in Tropical Agriculture course in 1995, 21 students, or 20

**Table 26. Enrolment at the Fiji Institute of Technology by course type and sex: 1992**

Course type	Both sexes	Male	Female	Percentage female
Automotive engineering	563	559	4	0.7
Building/civil engineering	540	519	21	3.9
Business/secretarial	1 130	267	863	76.4
Electrical engineering	724	704	20	2.8
General studies	136	87	49	36.0
Hotel and catering	261	114	147	56.3
Maritime studies	405	405	—	—
Mechanical engineering	515	509	6	1.2
Printing	90	61	29	32.2
All courses	4 364	3 225	1 139	26.1

Source: Ministry of Education, annual reports.

per cent of the total enrolment, were female. Female enrollees outnumber males in teacher training institutions, while all but a handful of the annual intake of 120 at the Fiji School of Nursing are females. At the Fiji School of Medicine, the proportionate share of female students increased steadily from 33 per cent in 1985 to 50 in 1994; during this nine-year period, the total intake more than doubled.

In 1994, there were 302 Fijian Government-sponsored students at the University of the South Pacific, of whom 144, or about 48 per cent, were females. Females also constituted about 53 per cent of the Government-sponsored students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts programme, and about 38 per cent of those enrolled in the Bachelor of Science programme.

As of 1994, there were 78 students who were awarded scholarships for higher studies abroad; of these, 34 students, or 44 per cent, were females. The distribution of the 78 students by area of study and sex is given in annex table C.6.

#### (b) Educational attainment

According to the 1986 census data, of all persons aged 15 years and over not attending school, 8.1 per cent had no education at all, and this proportion for females (11.2 per cent) was more than twice that for males (5.0 per cent). The proportion of those completing any one of primary grades 1-3 was slightly higher for females (5.7 per cent) than for males (5.4 per cent), while the proportion

**Table 27. Government of Fiji-sponsored students by course of study and sex: 1994**

Course of study	Both sexes	Male	Female	Percentage female
Bachelor of Arts Year 1	60	22	38	63.3
Bachelor of Arts Year 2	53	20	33	62.3
Bachelor of Arts Year 3	81	49	32	39.5
Subtotal	194	91	103	53.1
Bachelor of Science Year 1	32	16	16	50.0
Bachelor of Science Year 2	38	23	15	39.4
Bachelor of Science Year 3	38	28	10	26.3
Subtotal	108	67	41	38.0
Total	302	158	144	47.7

Source: Department for Women and Culture database.

of those completing any one of primary grades 4-6 was slightly higher for males (18.7 per cent) than for females (18.3 per cent). Only about 6.2 per cent of males and 4.6 per cent of females aged 15 years and over had completed the full secondary education course, that is, completed secondary grade 6. Only about 4.9 per cent among males and 3.3 per cent among females aged 15 years and over reported acquiring post-secondary education (table 28).

In Fiji, a literate person is considered to be one who has completed at least four years of primary education. On the basis of this definition, 88.3 per cent of males and 81.5 per cent of females aged 15 years and over not attending school were literate in 1986 (table 28). However, the literacy rate of all women aged 15 years and over is estimated to

have increased from 74 per cent in 1976 to 84 per cent in 1986.

The age-specific literacy rates given in table 29 indicate that the literacy rates which are highest at ages 15-19 decrease with increasing age. In 1986, while 98 per cent of all males as well as all females aged 15-19 years were reported as literate, the literacy rate for persons aged 50 years and over was 69 per cent for males and 50 per cent for females.

## D. WOMEN IN FAMILY LIFE

### 1. Family formation

In Fiji, there have not only been significant changes in the marriage patterns of the

**Table 28. Population aged 15 years and over not attending school by level of educational attainment and sex: 1986 census**

Level of educational attainment	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
None	33 640	8.1	10 453	5.0	23 187	11.2
Primary grades 1-3	23 155	5.6	11 412	5.4	11 743	5.7
Primary grades 4-6	77 131	18.5	39 171	18.7	37 960	18.3
Secondary grades 1-5	237 233	56.9	122 341	58.4	114 892	55.3
Secondary grade 6	22 502	5.4	13 017	6.2	9 485	4.6
Post secondary	17 263	4.1	10 300	4.9	6 963	3.3
Not stated	6 025	1.4	2 756	1.3	3 269	1.6
Total	416 949	100.0	209 450	100.0	207 499	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 29. Percentage of the population who have completed primary grade 4 and above (literacy rate) by age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976			1986		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	94	96	93	98	98	98
20-24	91	93	89	97	97	97
25-29	87	91	84	95	96	94
30-39	81	88	75	90	92	87
40-49	69	78	60	81	87	75
50+	53	64	41	60	69	50

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

people, but the patterns of marriage also vary significantly between the different ethnic groups.

Data from the 1976 and 1986 censuses indicate that the percentage remaining single or never married had increased during this 10-year period for males as well as females at all ages above 15 years, and that such increases were more marked at prime marriageable ages than at older ages, and among males more than among females. Between 1976 and 1986, the proportion of single males increased by 3.2 percentage points at ages 15-19, by 7.0 percentage points at ages 20-24 and by 4.2 percentage points at ages 25-29. During the same period, the proportion of single or never-married females increased by 3.4 percentage points at ages 15-19, by 5.3 percentage points at ages 20-24 and by 3.9 percentage points at ages 25-29 years. But at ages 30-34, the proportion single had increased more markedly for females, from 5.9 to 8.9 per cent, than for males, from 10.1 to 11.9 per cent.

Concurrently with the increase in the proportion of single persons, there has been a decline in the proportion of currently married persons, this decline being more significant at ages 20-29 for males and 20-34 for females. The proportion reported as currently married declined by 4.7 percentage points for males and by 3.5 percentage points for females at

ages 20-24; and by 2.7 percentage points for males and 2.6 percentage points for females at ages 25-29 years. At ages 30-34, the proportion currently married declined by 2.4 percentage points for females and 1.1 percentage points for males (table 30 and annex table D.1). The trends in proportions never married and currently married would suggest that an increasing number and proportion of young males and females have been refraining from early marriage but entering into marital union at a later stage.

The 1986 age-sex-specific proportions of the never married given in table 31 indicate that these proportions were significantly higher for ethnic Fijians than for Indians at all age groups. For example, the proportion of single males at ages 20-24 among ethnic Fijians (77.4 per cent) was 13.2 percentage points greater than the corresponding proportion for Indians (64.2 per cent). At higher ages, the probability of ethnic Fijian males remaining single was two to three times higher than for Indian males. A similar differential pattern is also noticed between ethnic Fijian females and their Indian counterparts. It will also be noted from table 31 that the proportions reported as currently married were considerably higher for Indian males compared with their ethnic Fijian counterparts at all ages, while these proportions for Indian females were significantly higher than for

**Table 30. Percentage of never married and currently married males and females aged 15 years and over by age group: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	Never married				Currently married			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	1976	1986	1976	1986	1976	1986	1976	1986
15-19	94.4	97.6	83.3	86.7	2.3	2.3	12.9	12.8
20-24	63.8	70.8	36.2	41.5	33.3	28.6	59.7	56.2
25-29	24.8	28.6	13.0	16.9	72.6	69.9	82.0	79.4
30-34	10.1	11.9	5.9	8.9	87.4	86.3	89.0	86.6
35-39	5.7	7.3	4.2	5.8	91.5	90.6	88.8	87.8
40-44	3.8	5.3	3.3	4.2	93.2	92.6	86.8	86.8
45-49	3.0	4.2	3.1	3.6	93.2	93.0	81.8	82.9
50-54	3.1	3.7	3.1	3.1	91.0	92.1	73.6	76.1
55-59	3.1	3.7	3.0	3.2	87.9	89.8	64.8	68.0
60-64	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.6	83.9	86.2	51.4	58.1
65+	3.7	4.7	3.9	4.8	69.4	74.4	28.3	35.7

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 31. Percentage of never married and currently married males and females aged 15 years and over by age group and ethnic origin: 1986 census**

Age group	Never married						Currently married					
	Fijians		Indians		Other		Fijians		Indians		Other	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15-19	98.1	89.4	97.0	83.7	97.4	91.3	1.8	9.9	2.9	15.9	2.2	8.3
20-24	77.4	49.2	64.2	33.7	76.6	52.2	22.1	48.1	35.2	64.4	22.4	45.4
25-29	38.3	22.4	19.6	11.6	40.3	25.5	60.0	73.6	79.1	85.0	57.9	69.9
30-34	18.7	12.1	5.4	5.8	21.6	13.2	79.1	83.3	93.2	89.6	75.1	82.4
35-39	11.3	8.2	3.3	3.4	13.3	8.2	86.1	85.9	95.4	89.7	82.6	85.8
40-44	8.2	5.8	2.3	2.7	9.3	6.4	89.1	87.3	96.2	86.8	86.3	83.9
45-49	6.0	5.1	1.6	1.8	10.3	6.8	90.5	84.0	96.5	82.2	84.1	81.0
50-54	5.0	4.0	1.4	1.7	9.7	6.8	89.8	78.7	95.7	73.6	84.0	74.6
55-59	4.9	4.6	1.7	1.4	8.2	4.7	87.6	69.2	93.4	66.3	83.3	70.7
60-64	4.1	4.9	1.8	1.6	7.5	6.3	84.3	60.2	89.9	55.0	80.3	61.2
65+	5.9	5.5	2.3	2.4	9.2	12.0	72.2	3.5	78.4	36.0	69.2	37.3

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

ethnic Fijian females at ages 15-39; at age 40 and over, the proportions of currently married females were higher among ethnic Fijians than among Indians.

It is also clear from table 31 that Indian men and women by and large tend to marry earlier than their Fijian counterparts. For example, the proportion married at ages 15-19 was 15.9 per cent for Indian females and 9.9 per cent for Fijian females. While nearly two thirds (64.4 per cent) of Indian females aged 20-24 were reported as married in 1986, the corresponding proportion for Fijian females was less than 50 per cent. A similar differential pattern is noticeable in regard to proportions married among males of both ethnic groups.

The tendency for early marriage among Indo-Fijians or Indians is also reflected in the singulate mean age at marriage, which is a measure of the average age at marriage derived from estimates of the proportion of males and females who are single in successive age groups based on census data. In 1986, the singulate mean age at marriage was 26.6 years for Fijian men and 23.4 years for Indian men; and 23.4 years for Fijian women compared with 21.6 years for Indian women. While Fijian men tend to marry women who are on average 3.2 years younger than themselves, among Indians this difference is 2.7 years (table 32).

**Table 32. Singulate mean age at marriage for ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians by sex: censuses of 1956 to 1986**

Census year	Ethnic Fijians		Indo-Fijians	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1956	25.9	22.3	21.6	18.1
1966	26.1	22.4	23.4	20.3
1976	25.9	22.1	23.5	21.1
1986	26.6	23.4	24.3	21.6

Source: Bureau of Statistics.

Table 32 also shows that since 1956 the singulate mean age at marriage has been fluctuating for Fijian males and females but has been rising gradually in the case of Indian males and females.

## 2. Reproductive patterns

Available data and estimates indicate that there has been a substantial reduction in fertility rates in Fiji over the past four decades. According to recent estimates prepared by the United Nations, the country's crude birth rate had declined from 46.3 per 1,000 population in 1950-1955 to 23.7 in 1990-1995; during the same period, TFR, or the number of births to a woman during her reproductive span, declined from 6.62 to 2.98 (table 33).

**Table 33. Trends in indicators of fertility: 1950-1955 to 1990-1995**

Period	Crude birth rate <sup>a/</sup>	Total fertility rate <sup>b/</sup>	Gross reproduction rate <sup>b/</sup>	Net reproduction rate <sup>b/</sup>
1950-1955	46.3	6.62	3.22	2.77
1955-1960	46.7	6.79	3.30	2.91
1960-1965	42.0	5.95	2.89	2.64
1965-1970	36.5	5.00	2.43	2.15
1970-1975	32.5	4.20	2.04	1.86
1975-1980	33.2	4.00	1.94	1.81
1980-1985	31.9	3.80	1.84	1.75
1985-1990	26.4	3.20	1.55	1.49
1990-1995	23.7	2.98	1.45	1.40

Source: United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 1994 Revision* (Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, Population Division, New York, 1995) (ST/ESA/SER.A.145).

<sup>a/</sup> Per 1,000 population.

<sup>b/</sup> Per woman.

A 1990 study based on fertility estimates derived from data from the censuses conducted in 1966, 1976 and 1986 revealed that the decline in fertility between 1966 and 1986 had occurred at an unequal pace between the two major ethnic groups, the indigenous Fijians and the Indo-Fijians or Indians. According to this study, whereas TFR of indigenous Fijians declined by 26 per cent from 5.58 children per woman in 1966 to 4.14 in 1986, that of Indians declined by 50 per cent from 5.51 children per woman to 2.77 during the same 20-year period. The study also showed that the decline in fertility among both ethnic groups was much faster during the period 1966-1976, and that during the subsequent decade, while the fertility of Indian women continued to decline, that of

Fijian women had virtually stabilized. Although TFR of Indian women declined by 2.7 children between 1966 and 1986, a decline of 2.05 children had occurred during the period 1966-1976 and of 0.69 children between 1976 and 1986. In the case of Fijian women, most of the decline in TFR occurred during the period 1966-1967 while the decline during the period 1976-1986 was negligible. In both ethnic groups, women aged 20-34 years had contributed most to the decline in TFR during the two decades within the period 1966-1986 (table 34).

The 1990 study also revealed that the observed decline in total fertility among both ethnic groups was mostly brought about by a

**Table 34. Age-specific and total fertility rates by major ethnic group: 1966-1986**

Age group	Fijians			Indians		
	1966	1976	1986	1966	1976	1986
15-19	0.055	0.042	0.062	0.095	0.053	0.062
20-24	0.287	0.237	0.211	0.329	0.244	0.207
25-29	0.323	0.257	0.227	0.299	0.218	0.162
30-34	0.238	0.174	0.171	0.203	0.113	0.080
35-39	0.148	0.099	0.106	0.122	0.049	0.029
40-44	0.059	0.037	0.040	0.048	0.014	0.010
45-49	0.007	0.004	0.011	0.006	0.001	0.005
Total fertility rate	5.58	4.25	4.14	5.51	3.46	2.77

Source: Bhakta Gubhaju and Md. Shahidulla, "A decomposition analysis of recent fertility decline in Fiji", *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, vol. 5, No. 4, 1990.

decline in marital fertility during the period 1966-1976 and that during the period 1976-1986 marital fertility declined very little among Indians and increased slightly among Fijians; the increase in marital fertility among Fijians during the period 1976-1986 was largely due to the increase in fertility of women in the younger and older age groups (table 35).

In 1986, Indian women had on average 1.3 births fewer than Fijian women. Estimates based on births occurring in health centres and hospitals also indicate that in 1994 an average Fijian woman had 1.1 births more than an Indian woman (annex table D.2). The lower fertility of Indian women, which was brought about by a relatively greater decline in marital fertility, was facilitated by the more widespread adoption of family planning by them than by Fijian women. Estimates based on sales, attendance, loop insertions and information provided by private pharmacists indicate that the family planning acceptance rate, which was about 9.0 per cent among both ethnic groups in 1966, had increased to only 15.0 per cent among Fijians, compared with 28.1 per cent among Indians. By 1986, the acceptance rate among Indians (35.6 per cent) was almost twice that of 18.7 per cent estimated for Fijians.

It is rather difficult to explain the considerably lower family planning acceptance rate among Fijian women, who are more literate, more economically active and have higher life expectancy and lower infant mortality than Indian women. Although no empirical evidence

is available, it is generally argued that the low rate of contraceptive practice among Fijians may be due to a negative attitude towards family planning based on the mistaken belief that land is still available in abundance; fear of political domination by immigrant Indians who outnumbered indigenous Fijians; and opposition to artificial means of contraception by the Catholic Church. These arguments are to some extent supported by the empirical findings of the 1974 Fiji Fertility Survey, which revealed that 38 per cent of Indians compared with 27 per cent of Fijians wanted to limit their families to two children. The Survey also reported that contraceptive practice was higher among Fijian Methodists than Catholics, and that there was no difference in this respect between Hindu and Muslim Indians.

Since 1986, TFR of all women in Fiji appears to have declined further to about three children per woman in 1990-1995. According to data from the Ministry of Health, female sterilization appears to be the most popular family planning method, with more than half the acceptors opting for this method (table 36). In general, sterilization is restricted to older women who have several children, the youngest being about 5 years of age, and who are in a stable marriage, and the decision requires the consent of the husband. In 1990, IUDs constituted the second most popular method (17.6 per cent of acceptors) followed by pills (12.4 per cent). Depo-provera (injection method) has also been gaining popularity relative to pills and condoms (table 36).

**Table 35. Marital age-specific fertility rates by major ethnic group: 1966-1986**

Age group	Fijians			Indians		
	1966	1976	1986	1966	1976	1986
15-19	0.556	0.438	0.626	0.426	0.338	0.390
20-24	0.510	0.454	0.439	0.426	0.367	0.321
25-29	0.396	0.332	0.308	0.322	0.253	0.191
30-34	0.270	0.202	0.205	0.215	0.123	0.089
35-39	0.168	0.113	0.123	0.130	0.054	0.032
40-44	0.068	0.043	0.046	0.053	0.016	0.012
45-49	0.008	0.005	0.013	0.007	0.001	0.006
Marital total fertility rate	9.88	7.93	8.80	7.89	5.76	5.20

Source: Bhakta Gubhaju and Md. Shahidulla, "A decomposition analysis of recent fertility decline in Fiji", *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, vol. 5, No. 4, 1990.

**Table 36. Percentage distribution of family planning acceptors by contraceptive method: 1982-1990**

Contraceptive method	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Pill	16.9	15.8	14.9	14.4	12.2	11.8	11.6	11.0	12.4
IUD	13.5	15.5	15.7	15.8	15.9	15.3	15.5	17.5	17.6
Condom	13.8	11.5	12.3	12.5	10.6	11.0	10.5	9.8	5.8
Injection	5.2	5.4	4.9	5.7	8.2	9.8	9.9	8.6	8.0
Female sterilization	50.6	51.4	52.2	51.6	53.1	52.1	52.4	53.1	53.4
All methods	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health annual reports, cited in World Bank, *Health Priorities and Options in the World Bank's Pacific Member Countries*, Report No. 11620-EAP (October 1994).

### 3. Marital disruption

Persons who are widowed or divorced/separated constitute that segment of the population living in a state of marital disruption. According to the 1986 census, 2.79 per cent of all persons aged 15 years and over (excluding those not stating their age) were widowed, and the proportion for females (4.62 per cent) was more than four times that for males (1.00 per cent). The incidence of widowhood also varies according to age, being generally very low at younger ages, and very high at older ages. Further, at all age groups, the incidence rates for females are very much higher than those for males among the total population. At older ages, 65 years and over, more than half the females were reported to be widowed com-

pared with less than one fifth among males (table 37).

It is also clear from table 37 that the pattern of incidence of widowhood among the various ethnic groups is more or less similar to the average national pattern. However, the incidence of widowhood among Indian males is higher than among their Fijian counterparts at ages 20-29 and lower than Fijian males at all age groups above 30 years. But the incidence of widowhood among Indian females is significantly higher than that among Fijian women at all age groups above 20 years. In addition to mortality factors, the higher incidence of widowhood among Indian females at all ages could be explained in terms of the rigid social customs prohibiting remarriage of widows.

**Table 37. Percentage of widowed persons aged 15 years and over by age group, sex and ethnic origin: 1986 census**

Age group	All ethnic groups			Fijians			Indians			Others		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	0.06	0.02	0.10	0.08	0.02	0.14	0.05	0.02	0.07	0.05	0.10	0.00
20-24	0.21	0.07	0.35	0.17	0.05	0.28	0.25	0.09	0.40	0.22	0.00	0.45
25-29	0.44	0.15	0.72	0.32	0.12	0.54	0.52	0.18	0.86	0.51	0.12	0.91
30-34	0.82	0.28	1.36	0.64	0.30	0.98	0.95	0.24	1.67	0.84	0.45	1.26
35-39	1.73	0.39	3.09	1.38	0.48	2.29	2.10	0.29	3.92	1.13	0.59	1.71
40-44	3.11	0.64	5.63	2.17	0.79	3.57	3.96	0.49	7.47	2.69	0.88	4.82
45-49	5.89	1.29	10.53	4.44	1.49	9.43	7.46	1.06	13.81	4.54	1.49	7.74
50-54	10.05	2.46	17.87	8.21	2.68	13.90	12.31	2.22	22.47	7.71	2.52	14.19
55-59	14.77	4.24	25.84	13.63	4.71	22.88	16.61	3.75	30.01	10.79	4.01	19.18
60-64	21.36	7.92	35.60	19.90	8.70	31.79	24.10	7.12	41.39	16.34	6.65	29.31
65+	37.81	18.34	57.17	38.25	19.04	56.61	38.38	12.88	59.88	31.27	16.69	46.12
All ages 15+	2.79	1.00	4.62	2.82	1.19	4.49	2.76	0.80	4.76	2.73	1.24	4.36

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. I, *General Tables*.

The 1986 census also showed that among all persons aged 15 years and over, the incidence of divorce or separation (1.08 per cent) was very much lower than the incidence of widowhood (2.79 per cent), and the incidence of divorce/separation, like that of widowhood, was relatively higher among females (1.46 per cent) than among males (0.71 per cent). The proportions divorced/separated also varied across age groups for both males and females (table 38).

It is also evident from table 38 that Fijian males and females experienced a higher incidence of divorce/separation than their Indian counterparts at practically all ages. This differential was more marked for males at age 35 and above and for females at age 45 and above.

#### 4. Household composition

As part of the 1986 census, information was collected in respect of households in conventional dwellings. The census identified four types of households in the country; one-person households; nuclear households consisting of head, spouse and unmarried children; extended households, including the nuclear family and all others related by blood or through marriage; and composite households, which are extended

households but also include any unrelated household member.

According to the 1986 census, there were a total of 124,098 households in the country, of which 60,962, or 49.1 per cent, were extended households and another 56,448, or 45.5 per cent, nuclear households. The number of one-person households (3,832) was slightly higher than that of composite households (2,856). The pattern of distribution of households in the urban and rural areas was similar to the national pattern, although the proportions of extended and nuclear households were higher in rural compared with urban areas, while the percentage of one-person and composite households was higher in urban than in rural areas (table 39).

The 1986 census also revealed that the distribution pattern of household types varied between the main ethnic groups in the country. While the majority of Indian households (55.1 per cent) were nuclear, the majority of households among indigenous Fijians (58.9 per cent) and "other" ethnic groups (50.3 per cent) were extended households. The second largest proportion of Indian households were the extended type, while that of native Fijians and "other" ethnic groups was nuclear. The proportion of one-person and composite households was

**Table 38. Percentage of divorced or separated persons aged 15 years and over by age group, sex and ethnic origin: 1986 census**

Age group	All ethnic groups			Fijians			Indians			Others		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	0.20	0.04	0.37	0.23	0.05	0.43	0.17	0.03	0.32	0.18	0.05	0.33
20-24	1.17	0.45	1.87	1.39	0.40	2.37	0.97	0.47	1.47	1.11	0.68	1.56
25-29	2.11	1.32	2.92	2.39	1.50	3.31	1.85	2.55	2.55	2.55	1.56	3.57
30-34	2.33	1.53	3.13	2.71	1.95	3.46	2.00	2.89	2.89	2.69	2.69	2.92
35-39	2.45	1.65	3.27	2.85	2.11	3.60	1.96	2.88	2.88	3.88	3.88	4.33
40-44	2.33	1.49	3.19	2.59	1.92	3.27	1.94	2.97	2.97	3.85	3.85	4.59
45-49	2.16	1.48	2.84	2.68	1.97	3.40	1.42	2.12	2.12	4.15	4.15	4.46
50-54	2.31	1.70	2.94	2.92	2.43	3.42	1.47	2.29	2.29	3.89	3.89	4.20
55-59	2.49	2.08	2.92	2.98	2.71	3.27	1.62	2.24	2.24	4.70	4.70	5.15
60-64	2.45	2.37	2.53	2.89	2.87	2.92	1.56	1.99	1.99	4.30	4.30	2.87
65+	2.24	2.22	2.26	2.57	2.62	2.52	1.44	1.59	1.59	4.11	4.11	3.81
All ages 15+	1.08	0.71	1.46	1.24	0.87	1.63	0.87	1.26	1.26	1.67	1.67	1.88

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 39. Numerical and percentage distribution of households in conventional dwellings by type and urban/rural residence: 1986 census**

Type of household	Fiji		Urban		Rural	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
One-person	3 832	3.1	1 907	3.9	1 925	2.6
Nuclear	56 448	45.5	21 928	44.2	34 520	46.3
Extended	60 962	49.1	24 201	48.8	36 761	49.3
Composite	2 856	2.3	1 543	3.1	1 313	1.8
Total	124 098	100.0	49 579	100.0	74 519	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. 6, *Housing and Services*.

considerably higher among “other” ethnic groups compared with indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians (table 40).

According to the 1986 census, the average size of all households living in conventional dwellings for the country as a whole was 5.71 persons, the average size in rural areas (5.85) being significantly higher than in urban areas (5.50). The average household size also varied according to ethnic group as well as type of household. On the average, the indigenous Fijian household had more members (6.14 persons) than an Indian household (5.43) and “other” households (5.11 persons).

As is to be expected, the average household size varied according to the type of household. For the country as a whole, the average size was highest (7.05 persons) in extended households, followed by composite households (6.82) and nuclear households (4.53 persons). But among indigenous Fijians households, the largest number of members (7.94 persons) was

recorded in respect of composite households, followed by extended households (7.24). The Fijian composite household in rural areas had on an average 8.13 persons, the largest number among all types of households in both urban and rural areas (table 41).

## 5. Household headship

According to the data from the 1986 census (table 42), only about 12 per cent of all household heads in the country were females, and this proportion varied between the various ethnic groups, being highest (14.1 per cent) among “other”, followed by Fijians (13.6 per cent) and Indians (11.2 per cent).

An analysis of the household heads by age group and residence indicates that in 1986, the largest proportion of male (60.9 per cent) as well as female (44.6 per cent) household heads residing in urban areas were aged 25-44 years, and this pattern was true among male and female ethnic Fijians and male Indian

**Table 40. Numerical and percentage distribution of households in conventional dwellings by type and ethnic group: 1986 census**

Household type	All ethnic groups		Fijians		Indians		Others	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
One-person	3 832	3.1	1 844	3.4	1 506	2.3	482	6.8
Nuclear	56 448	45.5	18 633	35.2	35 236	55.1	2 579	36.3
Extended	60 962	49.1	31 222	58.9	26 170	40.9	3 570	50.3
Composite	2 856	2.3	1 301	2.5	1 089	1.7	466	6.6
Total	124 098	100.0	53 000	100.0	64 001	100.0	7 097	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*, vol. 6, *Housing and Services*.

**Table 41. Average number of persons per household living in conventional dwellings by ethnic group and urban/rural residence: 1986 census**

Household type	Fiji				Urban				Rural			
	Fijians	Indians	Other	All groups	Fijians	Indians	Other	All groups	Fijians	Indians	Other	All groups
One-person	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Nuclear	4.67	4.50	3.96	4.53	4.54	4.25	3.94	4.29	4.72	4.68	3.99	4.68
Extended	7.24	6.90	6.51	7.05	7.54	6.44	6.42	6.91	7.09	7.26	6.69	7.14
Composite	7.94	6.26	5.00	6.82	7.67	5.53	4.66	6.06	8.13	7.30	6.30	7.71
All types	6.14	5.43	5.11	5.71	6.40	5.07	4.96	5.50	6.62	5.71	5.43	5.85

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 42. Numerical and percentage distribution of household heads by sex and ethnic group: 1986 census**

Ethnic group	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Fijians	53 000	100.0	45 782	86.4	7 218	13.6
Indians	64 001	100.0	56 847	88.8	7 154	11.2
Other	7 097	100.0	6 099	85.9	998	14.1
All ethnic groups	124 098	100.0	108 728	87.6	15 370	12.4

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986: Analytical Report on the Demographic, Social and Economic Characteristics of the Population* (Suva, March 1989).

household heads. The largest proportion of female Indian household heads in urban areas were in the 45-64 age group. In the rural areas, the majority of male household heads (52.4 per cent) belonged to the 25-44 age group, while the largest proportion of rural female household heads (47.1 per cent) were in the 45-64 age group. A similar pattern was reported in respect of the ethnic Fijian and Indian household heads in rural areas in 1986 (table 43).

## 6. Domestic violence

The Government of Fiji is concerned about the increasing incidence of violence in the country and the complex of factors that contribute to this situation. While the collection, compilation and publication of statistics on violence against women have much room for improvement, the several special efforts made so far clearly indicate a significant increase in violence committed against women and children since the last quarter of the 1980s.

The available data also do not give an adequate picture of violence of all forms taking place in a household setting, since domestic violence is undifferentiated from other forms of assault. Further, domestic violence is not fully reported to the authorities owing either to fear or pressure from family members to have the matter settled amicably.

Nevertheless, the police statistics on rape, defilement and incest given in table 44 show that there has been an increase in cases of defilement in respect of the under-16 age group and a decrease in the number of rape cases reported over the years from 1987 to 1993.

In 1989-1990, a total of 134 suicides were reported, of which 53 cases, or 39.6 per cent, were among males and 81 cases, or 60.4 per cent, among females. The vast majority of suicides (116 cases, or 86.6 per cent of the total) occurred among Indians, and Indian females accounted for about 81 per cent of

**Table 43. Percentage distribution of household heads by broad age group, sex, residence and ethnicity: 1986 census**

Age group/residence	Fijians		Indians		All ethnic groups	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Urban areas</b>						
Less than 25 years	4.0	7.0	4.9	3.7	4.5	5.3
25-44 years	58.8	50.7	62.7	39.9	60.9	44.6
45-64 years	32.5	34.6	27.7	45.3	29.8	40.1
65 years and over	4.3	7.2	4.4	10.6	4.5	9.5
Age not stated	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Rural areas</b>						
Less than 25 years	3.5	5.6	5.5	2.4	4.5	4.2
25-44 years	48.8	32.6	56.6	29.5	52.4	31.0
45-64 years	37.4	43.1	31.2	52.5	34.4	47.0
65 years and over	9.9	18.1	6.3	14.8	8.3	17.0
Age not stated	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.8
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986: Analytical Report on the Demographic, Social and Economic Characteristics of the Population* (Suva, March 1989).

**Table 44. Number of cases of rape, defilement and incest reported to the police: 1987-1993**

Type of offence	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Rape/attempted rape	80	102	71	98	82	77	48
Defilement (under 13)	17	3	6	12	11	2	4
Defilement (under 16)	40	46	75	64	42	53	73
Incest	4	4	1	1	6	4	-

Source: Fiji Police Force.

suicides among all women and 49 per cent in the total population. Among indigenous Fijians,

women accounted for about 79 per cent of the total 14 reported cases of suicides (table 45).

**Table 45. Numerical and percentage distribution of reported cases of suicide by ethnic group and sex: 1989-1990**

Ethnic group	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Fijians	14	10.4	3	5.7	11	13.6
Indians	116	86.6	50	94.3	66	81.5
Other	4	3.0	-	-	4	4.9
All ethnic groups	134	100.0	53	100.0	81	100.0

Source: Fiji Police Force.

## E. WOMEN IN ECONOMIC LIFE

### 1. Labour-force participation

Although the number of females in the working ages 15 years and over is almost equal to that of males, the number of females who are economically active, or in the labour force, has always been very much lower than that of males (see annex table E.1). According to the 1976 census data, the proportion of females aged 15 years and over who were economically active (17.1 per cent) was nearly one fifth the corresponding rate for males (84.1 per cent). By 1986, the proportion of economically active females, or female labour-force participation rate, had increased to 23.3 per cent; yet this rate was almost one fourth the rate of 85.4 per cent recorded in respect of males in that year (table 46).

The considerably lower labour-force participation rate reported for females is largely due to the fact that census definitions of economic activity have not adequately recognized women's economic contribution in the informal sectors, particularly in subsistence agriculture and in the handicraft subsector. It is also generally admitted that insufficient encouragement has been given to women to engage themselves actively in productive work.

The labour-force participation rates also differ from one age group to another for both males and females. It will be noted from table 47 and figure 3 that labour-force participation rates increase with increasing age until the peak ages of participation, thereafter declining. The participation rates reach a peak at ages 30-39 for males and 20-24 for females.

**Table 46. Percentage distribution of persons aged 15 years and over by economic activity status and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Activity status	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Economically active	50.8	84.1	17.1	54.6	85.4	23.3
Employed	47.4	79.5	14.9	50.5	80.8	19.8
Unemployed	3.4	4.6	2.2	4.1	4.6	3.5
Not economically active	48.7	15.3	82.4	44.7	13.9	75.9
Activity not stated	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

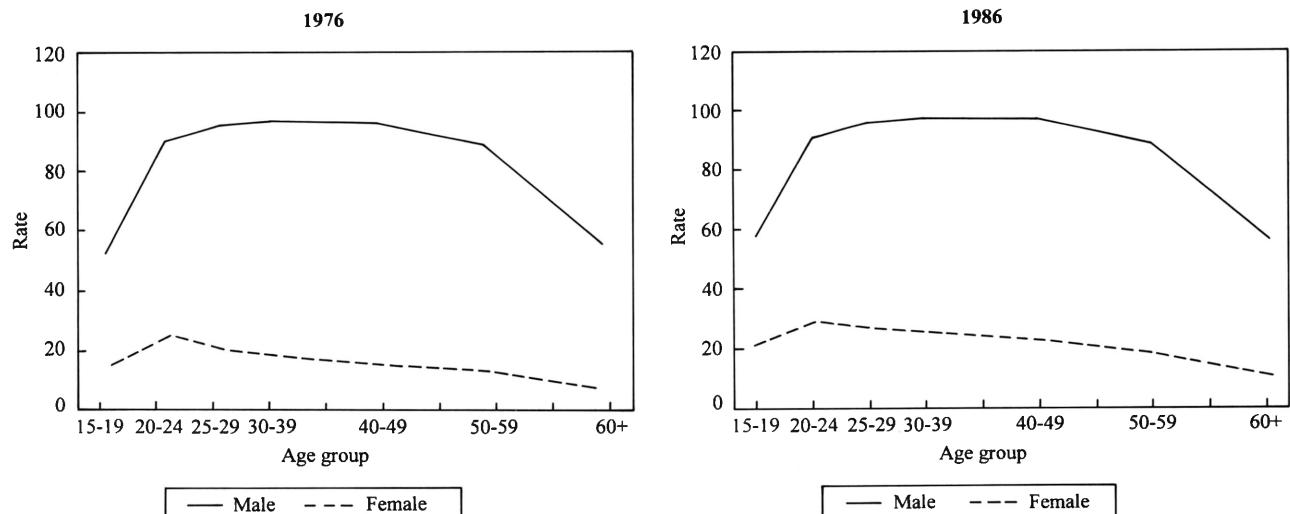
Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 47. Labour-force participation rates by age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	36.1	56.8	15.1	39.8	57.9	21.4
20-24	57.1	91.3	24.3	59.9	91.0	29.1
25-29	57.1	96.3	19.8	61.4	96.0	26.2
30-39	57.5	97.3	17.6	61.7	97.4	25.9
40-49	56.9	96.4	15.6	59.9	96.8	22.4
50-59	52.3	89.1	12.7	54.0	88.4	18.1
60+	33.6	58.8	7.3	33.8	57.1	10.2
All age groups	50.8	84.1	17.1	54.6	85.6	23.3

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Figure 3. Labour-force participation rates by age and sex: 1976 and 1986**



Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

The decline after reaching the peak is fairly gradual for both males and females; but the rates for females are considerably lower than the male rates at all age groups (see also annex table E.2)

It is also clear from table 47 that while the labour-force participation rates of both males and females increased between 1976 and 1986, the increase in the rates for females at all ages was more marked compared with those for males. In fact, at older ages, 50 years and over, the males rates declined during this 10-year period, while corresponding female rates recorded very significant increases.

There are also significant differences in the labour-force participation rates of both males and females between urban and rural areas. The overall participation rates of males are higher in rural areas (87.9 per cent) than in urban areas (81.5 per cent), while the overall urban female rate (30.6 per cent) is more than 12 percentage points higher than the 18.3 per cent for rural females. The urban participation rates are also higher than the corresponding rural rates at all ages except at ages 60 and over for both males and females (table 48), when formal sector employees retire and the opportunities of gainful employment for elderly persons are not easily available.

**Table 48. Labour-force participation rates by age, sex and residence: 1986 census**

Age group	Urban area			Rural area		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	35.1	45.3	25.1	42.7	65.5	19.1
20-24	62.6	87.0	39.7	58.1	93.6	21.5
25-29	64.8	94.7	36.5	58.8	96.8	18.2
30-39	65.7	96.8	35.2	58.7	97.8	18.7
40-49	62.4	95.9	29.1	58.2	97.3	17.9
50-59	51.5	82.6	19.6	55.4	91.7	17.6
60+	22.5	39.1	7.1	39.3	65.2	11.8
All age groups	55.8	81.5	30.6	53.8	87.9	18.3

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

According to the 1986 census data (table 49 and annex table E.3), the labour-force participation rate of Indian males (86.2 per cent) was slightly higher than that for Fijian males (85.5 per cent), but the participation rate of Fijian females (27.8 per cent) was nearly 10 percentage points higher than that for Indian females (17.9 per cent). The aggregate labour-force participation rates for "other ethnic groups" indicate that the rate for males (77.7 per cent) was considerably lower than the rates for Indian and Fijian males, and the rate for females (35.9 per cent) was considerably higher than those for their Indian and Fijian counterparts.

Since 1986, the labour-force participation rates for both males and females are reported to have increased, but this increase was more marked in the case of females than males. According to the 1989/90 Household Economic Activity Survey, the labour-force participation rate for males (87 per cent) was about 1.5 percentage points higher than the 85.4 per cent reported by the 1986 census, and the 1989/90 rate for females of 55 per cent was about 22 percentage points higher than, or almost double, the 1986 rate of 23.3 per cent.

The dramatic increase in the female labour-force participation rate noted above could partly be explained in terms of better coverage of women's work in the 1989/90 Survey. But the most important factor appears to be the overall increase in the participation of women in the formal sectors of the economy throughout

the 1980s, owing in large measure to government policies encouraging the establishment of tax-free manufacturing zones and a growth in the service sector. Both created a demand for a larger proportion of women's labour in the lower wage-earning occupational categories. Additionally, the enlightened recruitment policies of some large employers also contributed to the increased participation of women in the labour market. Many of the enlightened employment conditions resulted from concerted negotiations of workers' unions, and this was well illustrated by the efforts of the Fiji Bankers Employees' Union, which resulted in the provision of child day-care centres, equal opportunity for the promotion, further training for women and equal pay for equal work.

## 2. Employed persons

### (a) Nature of work

According to the census, the economically active population or labour force was defined to include the employed as well as the unemployed persons. The 1986 census defined an employed person as one who during the week preceding the census worked or was engaged in any activity concerned with providing the necessities of life for the person or the person's family or household. For the purposes of the census, those who worked during the reference week were categorized into two groups: those who worked mainly for money; and those who provided for themselves or for their families in other ways than by working

**Table 49. Percentage distribution of population aged 15 years and over by economic activity status, ethnic origin and sex: 1986 census**

Activity status	Fijians			Indians			Others		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Economically active	56.9	85.5	27.8	52.1	86.2	17.9	57.8	77.7	35.9
Employed	52.5	80.7	24.0	48.2	81.7	14.5	54.0	73.2	32.8
Unemployed	4.4	4.8	3.7	3.0	4.5	3.4	3.8	4.5	3.1
Not economically active	42.4	13.7	71.5	47.2	13.2	81.3	41.2	21.2	63.3
Status not stated	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.8	1.0	1.1	0.8
All statuses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

for cash. Thus, a person who worked mainly for cash, either in a paid job or on his or her own account, making, growing or selling things for money, was considered to have performed cash work. Those persons who performed a variety of tasks in growing or gathering produce or fishing to feed their families, but not mainly working to sell produce for cash, were considered to perform other work.

The numerical and percentage distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by nature of work performed during the reference week, and by sex and ethnic origin, is shown in table 50.

It will be noted from table 50 that 82.6 per cent of all employed males and 81.3 per cent of employed females in the country were engaged in work mainly for cash, but these proportions varied among the major ethnic groups in the country. The proportion of employed males and females working mainly for cash was highest among Indians and lowest among the Fijians. Among Indians, a significantly higher proportion of males (95.2 per cent) than females (91.5 per cent) worked for cash, but among Fijians and "other" ethnic

groups a higher proportion of females than males were working mainly for cash.

### (b) Industrial attachment

The numerical distribution of the 1976 and 1986 employed population aged 15 years and over by major industrial sector and sex is given in annex table E.4 and the percentage distribution is shown in table 51.

It is evident from table 51 that in 1976, as well as in 1986, the largest proportion of employed males was engaged in the major industrial group of agriculture, forestry and fishing, followed by the service sector, while among employed females the largest proportion was concentrated in the community and social services sector, and the second largest proportion in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industrial sector. The proportion among women working in the manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and finance, insurance and business sectors recorded a significant increase between 1976 and 1986, with a concomitant decline in the female proportions employed in the community and social services sector. In 1986, the proportions of employed females engaged in all these

**Table 50. Employed persons aged 15 years and over classified by type of work performed, ethnic origin and sex: 1986 census**

Ethnicity/sex	Cash work		Other work		All work	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Fijians</b>						
Both sexes	72 922	69.3	32 322	30.7	105 244	100.0
Male	55 305	67.9	26 104	32.1	81 409	100.0
Female	17 617	73.6	6 218	26.1	23 835	100.0
<b>Indians</b>						
Both sexes	100 135	95.5	4 711	4.5	104 846	100.0
Male	85 667	96.2	3 369	3.8	89 036	100.0
Female	14 468	91.5	1 342	8.5	15 810	100.0
<b>Other</b>						
Both sexes	10 567	82.0	2 314	18.0	12 881	100.0
Male	7 374	80.6	1 776	19.4	9 150	100.0
Female	3 193	85.6	538	14.4	3 731	100.0
<b>Total</b>						
Both sexes	183 624	82.4	39 347	17.6	222 971	100.0
Male	148 346	82.6	31 249	17.4	179 595	100.0
Female	35 278	81.3	8 098	18.7	43 376	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 51. Percentage distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by major industrial sector and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Major industrial sector	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	45.7	49.5	25.8	47.7	52.4	28.1
Mining, quarrying	1.0	1.1	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.2
Manufacturing	7.8	8.0	6.6	8.1	7.6	10.2
Electricity, gas and water	1.0	1.1	0.2	1.0	1.1	0.2
Construction	6.7	7.8	0.6	5.3	6.4	0.5
Wholesale and retail trade, hotels etc.	10.3	9.1	16.7	11.7	9.8	19.2
Transport, communication, storage	5.4	6.0	2.2	5.9	6.7	2.5
Finance, insurance, business	2.1	1.7	3.9	2.7	2.3	4.5
Community and social services	17.3	13.3	39.0	16.4	12.4	33.3
Industry not stated	2.8	2.4	4.7	0.7	0.5	1.3
All industries	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

four sectors were higher than the corresponding proportions among employed males.

### (c) Occupational structure

The numerical distribution of the employed persons by occupation or the kind of work performed during the reference week is given in annex table E.5, and the percentage distribution is shown in table 52. It will be noted that, between 1976 and 1986, there was an appreciable increase in the number of women

engaged in all categories of occupations. In particular, the number of women employed as sales workers had more than doubled, while those engaged as production workers recorded an almost threefold increase, owing largely to increased employment in business establishments and in manufacturing.

However, in terms of absolute and relative distribution, the 1986 census data showed that the largest concentration of employed females was in the major occupational category of

**Table 52. Percentage distribution of the employed population aged 15 years and over by major occupational group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Major occupational group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Professional, technical and related	7.5	5.6	18.0	8.0	6.0	16.2
Administrative, managerial workers	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.2	1.4	0.6
Clerical and related workers	6.8	4.9	17.2	7.0	4.6	16.9
Sales workers	5.5	5.0	7.9	6.7	5.9	10.0
Service workers	6.8	4.5	19.3	6.9	4.4	17.2
Agricultural and forestry workers and fishermen	45.5	49.3	24.9	47.5	52.3	27.7
Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers	23.0	26.1	6.4	22.0	24.7	10.5
Occupation not stated	3.9	3.5	5.8	0.7	0.7	0.9
All occupations	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

agricultural and forestry workers and fishermen, followed by service workers, clerical and related workers and professional, technical and related workers. In 1986, women constituted nearly 40 per cent of all persons engaged as professional, technical and related workers and approximately 48 per cent of all persons engaged as clerical and related workers and service workers (annex table E.5). The substantial proportion of women in professional and technical occupations is explained by the predominance of women as nurses and teachers; in the clerical and related occupations, most stenographers and receptionists are females. Although the number of female administrative and managerial workers almost doubled, from 127 in 1976 to 251 in 1986, women constituted only 9.0 per cent of all persons in this occupational category in 1986. In general, women predominate in occupations at the lower end of wage or salary-earning and are largely excluded from higher-level decision-making positions.

#### (d) Employment status

The censuses have classified employed persons in terms of their employment status into three broad categories:

(a) Own-account workers or self-employed persons who run their own business or enterprise and do not receive a wage or salary but receive income through the sale of their pro-

ducts or services. This broad category also includes casual workers and everyone who is paid on a contract, task or piecework basis; this kind of arrangement is common in rural areas, as for example, cane-cutting gangs or fencing on contract, and in urban areas, as for example grass-cutters, casual labourers and stevedores;

(b) Employees who are employed and are paid wages or salaries regularly in cash. A wage earner is paid in cash on an hourly, daily or weekly basis. A salary earner has his or her pay assessed on an annual basis but paid monthly or half-monthly. The census has made a distinction between government or public employees and private employees;

(c) Unpaid family workers who work in the family business or farm and members of the family who are provided with food and lodging and share in the benefits of any profits which arise from the joint family work but do not receive cash on a regular basis.

The numerical distribution of employed persons by employment status and sex as reported in the 1976 and 1986 censuses is shown in annex table E.6, while their percentage distribution is given in table 53. It will be noted that the majority of employed males as well as employed females were employees receiving regular wages or salaries and that,

**Table 53. Percentage distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by employment status and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Employment status	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Own-account workers <sup>a</sup>	34.9	37.7	19.8	36.3	40.5	19.1
Employees	53.8	51.8	64.6	45.6	41.8	61.4
Public	18.4	17.5	22.9	17.1	15.7	22.4
Private	35.4	34.3	41.7	28.5	26.0	39.0
Unpaid family workers	8.1	7.7	10.6	17.6	17.4	18.5
Status not stated	3.1	2.8	5.0	0.5	0.3	1.0
All statuses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Parliament of Fiji. *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

<sup>a</sup> Including village workers or casual workers and everyone paid on the basis of a contract, task or piecework.

in both 1976 and 1986, the proportionate share of employees in the total number of employed persons was significantly higher among females than among males. In 1986, about 61 per cent of all employed females were categorized as employees, the corresponding proportion among males being about 42 per cent.

It will also be noted from table 53 and annex table E.6 that although the number of male as well as female employees had increased substantially between 1976 and 1986, their relative share in the total number of employed persons declined significantly during this decade. This is largely because of the considerable increase in the share of unpaid family workers; the proportionate share of male unpaid family workers increased from 7.7 to 17.4 per cent and that for females from 10.6 to 18.5 per cent. In the case of males, there was also a significant increase in the category of own-account workers, from 37.7 to 40.5 per cent.

The distribution pattern of employment status also varies considerably between urban and rural areas. According to the 1986 census (table 54 and annex table C.7), in the urban areas the vast majority of employed males (74.8 per cent) and employed females (85.9 per cent) work as paid employees and the second largest proportion as own-account workers (20.1 per cent among males and 10.1 per cent among females). In the rural areas, the largest

proportion among employed males was reported to be own-account workers (51.7 per cent) and the second largest proportion (24.4 per cent) unpaid family workers. Among employed rural females, the largest concentration (35.4 per cent) was in the category of unpaid family workers, followed by employees (34.4 per cent). Also in the rural areas, a higher proportion among employed females compared with employed males was reported as paid employees and unpaid family workers. Further, the number as well as proportion of own-account workers among both males and females was higher in rural than in urban areas, reflecting the greater opportunities for self-employment in rural areas.

#### *(e) Formal sector employment*

As noted earlier, the participation of women in the formal economy increased overall through the 1980s, largely owing to the establishment of tax-free manufacturing zones, the growth of the service sector and enlightened recruitment policies. Consequently, the proportionate share of women in total paid employment increased from 18.9 per cent in 1976 to 26.2 per cent in 1986 (annex table E.6). Employment data also indicate that females accounted for 29 per cent of the 171,572 paid employees and self-employed persons in 1992, and for 30.5 per cent of all paid employees in 1993, and that a third of all female paid employees were in the manufacturing sector.

**Table 54. Percentage distribution of employed persons by employment status, sex and urban/rural residence: 1986 census**

Employment status	Urban area			Rural area		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Own-account workers <sup>a</sup>	17.5	20.1	10.1	48.3	51.7	29.1
Employees	77.7	74.8	85.9	25.2	23.6	34.4
Public	30.0	30.0	30.2	8.9	8.0	13.7
Private	47.7	44.8	55.7	16.3	15.6	20.7
Unpaid family workers	4.2	4.6	3.2	26.1	24.4	35.4
Status not stated	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.3	1.1
All statuses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

<sup>a</sup> Including village workers or casual workers and everyone paid on the basis of a contract, task or piecework.

According to the 1989 Annual Employment Survey, a higher proportion among females than among males was employed in partnerships, private companies, and non-profit organizations, while males were more likely to be employed in public organizations, public companies, statutory bodies and central and local government (table 55).

The 1989 Survey also showed that females working in partnerships constituted a higher proportion of waged employees than males, and their proportion in salaried employment was lower than that of males in all types of organizations. The proportion of women in salaried employment was highest (49.6 per cent) in non-governmental organizations and lowest (18.5 per cent) in local governments (table 55).

According to the 1989 Survey, the average salary was estimated at F\$ 8,055 per annum and this represented an increase of F\$ 478 over the 1985 average salary. The highest salaries were paid by public companies and public statutory bodies in which a higher proportion of males than females were employed, while the lowest salaries were paid by cooperatives, non-governmental organizations and partnerships, in which more females than males were employed. The average salary of a female employee was estimated to be about 88 per cent of the average salary of a male

employee. While females earned on the average less than males in all types of organizations, the greatest gender equity was reported in respect of the central government and the least in public companies.

A distribution of the salaried employees in 1985, 1989 and 1993 by salary group or level is given in table 56. It will be noted that while there are more females than males at the two lowest salary levels, males outnumber females in the higher salary brackets, and this gender gap is more pronounced at the middle and highest grades. In 1985, there were 16 times more males than females in the highest salary group (F\$ 15,000 and over) and although the gender gap at this level has narrowed considerably over the years, in 1993, there were 461 males for every 100 females.

#### *(f) Informal sector employment*

The informal sector, which covers economic activities carried out by households, constitutes a significant proportion of all economic activities in the country, particularly in the agricultural and related areas and in manufacturing, and to a lesser extent in professional and community services. The informal sector is characterized by a high proportion of working proprietors or self-employed persons; nearly 63 per cent of those working in the informal sector

**Table 55. Percentage distribution of formal sector employees by type of organization and sex, and percentage female in total waged and salaried employees: 1989**

Type of organization	Percentage in each organization		Percentage female in total paid employees		
	Male	Female	Total	Waged	Salaried
Individual	6.1	6.6	30.9	30.6	32.1
Partnership	3.4	9.2	52.9	57.1	31.7
Cooperative	0.4	0.4	26.7	25.2	31.0
Private limited company	30.7	35.7	32.6	33.8	28.6
Public limited company	9.9	6.2	20.8	18.6	32.6
Statutory body	5.3	2.7	17.2	6.1	24.0
Non-governmental organization	1.4	3.4	49.2	48.3	49.6
Central government	37.6	29.9	24.9	7.3	32.6
Local government	1.4	0.3	7.4	1.9	18.5
Other	3.8	5.7	38.4	33.4	46.3
All types	100.0	100.0	29.3	27.2	32.3

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Annual Employment Survey, 1989*.

**Table 56. Distribution of salaried employees by salary group and sex: 1985, 1989 and 1993**

Salary group	1985			1989			1993		
	Male	Female	Males/ 100 females	Male	Female	Males/ 100 females	Male	Female	Males/ 100 females
<1 500	508	663	77	473	312	152	95	99	96
1 500-1 999	285	215	133	180	151	119	86	131	66
2 000-3 499	1 310	798	164	1 731	592	292	590	549	107
3 500-4 999	3 513	1 459	241	3 740	1 255	298	2 061	536	385
5 000-7 499	6 534	5 332	123	7 880	5 589	141	5 901	2 723	217
7 500-9 999	3 839	2 213	173	4 010	2 188	183	5 875	4 922	119
10 000-14 999	3 626	729	497	3 687	1 141	323	6 292	3 575	176
15 000+	1 933	118	1 638	2 304	257	896	5 646	1 225	461
Total	21 548	11 427	189	24 105	11 485	210	26 546	13 760	193

Source: Bureau of Statistics.

were reported to be self-employed according to the 1989/90 Household Economic Activity Survey, which also revealed that 15 per cent of females and 22 per cent of males in this sector were in unpaid employment.

The 1989/90 Survey also showed (table 57) that 65.7 per cent of all unpaid workers were engaged on a casual basis, the proportion among women (77.8 per cent) and children (67.4 per cent) being considerably higher than the 60.8 per cent reported for men. Among all paid employees in the informal sector, nearly 60 per cent were engaged on a casual basis and the proportion was again higher among women (65.0 per cent) compared with men (59.7 per cent).

As noted earlier, women play an important role in agriculture, forestry and fishing, particu-

larly in the subsistence economy. The 1989/90 Household Economic Activity Survey showed that females constituted 22 per cent of persons engaged in agriculture and forestry and 59 per cent of those engaged in subsistence fishing. The Survey also revealed that a higher percentage among females than males were working as self-employed persons in all three subsectors, and that a higher proportion among males than among females were engaged as paid workers in all three subsectors. While the proportion of unpaid family workers in all three subsectors combined was higher among males (21.2 per cent) than among females (17.5 per cent), in the forestry subsector the proportion of unpaid family workers among females was significantly higher than among males (table 58). According to the 1989/90 Household Economic Activity Survey, the income of paid workers in subsistence agriculture, forestry and fishing was

**Table 57. Percentage distribution of unpaid workers and paid employees in the informal sector by basis of employment and sex: 1989/90**

Basis of employment	Unpaid workers				Paid employees			
	Men	Women	Children	Total	Men	Women	Children	Total
Regular	16.3	19.8	32.6	17.8	7.8	15.9	80.9	11.0
Casual	60.8	77.8	67.4	65.7	59.7	65.0	13.2	59.9
Exchange	22.8	2.4	0.0	16.4	—	—	—	—
On hire	—	—	—	—	32.5	19.1	6.0	29.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Household Economic Activity Survey, 1989/90*.

**Table 58. Percentage distribution of persons employed in the informal agricultural sector by employment status and sex: 1989/90**

Employment status	Male workers				Female workers			
	Agri-culture	Forestry	Fishing	Total	Agri-culture	Forestry	Fishing	Total
Self-employed	52.3	75.6	74.1	57.3	61.4	75.9	87.3	68.5
Unpaid	24.3	9.4	12.1	21.2	18.2	20.8	12.2	17.5
Paid	23.4	15.0	13.8	21.5	20.3	3.3	0.6	14.0
All statuses	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Household Economic Activity Survey, 1989/90*.

F\$ 335 per month; the average income of females, F\$ 229, was about 64 per cent of the F\$ 358 earned by males. Although the average income of females was highest in the agriculture subsector, it was about 61 per cent of the income a male earned. In the fishing subsector, the average income of males, F\$ 558, was about 23 times more than the F\$ 24 earned by women (table 59).

**Table 59. Average income of paid workers in the informal agricultural sector by subsector and sex: 1989/90**

Subsector	Both sexes	(Fijian dollars)	
		Male	Female
Agriculture	359	389	236
Forestry	92	94	58
Fishing	529	558	24
All subsectors	335	358	229

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Household Economic Activity Survey, 1989/90*.

The 1991 census of agriculture revealed that women constituted only 5 per cent of all farmers in the country and 19 per cent of the labourers working on farms. The census also showed that among those workers who were remunerated for their work, 89 per cent were males and 11 per cent were females, and that 35 per cent of the females who were remunerated were paid in kind, the corresponding proportion for males being 25 per cent.

In the informal manufacturing sector, women comprised 92 per cent of all employees.

The 1989/90 Household Economic Activity Survey showed that 93 per cent of all women working in the informal manufacturing sector were engaged in the manufacture of textiles, clothing and leather. Of a total of 11,026 women reported as being employed in the informal manufacturing sector, 9,390, or 85.2 per cent, were self-employed, 1,278, or 11.6 per cent, unpaid workers and 358, or 3.2 per cent, paid workers (table 60).

### 3. Unemployed persons

As noted earlier, the economically active population or the labour force comprises both the employed and the unemployed. The censuses defined "unemployed" as those persons who during the reference period did not do any work but wanted to work and were actively looking for work.

Data from the censuses indicate that the total number of persons reported as unemployed in the country had increased by about 53 per cent from 11,820 in 1976 to 18,189 in 1986, and that while the number of unemployed males increased by about 28 per cent from 8,052 to 10,334, the number of unemployed females more than doubled, from 3,768 to 7,855, during this 10-year period (annex table E.1). Consequently, unemployed females as a proportion of all persons reported as unemployed increased from 32 per cent in 1976 to 43 per cent in 1986. The unemployment rate (or unemployed as percentage of total economically active) had increased from 12.8 to 15.3 per cent for females, while it had remained more or less

**Table 60. Numerical and percentage distribution of females employed in the informal manufacturing sector by type of manufacturing and employment status: 1989/90**

Type of manufacturing	Self-employed		Unpaid worker		Paid worker		All statuses	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Textile/clothing/leather	8 834	94.1	1 113	87.1	349	97.5	10 296	93.4
Tapa cloth	37	0.4	3	0.2	—	—	40	0.3
Weaving/mat-making	2 349	25.0	346	27.1	292	81.6	2 987	27.1
Tailoring	4 635	49.4	460	36.0	17	4.7	5 112	46.4
Knitting/needle work/tapestry	1 798	19.1	301	23.6	40	11.2	2 139	19.4
Other	15	0.2	3	0.2	—	—	18	0.2
Food processing	501	5.3	162	12.7	9	2.5	672	6.1
Wooden articles	46	0.5	3	0.2	—	—	49	0.4
Other manufacturing	9	0.1	—	—	—	—	9	0.1
Total	9 390	100.0	1 278	100.0	358	100.0	11 026	100.0

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Household Economic Activity Survey, 1989/90*.

constant at 5.5 per cent for males during the period 1976-1986 (table 61).

It must, however, be noted that the censuses applied a strict definition of "unemployed", that is, those without employment who actively looked for work during the reference period of the census. Others who did not search for work would have been excluded from the category of "unemployed". Since wage-earning

opportunities were known to be scarce during this period, it can be assumed that a considerable additional number of persons in the working ages wanted work but did not look for it during the reference period. Further, in accordance with Fijian cultural patterns, unemployed Fijians (who are "resting") typically do not search for work but rather make themselves available for work when job offers are brought to them by their social network. Such "discour-

**Table 61. Distribution of unemployed persons by urban-rural residence and sex and unemployment rate: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Residence-sex	1976 census			1986 census		
	Economic-ally active population	Un-employed population	Un-employment rate (%)	Economic-ally active population	Un-employed population	Un-employment rate (%)
<b>Fiji</b>						
Both sexes	175 785	11 820	6.7	241 160	18 189	7.5
Male	146 315	8 052	5.5	189 929	10 334	5.4
Female	29 470	3 768	12.8	51 231	7 855	15.3
<b>Urban areas</b>						
Both sexes	71 422	7 859	11.0	98 293	11 687	11.9
Male	55 048	5 489	10.0	70 905	7 050	9.9
Female	16 374	2 370	14.5	27 388	4 637	16.9
<b>Rural areas</b>						
Both sexes	104 363	3 961	3.8	142 867	6 502	4.6
Male	91 267	2 563	2.8	119 024	3 284	2.8
Female	13 096	1 398	10.7	23 843	3 218	13.5

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

aged workers" and "resting" Fijians would have been recorded as "economically inactive" rather than as "unemployed" at the censuses.

Although the unemployment rate was relatively low for the country as a whole, it was much higher in urban areas, where more than 11.0 per cent of the urban labour force was reported as unemployed in 1976 and 1986. In both years, the female unemployment rates were considerably higher than the male rates in urban and rural areas, and this gender gap was more marked in rural areas, where the female unemployment rate was nearly four times the male rate in 1976, and nearly five times the male rate in 1986 (table 61).

The unemployment rates for males and females also vary between various ethnic groups in the country. According to the 1986 census data (see table 62 and annex table E.3), the

female unemployment rate was highest (18.9 per cent) for Indians, followed by Fijians (13.8 per cent) and "others" (8.6 per cent), whereas the male unemployment rate of "other" ethnic groups (5.7 per cent) was slightly higher than for Fijians (5.6 per cent) and Indians (5.2 per cent). Thus, in 1986, Indian males experienced the lowest and Indian females the highest unemployment rate in the country.

In Fiji, as in most other countries of the region, unemployment is a problem that greatly affects the youth. The number of unemployed among those aged 19-24 years constituted 73 per cent of all unemployed persons in 1976 and 74 per cent in 1986. It is clear from table 63 that unemployment rates for both males and females start high at the younger age groups and declines rapidly with advancing age. In 1976 as well as in 1986, females aged 15-19 years experienced the highest unemployment rate in the country, followed by females aged 20-24 years; in 1986, the unemployment rates for females at these two age groups were more than two and a half times the corresponding rates for males. These marked gender differentials highlight the fact that females experienced greater difficulties than males in finding a job.

The unemployed are relatively well-educated; in 1986, over nine-tenths of all unemployed persons aged 15-19 and 20-24 years had some secondary education and these proportions for females were significantly higher

**Table 62. Unemployment rates by ethnic group: 1986 census**

Ethnic groups	Both sexes	Male	Female
Fijians	7.6	5.6	13.8
Indians	7.6	5.2	18.9
Others	6.6	5.7	8.6
All ethnic groups	7.5	5.4	15.3

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 63. Unemployment rates by age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	21.2	16.7	38.6	24.7	17.3	45.0
20-24	9.5	8.1	14.6	14.1	10.1	26.5
25-29	4.6	4.0	7.3	5.6	4.3	10.3
30-39	2.4	2.3	2.8	2.6	2.4	3.5
40-49	1.8	1.8	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.8
50-59	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.3
60+	2.3	2.3	2.6	0.6	0.5	1.3
Age not stated	8.7	10.0	2.2	5.2	5.4	4.9
All ages	6.7	5.5	12.8	7.5	5.4	15.3

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

than for males. The percentage with secondary education was uniformly high across ethnic divisions and sex as well, although there were slight differences in the values (table 64).

#### 4. Business and credit

In Fiji, women play a relatively small but significant role in business activities. The participation of women in the economy as entrepreneurs, small moneylenders, cooperative operators and real-estate owners has increased steadily since the early 1980s. Many women have proved to be successful business managers of individual as well as cooperative enterprises. The Multicraft Programme (non-formal education) previously offered by the Ministry of Education in secondary schools helped in providing the rudiments of small business skills training. There are indications that women's business activities will expand in the coming years, but the experience today suggests the need for greater official encouragement and support through the provision of special services to women.

Although women and men have equal access to credit from the Fiji Development Bank and the commercial banks in the country, women are invariably disadvantaged on account of their social position. They are often less accustomed to visiting large organizations and are reluctant, or sometimes even fear, to enter a bank, particularly if there is no one within the bank whom they know personally and from whom they can seek advice. Additionally, they are often disadvantaged since they lack either

the collateral required to secure a loan or equity contribution. At times women have difficulties in clearly explaining the details of even excellent proposals for small business ventures. If the bank assessor generates an aura of "being very busy and impatient" and does not show sensitivity and understanding, the female applicant's perception, rightly or wrongly, is one of rejection.

In 1993, the Fiji Development Bank approved a total of 5,071 loans, of which only 577, or 11.4 per cent, were to individual women, while 3,783, or 74.6 per cent, were given to men and another 711, or 14.0 per cent, to joint borrowers. Nearly 53 per cent of the loans granted to individual women and 64 per cent of those granted to men were for agricultural purposes, while nearly 87 per cent of the joint loans were for industrial and commercial purposes (table 65). In 1994, of a total of 9,580 loans allotted to individual borrowers, 1,073, or 11.2 per cent, were given to women.

Data from the Fiji Development Bank also show that although the average value of all 5,071 loans granted in 1993 was F\$ 25,112, the average value of the 711 joint loans (F\$ 110,54) was more than four times the average value of all loans. It is also interesting to note that while women received only about 11 per cent of the total loans, the average value of the 577 loans received by women (F\$ 11,562) was significantly higher than the average value (F\$ 11,122) of the 3,783 loans given to men. The Fiji Development Bank data also revealed that the average value of loans given to

**Table 64. Percentage unemployed with some secondary education among unemployed persons aged 15-19 and 20-24 years by ethnic group and sex: 1986 census**

Ethnic group	15-19 years			20-24 years		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Fijians	90.4	88.1	92.9	92.2	90.9	94.2
Indians	90.5	89.1	92.6	88.9	88.6	89.2
Others	90.1	88.1	92.5	89.7	91.5	87.7
All groups	90.4	88.6	92.5	90.5	90.0	91.5

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table 65. Numerical and percentage distribution of loans approved by the Fiji Development Bank by purpose of loan and sex: 1993**

Purpose of loan	Male		Female		Joint		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agricultural	2 424	64.1	308	53.4	86	12.1	2 818	55.6
Fijian industry/commerce	992	26.2	188	32.6	325	45.7	1 505	29.7
Industry/commerce	343	9.1	30	5.2	293	41.2	666	13.1
New Zealand loan scheme <sup>a/</sup>	24	0.6	51	8.8	7	1.0	82	1.6
All purposes	3 783	100.0	577	100.0	711	100.0	5 071	100.0

Source: Fiji Development Bank.

<sup>a/</sup> The Government of New Zealand provides funds through its bilateral aid programme, to be given as loans to rural landless women with priority for projects to promote women's role in development. This scheme is administered by the Fiji Development Bank.

women was higher than the corresponding average value of loans granted to men in respect of all four broad purposes. Further, the average value of loans given to Fijian women for industrial and commercial purposes was nearly 35 per cent higher than those given to Fijian men for the same purpose (table 66).

A breakdown of the 577 loans granted to women by the Fiji Development Bank in 1993 by specific business sector indicates that 297, or 51.4 per cent, of these loans were for crop agriculture, while another 106, or 18.4 per cent, were for retailers. Although the number of loans given for real estate business amounted to only 39, or about 6.8 per cent of the total,

the average value of loans for this purpose (F\$ 62,772) was more than five times the average value of loans granted for all purposes. In 1993, women were also granted 46 loans for purposes of engaging in transport business, the average value of these loans amounting to F\$ 14,325 (table 67).

It is also clear from table 67 that although 336, or about 58 per cent, of the 577 loans were granted to Fijian women, the average value of the 336 loans (F\$ 11,148) was significantly lower than the average value of the 241 loans (F\$ 12,140) given to women of Indian and "other" ethnic groups. However, the average values of loans given to Fijian women in the

**Table 66. Average value of loans approved by the Fiji Development Bank by purpose of loan and sex: 1993**

(Fijian dollars)

Purpose of loan	Average value of loan granted to				Female average as percentage of male average
	Men	Women	Joint	All loans	
Agriculture	7 018	8 230	32 356	7 924	117.3
Fijian industry and commerce	10 614	14 361	46 253	18 778	135.3
Industry and commerce	42 195	43 471	207 327	114 901	103.0
New Zealand loan scheme	2 460	2 592	5 049	2 763	105.3
All purposes	11 122	11 562	110 544	25 112	104.0

Source: Fiji Development Bank.

**Table 67. Number and average value of loans approved to females by specific business area and ethnic origin: 1993**

(Average value in Fijian dollars)

Specific business sector	Fijians		Indians and others		All ethnic groups	
	Number	Average value	Number	Average value	Number	Average value
Real estate	23	76 145	16	43 549	39	62 772
Transport	42	11 858	4	40 236	46	14 325
Retailers	95	3 516	11	5 736	106	3 747
Wholesalers	35	2 604	2	5 350	37	2 752
Hotel/restaurant/saloon	11	9 570	5	14 915	16	11 241
Business/other services	10	20 481	2	3 250	12	17 609
Manufacturing/quarrying	8	1 794	6	17 783	14	8 647
Livestock/fishing	6	2 041	4	10 775	10	5 534
Crop agriculture	106	6 928	191	9 232	297	8 409
All business sectors	336	11 148	241	12 140	577	11 562

Source: Fiji Development Bank.

areas of real estate and for business/other services were higher than those given to Indian and other ethnic women.

During the three-year period 1992-1994, there was an increase in the total number of registered moneylenders in the country, from 61 in 1992 to 109 in 1994; the number of female moneylenders increased from 16 to 37 during the same period (table 68). The more than doubling in the number of female moneylenders is due in part to the increased female labour force in the garment industry; women feel more comfortable borrowing from a moneylender of their own sex.

## F. WOMEN IN PUBLIC LIFE

### 1. Women voters

Accurate information regarding the number of voters by sex is not available, as the relevant laws do not permit the identification of voters by sex. However, since women constitute nearly 50 per cent of persons in the age groups eligible to vote, it could be assumed that half the registered voters are women and that an equal proportion of those who actually vote are women. It is generally believed that more women than men register themselves as voters because women are more likely to be at home

**Table 68. Number of registered moneylenders by sex: 1992-1994**

Date	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
30 June 1992	61	100.0	45	73.8	16	26.2
31 December 1993	79	100.0	55	69.6	24	30.4
20 April 1994	109	100.0	72	66.1	37	33.9

Source: Commission of Stamp Duties.

when officials visit for the purpose of voter registration, and that more women than men take the time to go to polling stations to cast their votes.

## **2. Women parliamentarians**

During the early 1980s, Fiji women had very little share in decision-making at the national level. The 70-member House of Representatives then had only one elected woman member who belonged to the opposition party, while there was only one woman among the 34 nominated members of the upper house or Senate. Since then, women's representation in Parliament has increased somewhat.

At the 1992 general elections, there were only four woman candidates, of whom three were ethnic Fijians and one Indian. One of the three ethnic Fijian women candidates was successful, gaining 42 per cent of the votes from her constituency, and was subsequently appointed a Cabinet Minister. The other three women candidates were not successful. At the 1994 general elections, three women, all Fijians, were elected to the House of Representatives and all three were appointed to the 18-member Cabinet. One of these women cabinet ministers recently served as Fiji's first woman Acting Prime Minister.

There are three women members in the Senate today; all three are ethnic Fijians appointed by the 51-member Great Council of Chiefs. Five of the 51 members of the Great Council are women.

## **3. Women in local government**

The participation of women in decision-making at the local government level has been somewhat better than at the national level, although there has not been any significant progress through the 1980s. During the first half of the decade, no woman was elected to any of the provincial councils, which together had 70 seats. In the 16 rural district local authorities, which had a combined total of 251 members, only nine were women. Among the several town councils, only four had one woman member each.

Since 1988, the 30-member Suva municipal council had nine women councillors, although in any one year there was a maximum of only two women councillors. In the 15-member Ba municipality, there were five women members in all, but only one in any given year. The 12-member Labasa town council had the largest number of concurrently serving women councillors; there were three women councillors from 1990 to 1993. Lautoka has had six women in its 16-member council over the last 10 years, with a maximum of two women councillors in any one year. So far only two women councillors have been elected as mayors and three as deputy mayors by the nominated councillors. There is currently no woman mayor in Fiji.

Much of the difficulty in promoting women's participation in politics at the national and local levels could be attributed to a lack of awareness and confidence among the women themselves. Another factor is the entrenched cultural attitudes or values that discourage women from taking leadership positions. Although many women have in recent years offered themselves as candidates for a number of political positions, there has been reluctance on the part of political organizations and authorities to accept women as decision makers.

## **4. Women in government service**

At present, women account for 44 per cent of all government employees or public servants in the country, and this proportion varies among ethnic groups. Indian women constitute 39 per cent of all Indians in government service, the corresponding proportion for indigenous Fijian women and women belonging to "other" ethnic groups being 47 per cent. Most of the female government employees are concentrated in two ministries, Health and Education, where a majority of them are employed as nurses and teachers respectively.

Although females constitute a significantly high proportion of the country's public servants, they are largely employed at lower-level positions; 48 per cent of all lower-level jobs and only 8 per cent of upper-level jobs are held by women. However, in the Ministry of

Education, about 37 per cent of executive positions were held by women, who also accounted for 33, 42 and 58 per cent respectively of higher-, middle- and lower-level administrators.

The first appointment of a woman at the Permanent Secretary level was in 1986, when a woman was appointed as Secretary to the Cabinet. At present, there are only two women among the 25 Permanent Secretaries, and three women among the 16 Deputy Permanent Secretaries. Women currently hold the positions of Secretary to the House of Representatives, Secretary to the Senate and Director of Public Prosecutions. Women have so far not been appointed to any of the eight ambassadorial or head of consulate positions.

Women are also notable by their absence in the judiciary; both of the Puisne Judges, the Chief Registrar and all 13 Resident Magistrates are men. In 1992, only one of the 50 nationally appointed Justices of the Peace was female, while at the divisional level, 4 out of 100 Justices of the Peace were females.

In 1992, women constituted about 56 per cent of all primary schoolteachers and about 68 per cent of special teachers, while they accounted for 47 per cent of secondary schoolteachers. At the technical/vocational institutions and teacher training colleges, women's share of the teaching positions was about 37-38 per cent. These proportions also vary among the major ethnic groups in the country; at the primary level, there was a higher proportion of female teachers among Indians (58.2 per

cent) than among Fijians (54.9 per cent), while at secondary levels the proportions were about equal for the two major ethnic groups but slightly higher for women of "other" ethnic groups. A considerably lower proportion of Indian women (45.9 per cent) compared with Fijian women (84.0 per cent) were involved in special education (table 69).

Although more females than males are employed as primary schoolteachers, a survey reported a dearth of women in positions of responsibility within primary schools and in primary school administration within the Ministry of Education.

Women are not only concentrated in lower-level positions in government service but they also do not obtain their promotions as often as men do. Data from the Public Service Commission indicate that in 1994, the average number of years since the last promotion was 8.9 years for females compared with 6.4 years for males (table 70). More than 14 years

**Table 70. Average number of years since the last promotion of public service employees by sex and ethnic group: 1994**

Ethnic group	Male	Female
Fijians	6.0	8.7
Indians	7.1	9.6
Others	6.0	6.9
All groups	6.4	8.9

*Source:* Public Service Commission.

**Table 69. Percentage of female teachers, by level of education and ethnic group, and percentage of teachers trained, by sex: 1992**

Level of education	Percentage of female teachers				Percentage trained	
	Fijians	Indians	Others	All ethnic groups	Male	Female
Primary	54.9	58.2	43.3	56.1	97.3	97.6
Secondary	47.1	47.2	48.1	47.2	52.6	53.2
Special	84.0	45.9	—	67.8	85.7	76.3
Technical and vocational	38.1	34.8	53.3	36.9	53.5	87.5
Teacher training	53.6	16.0	43.8	37.7	93.0	100.0

*Source:* Ministry of Education, annual reports.

ago, females were less likely than males to have been promoted. The period since the last promotion was shortest for women from "other" ethnic groups than for Fijians and Indian women.

An important reason why women are not promoted as often as men is the fact that women are less likely to hold acting positions; only 24 per cent of all acting positions are held

by women, the proportion being 11 per cent in respect of middle-level and 40 per cent in respect of lower-level acting positions.

Women's representation on appointed statutory bodies is very low. At the national level, women constitute only 4 per cent of tribunal members, 4 per cent of commission members and 9 per cent of the membership of all wage councils.

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**PART II**

**ANNEX TABLES**

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**Table C.1 Numerical distribution of the enumerated population by residence and sex:  
1976 and 1986 censuses**

Residence	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Urban centres <sup>a/</sup>	194 619	97 040	97 579	253 036	126 196	126 840
Urban localities <sup>b/</sup>	23 586	11 929	11 657	23 649	11 905	11 744
Rural areas	369 863	187 981	181 882	438 690	224 467	214 223
Total	588 068	296 950	291 118	715 375	362 568	352 807

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

<sup>a/</sup> Urban centre is defined as the city and peri-urban area. The Fiji official census defines peri-urban as that area contiguous to a town and city's statutory boundaries, and where a significant proportion of the population is engaged in non-agricultural employment. The data include the population of Suva, Lautoka, Nausori, Nadi, Labasa, Ba and Lami.

<sup>b/</sup> Urban localities comprise the unincorporated townships of Vatukoula, Levuka, Sigatoka, Savusavu, Navaua, Rakiraki, and Tavua.

**Table C.2 Numerical distribution of the enumerated population by major ethnic group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Major ethnic group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Fijians	259 932	131 413	128 519	329 305	167 256	162 049
Indians	292 896	147 194	145 702	348 704	175 829	172 875
Others	35 240	18 343	16 897	37 366	19 483	17 883
All ethnic groups	588 068	296 950	291 118	715 375	362 568	352 807

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

**Table C.3 Numerical distribution of the enumerated population by five-year age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
0-4	81 306	41 542	39 764	101 286	52 044	49 242
5-9	77 968	39 719	38 249	93 152	47 850	45 302
10-14	82 580	41 586	40 994	79 025	40 358	38 667
15-19	73 168	36 829	36 339	73 616	37 070	36 546
20-24	56 808	27 833	28 975	73 728	36 731	36 997
25-29	45 079	22 435	22 644	63 444	31 988	31 456
30-34	37 320	18 753	18 567	50 708	25 337	25 371
35-39	31 994	15 931	16 063	41 717	21 035	20 682
40-44	25 782	13 191	12 591	34 769	17 570	17 199
45-49	21 213	10 827	10 386	28 802	14 451	14 351
50-54	16 644	8 657	7 987	22 664	11 502	11 162
55-59	13 724	7 114	6 610	17 069	8 749	8 320
60-64	9 943	5 227	4 716	12 043	6 198	5 845
65+	13 828	6 884	6 944	20 989	10 450	10 539
Not stated	711	422	289	2 363	1 235	1 128
Total	588 068	296 950	291 118	715 375	362 568	352 807

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

**Table C.4 Percentage distribution of the enumerated population by five-year age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
0-4	13.8	14.0	13.7	14.2	14.4	14.0
5-9	13.3	13.4	13.1	13.0	13.2	12.8
10-14	14.0	14.0	14.1	11.0	11.1	11.0
15-19	12.4	12.4	12.4	10.3	10.2	10.4
20-24	9.7	9.4	10.0	10.3	10.1	10.4
25-29	7.7	7.6	7.8	8.9	8.8	8.9
30-34	6.3	6.3	6.4	7.1	7.0	7.3
35-39	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.8	5.8	5.9
40-44	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.9	4.8	4.9
45-49	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.0	4.0	4.0
50-54	2.8	2.9	2.7	3.2	3.2	3.2
55-59	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4
60-64	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7
65+	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.9	2.9	2.9
Not stated	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: South Pacific Commission, *Population Statistics*, Statistical Bulletin No. 42, Noumea, 1995.

**Table C.5 Marital status of the population aged 15 years and over by ethnic group and sex: 1986 census**

Ethnic group and marital status	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Fijians</b>	200 286	100.0	100 824	100.0	99 462	100.0
Never married	70 026	35.0	40 082	39.8	29 944	30.1
Married	116 731	58.3	57 206	56.7	59 525	59.8
Widowed	9 270	4.6	1 988	2.0	7 282	7.3
Divorced/separated	4 097	2.0	1 458	1.4	2 639	2.7
Not stated	162	0.1	90	0.1	72	0.1
<b>Indians</b>	217 747	100.0	108 999	100.0	108 748	100.0
Never married	59 530	27.3	34 334	31.5	25 196	23.2
Married	145 431	66.8	72 334	66.4	73 097	67.2
Widowed	9 639	4.4	1 413	1.3	8 226	7.6
Divorced/separated	3 020	1.4	843	0.8	2 177	2.0
Not stated	121	0.1	75	0.1	52	0.1
<b>Other ethnic groups</b>	23 879	100.0	12 493	100.0	11 386	100.0
Never married	8 498	35.6	4 941	39.6	3 557	31.2
Married	13 678	57.3	6 990	56.0	6 688	58.7
Widowed	1 021	4.3	241	1.9	780	6.9
Divorced/separated	624	2.6	287	2.3	337	3.0
Not stated	58	0.2	34	0.3	24	0.2
<b>All ethnic groups</b>	441 912	100.0	222 316	100.0	219 596	100.0
Never married	138 054	31.2	79 357	35.7	58 697	26.7
Married	275 840	62.4	136 530	61.4	139 310	63.4
Widowed	19 930	4.5	3 642	1.6	16 288	7.4
Divorced/separated	7 741	1.8	2 588	1.2	5 153	2.3
Not stated	347	0.1	199	0.1	148	0.1

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table C.6 Distribution of overseas scholarship students by area of study and sex: 1994**

Study area	Both sexes	Male	Female
Administration	3	3	0
Agriculture	3	1	2
Business studies/economics	9	4	5
Computer	4	2	2
Education	2	0	2
Engineering	20	16	4
Fisheries	2	2	0
Forestry	1	1	0
Geology	2	1	1
Health/medicine	9	6	3
Information	3	0	3
Law	3	2	1
Meteorology	1	1	0
Museology	1	0	1
Science	4	2	2
Statistics	1	0	1
Surveying	2	2	0
Tourism	6	1	5
Town planning	1	0	1
International Baccalaureate	1	0	1
Total	78	44	34

*Source:* Public Service Commission.

**Table D.1 Numerical distribution of population aged 15 years and over by marital status, age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group and census year	Never married		Currently married		Widowed		Divorced/separated	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>1976</b>								
15-19	34 521	30 304	848	4 677	78	69	43	174
20-24	17 751	10 480	9 261	17 297	91	143	256	740
25-29	5 558	2 957	16 290	18 583	78	252	362	710
30-34	1 889	1 095	16 398	16 519	57	341	321	547
35-39	911	674	14 579	14 265	105	582	285	486
40-44	507	419	12 297	10 927	121	853	218	356
45-49	326	324	10 091	8 500	183	1 195	191	318
50-54	268	247	7 881	5 898	296	1 499	162	275
55-59	224	200	6 256	4 286	399	1 852	185	197
60-64	149	169	4 388	2 428	513	1 890	129	144
65+	254	272	4 781	1 967	1 429	4 283	217	160
NS	134	40	168	112	22	49	5	8
Total	62 492	47 181	103 238	105 459	3 372	13 008	2 374	4 115
<b>1986</b>								
15-19	36 160	31 681	866	4 676	9	36	15	134
20-24	25 996	15 363	10 521	20 792	26	128	166	693
25-29	9 153	5 300	22 346	24 998	48	228	423	917
30-34	3 008	2 248	21 860	21 969	70	344	388	795
35-39	1 538	1 191	19 062	18 166	82	640	347	677
40-44	924	731	16 261	14 945	113	968	261	548
45-49	603	521	13 443	11 903	186	1 511	214	407
50-54	425	341	10 594	8 496	283	1 995	196	328
55-59	327	267	7 861	5 657	371	2 150	182	243
60-64	212	213	5 342	3 399	491	2 081	147	148
65+	492	507	7 781	3 763	1 917	6 019	233	238
NS	519	334	593	546	46	188	16	25
Total	79 357	58 697	136 530	139 310	3 642	16 288	2 588	5 153

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

Note: NS = age not stated. In addition, there were 2,560 males and 2,292 females who did not state their marital status.

**Table D.2 Age-specific fertility rates by ethnic group: 1994**

Age group (in years)	Population female			Number of births			Age-specific fertility rates		
	Fijians	Indians	Total	Fijians	Indians	Total	Fijians	Indians	Total
15-19	19 577	17 424	38 931	931	993	1 999	0.0476	0.0570	0.0513
20-24	18 326	16 582	36 842	3 475	2 838	6 626	0.1896	0.1711	0.1798
25-29	16 451	15 904	34 217	2 934	2 053	5 267	0.1783	0.1291	0.1539
30-34	13 823	14 117	29 536	1 961	885	3 078	0.1419	0.0627	0.1042
35-39	11 338	11 745	24 454	818	212	1 122	0.0721	0.0181	0.0459
40-44	9 451	9 571	20 127	198	33	232	0.0210	0.0034	0.0115
45-49	8 009	780	16 604	6	1	8	0.0007	0.0013	0.0005
Total/TFR	96 975	86 123	200 711	10 323	7 015	18 332	3.26	2.21	2.74

Source: Bureau of Statistics.

**Table E.1 Population aged 15 years and over by economic activity status and sex:  
1976 and 1986 censuses**

Activity status	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Economically active	175 785	146 315	29 470	241 160	189 929	51 231
Employed	163 965	138 263	25 702	222 971	179 595	43 376
Unemployed	11 820	8 052	3 768	18 189	10 334	7 855
Not economically active	168 446	26 656	141 790	197 582	30 868	166 714
Status not stated	1 860	1 065	795	3 170	1 519	1 651
All statuses	346 091	174 036	172 055	441 912	222 316	219 596

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table E.2 Distribution of economically active persons aged 15 years and over by age group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Age group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
15-19	26 408	20 935	5 473	29 283	21 462	7 821
20-24	32 452	25 407	7 045	44 195	33 425	10 770
25-29	26 107	21 613	4 494	38 937	30 698	8 239
30-39	39 874	33 763	6 111	57 060	45 148	11 912
40-49	26 760	23 173	3 587	38 061	30 991	7 070
50-59	15 907	14 047	1 860	21 436	17 910	3 526
60+	7 977	7 123	854	11 168	9 500	1 668
Not stated	300	254	46	1 020	795	225
Total	175 785	146 315	29 470	241 160	189 929	51 231

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table E.3 Population aged 15 years and over by economic activity status, ethnic origin and sex: 1986 census**

Activity status	Fijians			Indians			Others		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Economically active	113 904	86 259	27 645	113 464	93 962	19 502	13 792	9 708	4 084
Employed	105 244	81 409	23 835	104 846	89 036	15 810	12 881	9 150	3 731
Unemployed	8 660	4 850	3 810	8 618	4 926	3 692	911	558	353
Not economically active	84 934	13 815	71 119	102 801	14 409	88 392	9 847	2 644	7 203
Activity status not stated	1 448	750	698	1 482	628	854	240	141	99
All statuses	200 286	100 824	99 462	217 747	108 999	108 748	23 879	12 493	11 386

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table E.4 Numerical distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by major industrial sector and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Major industrial sector	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	76 869	70 020	6 849	106 305	94 133	12 172
Mining, quarrying	1 660	1 592	68	1 345	1 270	75
Manufacturing	13 036	11 274	1 762	18 106	13 684	4 422
Electricity, gas and water	1 626	1 578	48	2 154	2 049	105
Construction	11 182	11 033	149	11 786	11 557	229
Wholesale and retail trade, hotels etc.	17 364	12 931	4 433	26 010	17 679	8 331
Transport, communications, storage	9 035	8 442	593	13 151	12 048	1 103
Finance, insurance business	3 515	2 475	1 040	6 016	4 073	1 943
Community and social services	29 117	18 773	10 344	36 619	22 172	14 447
Industry not stated	4 692	3 447	1 245	1 479	930	549
All industries	168 096	141 565	26 531	222 971	179 595	43 376

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table E.5 Numerical distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by major occupational group and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Major occupational group	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Professional, technical and related	12 649	7 877	4 772	17 774	10 725	7 049
Administrative, managerial workers	1 656	1 529	127	2 766	2 515	251
Clerical and related workers	11 462	6 896	4 566	15 569	8 242	7 327
Sales workers	9 222	7 124	2 098	14 861	10 540	4 321
Service workers	11 429	6 303	5 126	15 422	7 979	7 443
Agricultural, forestry workers and fishermen	76 444	69 849	6 595	105 924	93 925	11 999
Production, transport equipment operators and labourers	38 680	36 979	1 701	49 000	44 439	4 561
Occupation not stated	6 554	5 008	1 546	1 662	1 233	429
All occupations	168 096	141 565	26 531	222 978	179 598	43 380

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

**Table E.6 Numerical distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by employment status and sex: 1976 and 1986 censuses**

Employment status	1976 census			1986 census		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Own-account worker <sup>a/</sup>	58 681	53 432	5 249	81 000	72 706	8 294
Employee	90 513	73 365	17 148	101 655	75 003	26 652
Public	30 939	24 863	6 076	38 102	28 396	9 706
Private	59 574	48 502	11 072	63 553	46 607	16 946
Unpaid family worker	13 676	10 864	2 812	39 231	31 200	8 031
Status not stated	5 226	3 904	1 322	1 085	686	399
All statuses	168 096	141 565	26 531	222 971	179 595	43 376

Sources: Parliament of Fiji, *Report on the Census of Population, 1976*; and Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

<sup>a/</sup> Including village workers or casual workers and everyone who is paid on a contract, task or piecework basis.

**Table E.7 Numerical distribution of employed persons aged 15 years and over by employment status, sex and residence: 1986 census**

Employment status	Urban area			Rural area		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Own-account worker <sup>a/</sup>	15 190	12 898	2 292	65 810	59 808	6 002
Employee	67 297	47 742	19 555	34 358	27 261	7 097
Public	26 016	19 138	6 878	12 086	9 258	2 828
Private	41 281	28 604	12 677	22 272	18 003	4 269
Unpaid family worker	3 669	2 942	727	35 562	28 258	7 304
Status not stated	450	273	177	635	413	222
All statuses	86 606	63 855	22 751	136 365	115 740	20 625

Source: Bureau of Statistics, *Report on Fiji Population Census, 1986*.

<sup>a/</sup> Including village workers or casual workers and everyone who is paid on a contract, task or piecework basis.

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