



Republic of Sierra Leone

2004 Population and Housing Census

Executive Summary - Employment and Labour Force



UNFPA



SSL



EU

November 2006

FOREWORD

Government and other Stakeholders have been eagerly awaiting this report. The long interval between the 1985 and the 2004 population censuses has been mainly attributed to the 10 (ten) years brutal civil war. The 2004 census is an improvement on that of 1985 in that more questions were asked this time, and of course more information will be provided to the public after the analysis of the data.

Following the transformation of the then Central Statistics Office (CSO) which was purely a government institution, to the present Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) a semi-autonomous Institution, the need for better Strategy for the development of National Statistics has been constantly expressed at all meetings of Stakeholders. The political will, to develop Statistics in Sierra Leone is also there.

The government is very much aware about the need for better statistics to inform the design, implementation and eventual evaluation of various development programmes for economic recovery and national development. Statistics Sierra Leone is expected to play a greater role than before in the development of National Statistics, it will have to develop standards, promote best practices and co-ordinate the entire National Statistical System to ensure that better Statistics are produced for better planning, policy formulation, programme design and development, and effective implementation.

In order to be able to do this and more, Statistics Sierra Leone will have to be strengthened in the first instance as past evidence shows that it has been weak, under-staffed, under-resourced, and therefore vulnerable.

Our expectation is that with a sound Statistics Institution in place and a reinvigorated National Statistical System that is properly co-ordinated, the government and other Stakeholders will get quality Statistics (accurate, consistent, timely, relevant etc) to track progress being made towards meeting our development goals and targets on poverty reduction, job creation, housing, agriculture production, health, education, transport and communications etc.

On behalf of Statistics Sierra Leone, I would like to express our appreciation to the Government of Sierra Leone, to the donor partners (European Union -EU), and United Nations Population Fund – UNFPA) for supporting the 2004 Census activities.

Finally, I would like to express our appreciation to my predecessor Professor Herbert B.S. Kandeh and to all individuals who played a part in the design of the census, and in the generation, processing and analysis of the data. I wish to very much recognize the important roles played by the External Consultant Professor Clifford Odimegwu and also the Local Consultants.

It is impossible to say everything at once about the 2004 population and Housing Census. We have therefore prepared this Executive Summary to serve as a guidebook for the government, the Stakeholders and the general public.

Prof. Joseph Aruna Lawrence Kamara (PhD)
Statistician General

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CHAPTER FIVE

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR FORCE

BY:

- ✧ **SAMUEL BRAIMA**
- ✧ **PHILIP S. AMARA**
- ✧ **BRIDGET MOSERAY**

It took two decades for Sierra Leone to undertake a Housing and Population Census that can provide the Government, International Organisations and Bodies, Researchers, Policy Planners and Makers with data that has national coverage and diverse issues about Sierra Leoneans not limited to the head count of Sierra Leoneans but including population structure and composition, economic activities(Industrial and occupational classification) educational and marital status, fertility, fecundity, mortality , morbidity, work environment to name the obvious.

The three questions pertaining to Labour and Employment status formed the basis for this analysis and eight key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM) had been derived for analysis; Status in Employment, Labour Force Participation Rate, Employment -to- Population Ratio, Employment by Industry, Unemployment, Youth Unemployment, Inactivity Rate and Informal Sector Employment. The working age used in the analysis is 15-64 years.

Out of almost 5 million people of Sierra Leone, 52.6 percent (2,621,773) are in the working age 15-64 years, with about 85.62 percent of those in the working age,(1,785,662) economically active. This translates into 1,722,460 employed and 63,262 unemployed.

The Labour Force distribution is proportional regionally but clearly shows gender disparity. There is a fair share of an inactive population with over 60 percent engaged in household work (about 12 percent not working & not looking for work, retired and others). Western Urban has the largest share about 25 percent males, females 47 percent followed closely by Kenema, Kailahun and Pujehun.

The surprising result is the dependency ratio of 90, lower than 106 of 1985 Census, implying a higher proportion of people in the working age in 2004 than in 1985. This result is surprising given that we are a post-conflict country where extended family is predominant.

The Age Specific Activity Rate shows that after 54 years the activity rate declines continuously, implying in aggregate that optimal productivity cannot be achieved beyond that age.

The result reveals a relatively high Employment-to-Population (65.7 percent) implying the ability of the economy to create jobs but does not provide information about the earnings and working conditions.

This ratio is 70.4 for males and 61.5 for females, a clear show of gender disparity, dictating the need for a gender sensitive approach to employment.

Labour Force Participation rates are lowest in Western Urban district, below 60 percent, whereas all other districts record rates above 60 percent. This rate further confirms male dominance in the Labour market. Women's Share in Non-Agricultural Employment is by far lower than that for Males, another clear indication of gender disparity.

The Unemployment Rate of about 3.45 percent is unrealistic but emanates from the definition used. Unpaid family workers/Household workers, those without work and not looking for work (the so-called discouraged workers) when added to those available for work/seeking work but without it gives 27.5 percent $(347,706+80460 +632,620)/1,785,662$. This is slightly over 720,000 persons, a more realistic figure for an economy like Sierra Leone where the skill base is low and the labour market is limited and fragmented. Unemployment is rife in Western Urban district than in all other districts.

Youth Unemployment is pronounced because the Youth rate exceeds the national and District rates. This is reflective of the school leaving age, which is 15 years for those who cannot make the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE). Thus, there is excess supply of labour and this pressure cannot be absorbed by the economy.

The distribution of the Labour Force classified by industry tells the entire story about labour market mismatch. About 80 percent of those employed are either in crop farming (60.4percent), or Trade/Repairs (14.32 percent) or Commercial/Social Work (4.4percent). Three regions display this same pattern, North, East and South report Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry whereas the West reports Trade/Repairs. At district level Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry loomed paramount, with the largest number of economically active persons in the Western Urban district being in the Trade/Repairs industry.

An analysis of the paid employed by Industrial classification shows that education was the favourite candidate accounting for about 20 percent of paid employment. Public Administration and Defence (16.2 percent), Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry (11.7 percent) with Trade/Repairs accounting for about 8 percent.

It is worthy to note that there are more females engaged in paid employment in Education (25.7 percent as against 19.4).and Agriculture (14.2 percent against 11 percent. This pattern is discernible in financial intermediation, Social Work,

Hotel and Restaurants. Note also that in self employment Agriculture is top of the activities.

Classifying Labour Force by cash earning shows that 50 percent of the labour force is in self employment, 5 percent paid employment. There is dire need for small and medium scale (SM) enterprise development. Agriculture accounts for about 61 percent of total cash earning. The preponderance of Agriculture as the major means of earning cash, the ultimate job for a lot of rural people implies the vogue of “decent work” propagated by the ILO is yet a far cry in Sierra Leone. The desire for job creation as a strategy for poverty reduction is well placed because the bulk of the economically active are at economic risk and therefore vulnerable to the vagaries of climate and shortage of input supplies and credit/loans.

The occupational classification reveals a weak skill base in the country because those that are skilled agricultural workers, elementary occupation workers and service/shop workers represent 86 percent of the cash earning population. To buttress the above, those in Legislative and Managerial Occupations are about 2 percent in the West, 1.0 (one) percent in the East and about 0.5 percent in the South. Numerically the total of Legislative/Managerial workers, Professionals and Technicians in the whole country is less than 120,000. This is appalling and calls for attention to encourage the educational system to cater aggressively for the training of cadres in these areas.

Even with the low level of technology workers are exposed to injury. Males and females of the Bonthe district seem to be at high risk in terms of occupational injury. The south showed the greatest exposure to occupational injury. As usual occupational injury is gender related as can be seen from following figures; sight difficulty (males 31.4 percent, females 24.3), blindness (males 8.9 percent, females 5.4), Use of arms (males 7.8 percent, females 7.6). Use of legs (females 17.1 percent, males 16.2), back spine (females 17.3 percent, males 15.4 percent and rheumatism (females 10 percent, males 5.1). Census data confirms that with information about jobs and education occupational injury can be kept at low ebb.

The magnitude of the self employed is an indication of the size of the Informal sector. This sector tends to absorb new job entrants from which some graduate in self enterprises or experience to enter the formal job market.

Given the rights of children is centre stage and a major goal in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Child Labour formed a part of the analysis. Data reveals that 3.03 percent of children 10-14 years are in paid/ employment, 57.51 in self employment and 33.92 percent are engaged as unpaid family workers. For those 6 to 17 years about 32.5 percent are out of school, Koinadugu recorded 57.4 percent, all other districts recorded values above 30 percent. Only the Western Urban and Rural districts recorded 16.6 and 25.6 percent respectively.

This dictates the need for a reform of our educational practices and to encourage compulsory education. The females are more at risk in child labour.

It is never possible for a Census to capture the dynamics of the labour market but it provides the bedrock for analysis and gaps to be filled. There is an urgent need for a Labour Force Survey, Micro Enterprise survey, Survey on Children in the Worst Form of Child Labour (WFCL)/ Children Engaged in Hazardous work.

Data necessitates that Sierra Leone embarks on Youth Employment as part of a holistic development programme, Compulsory Education Programme and Public Intensive Works.

The above surveys and Programmes along with the Census and Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey will provide direction for the design formulation and implementation of an Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) that would be in tune with the 21st Century.

Figure 1.1: Distribution of Census working Population According to Economic Status

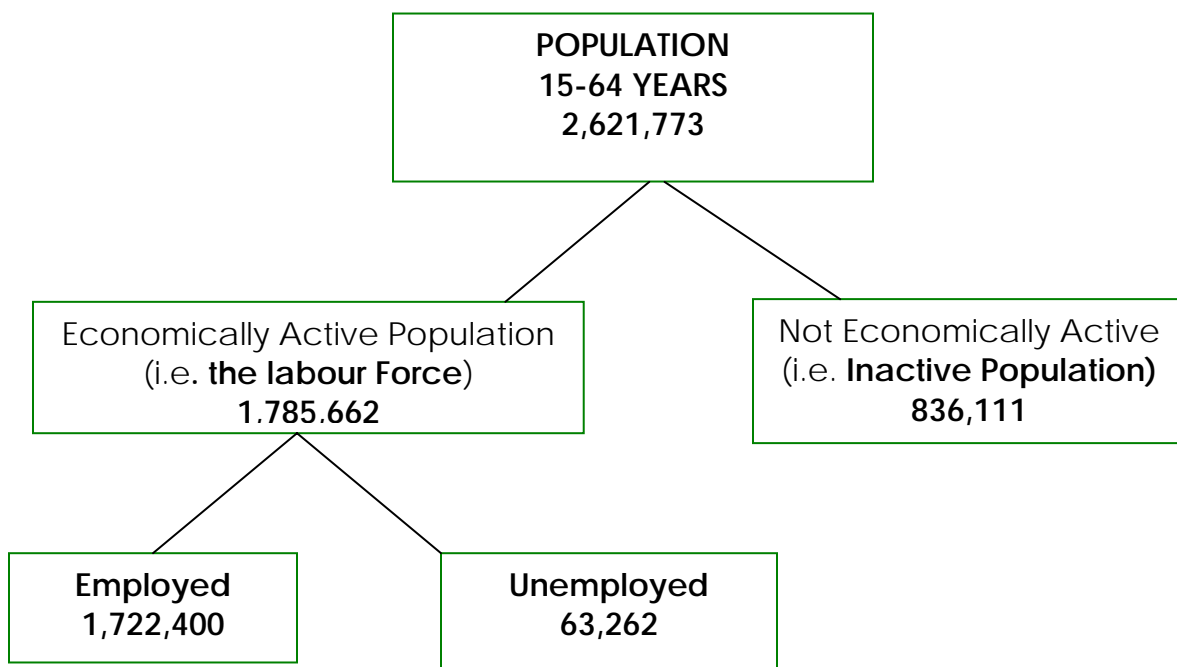
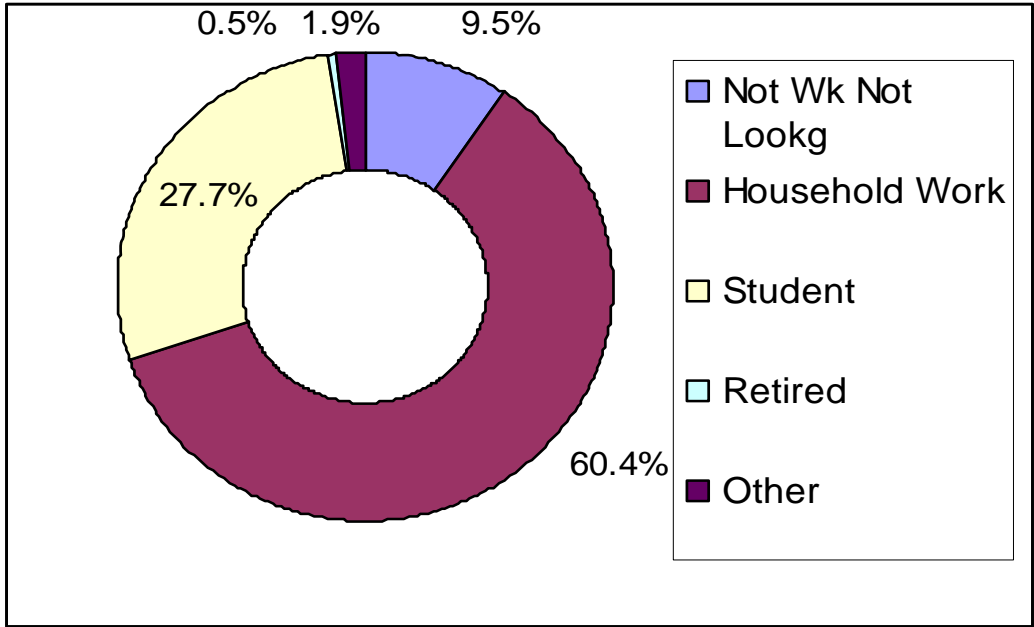


Figure 1.2: Distribution of the number of Currently Economically Inactive persons by Reasons



Not Wkg/Not Lk=Not working and Not Looking for Work

Figure 1.3 : Refined Activity Rate by Region and by Sex

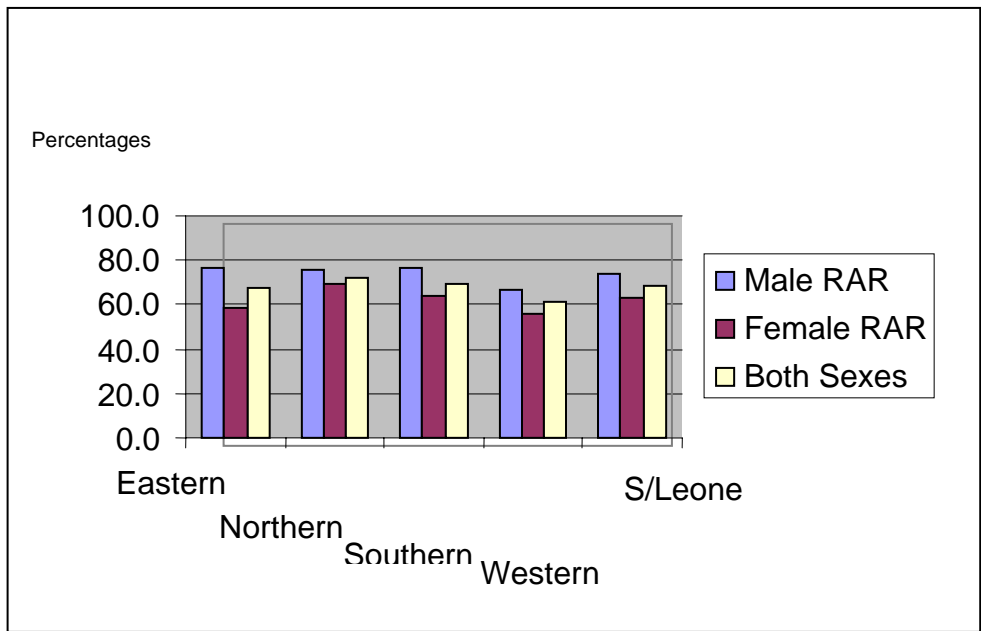
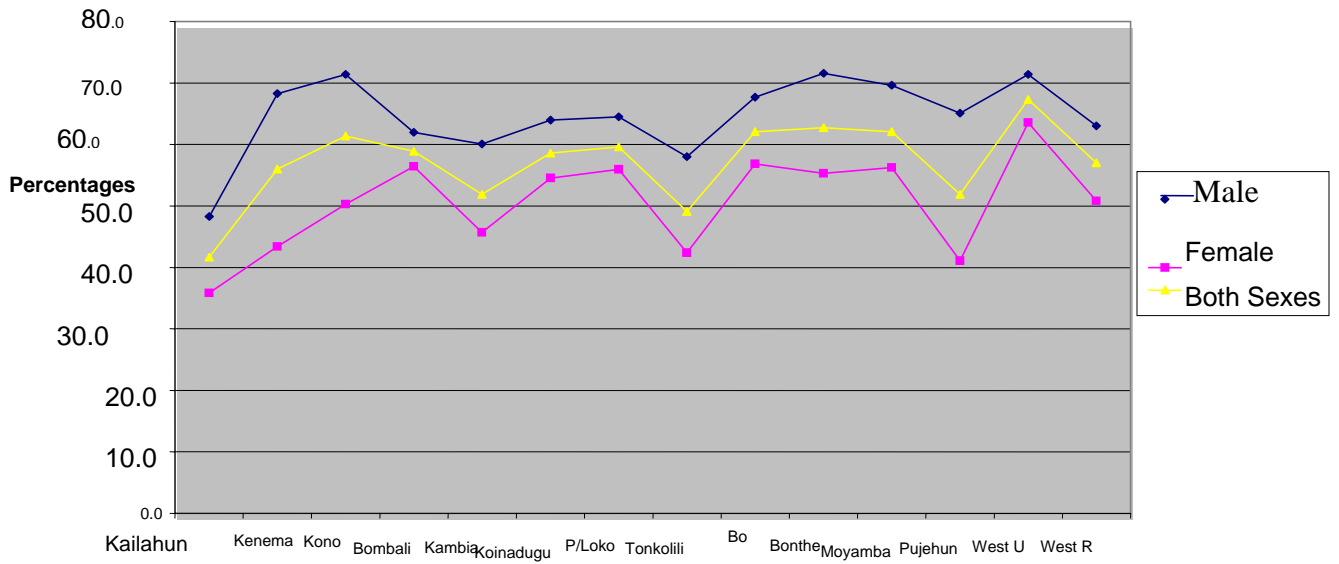


Figure 1.4 Refined Activity rate by District and by Sex



Percentages

Figure 1.5: Age-Sex Specific Activity Rate

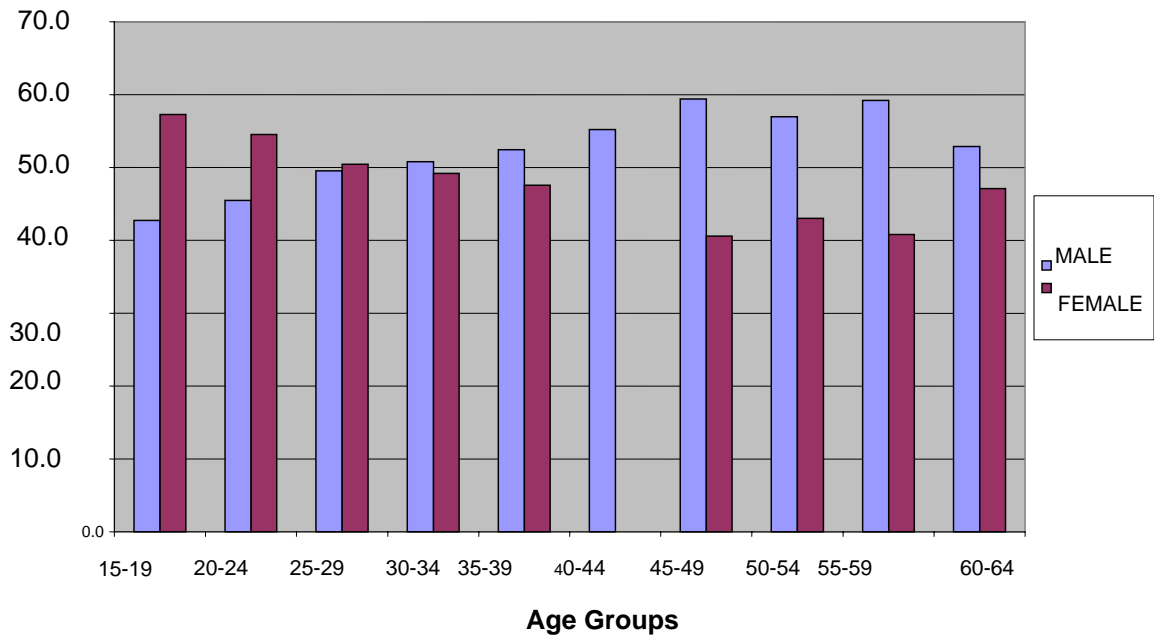


Figure 1.6: Age Specific Activity Rate

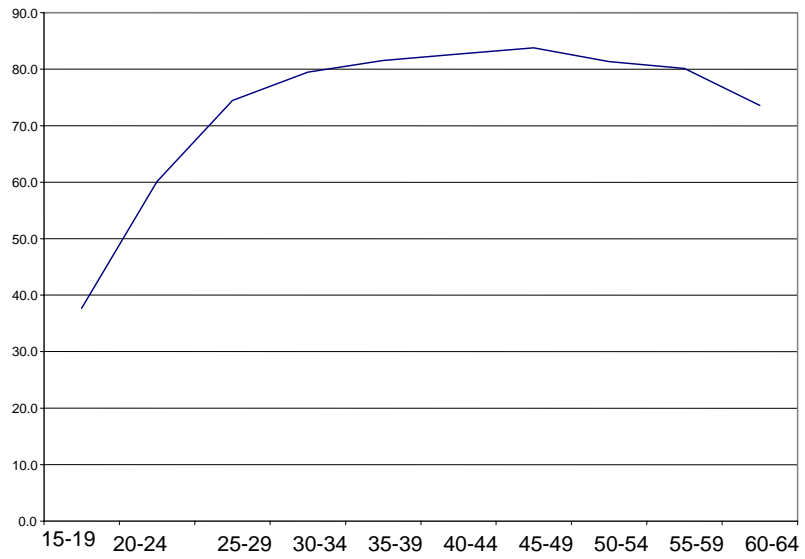


Figure 1.7 Economic Dependency Ratio for Sierra Leone by Sex

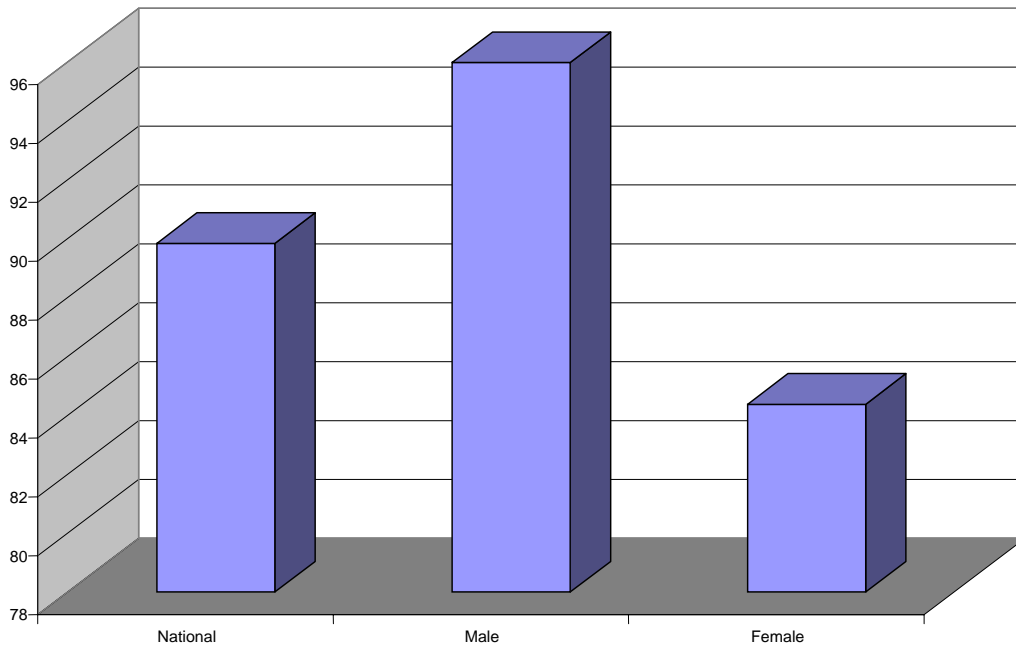


Figure 1.8: Labour Force Participation Rates by District and Sex

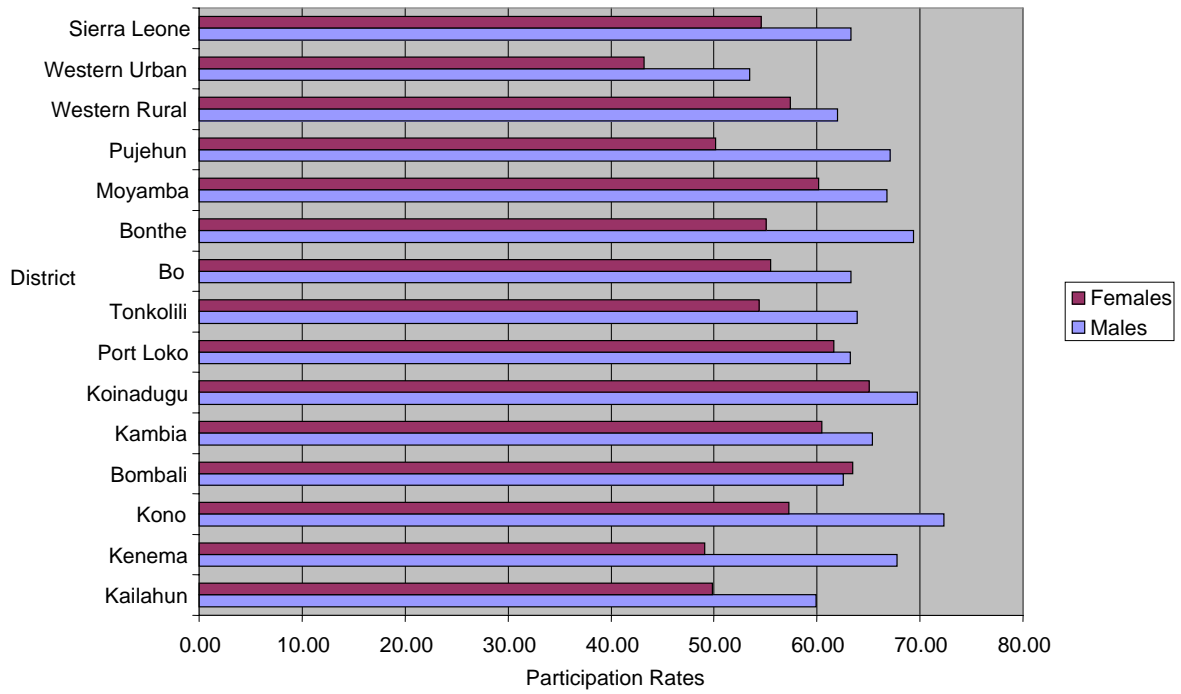


Figure 1.9 Labour Force Participation Rates

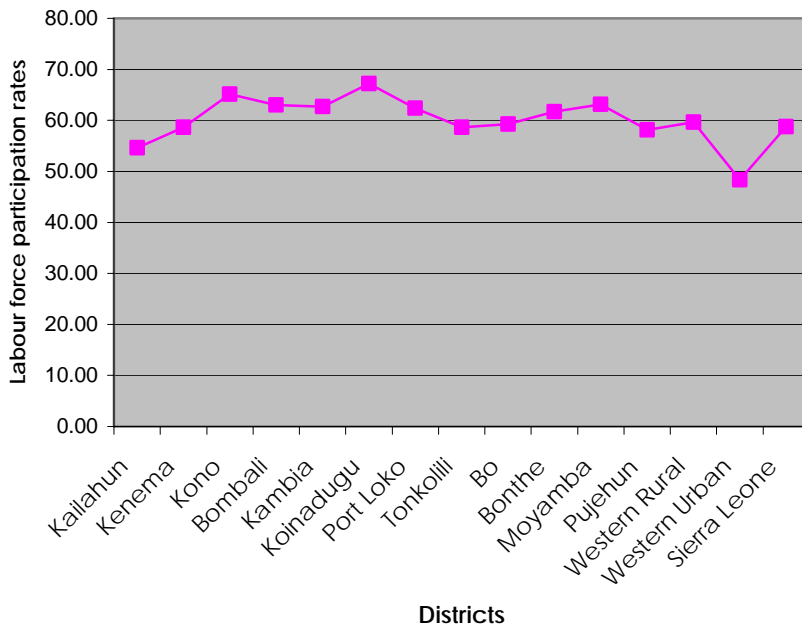


Figure 1.10: Youth Labour Force Participation Rate

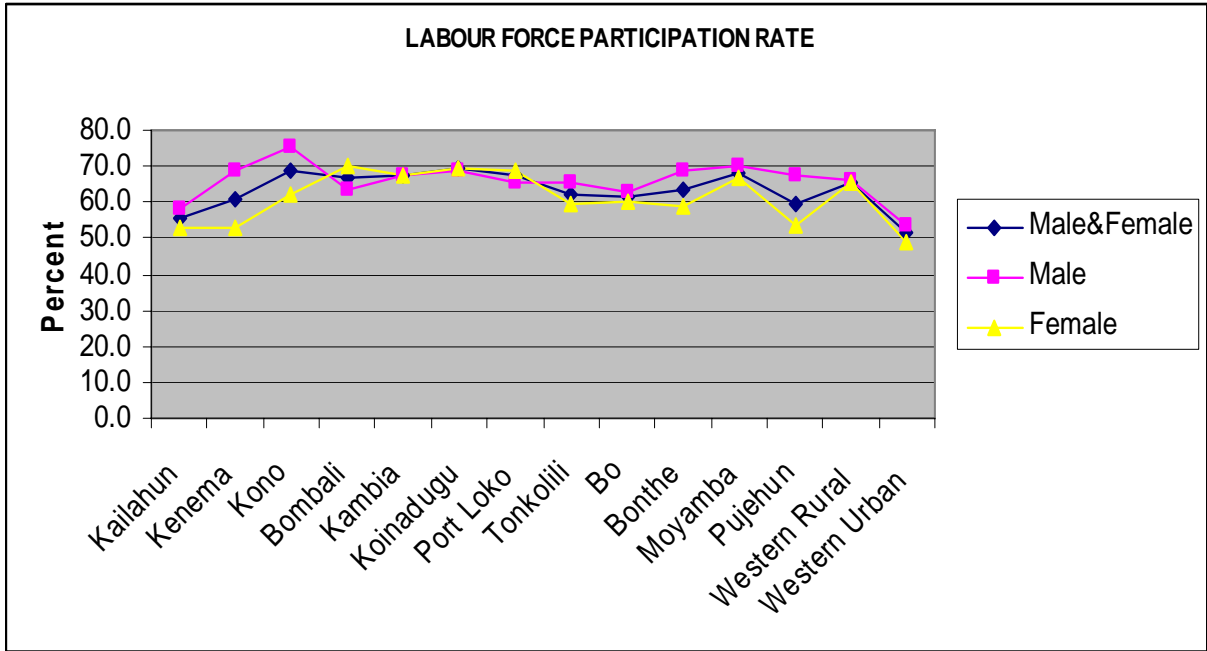


Figure 2.1: Percentage Distribution of the Paid Labour Force(Both Sexes) by Region

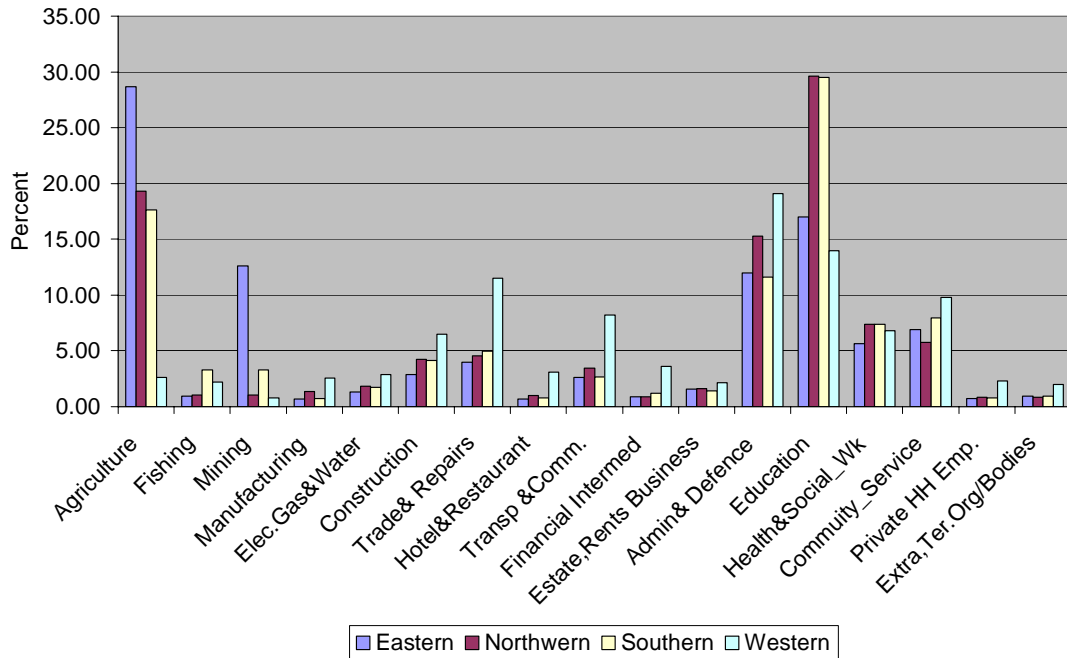


Figure 2.2: Cash Earning Status of the Labour Force Classified by Activity Status

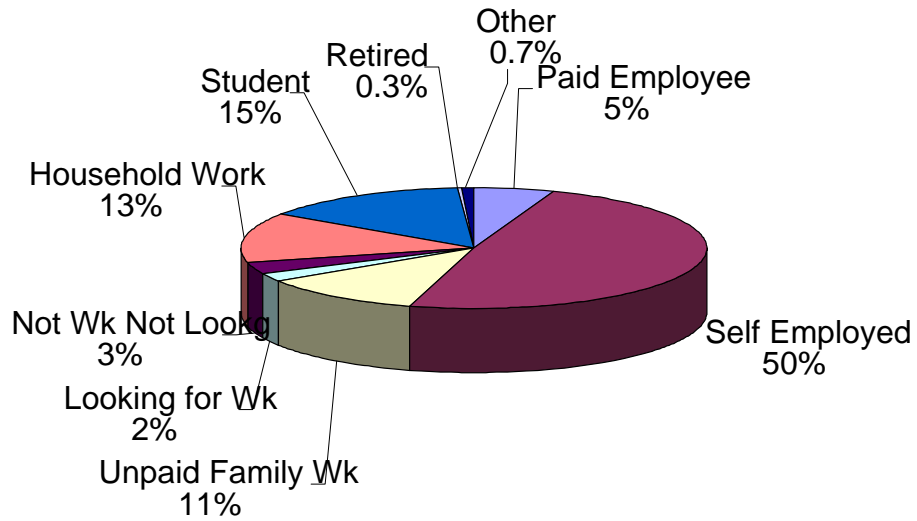


Figure 3.1: Occupational Distribution of the Cash Earning Population by Region

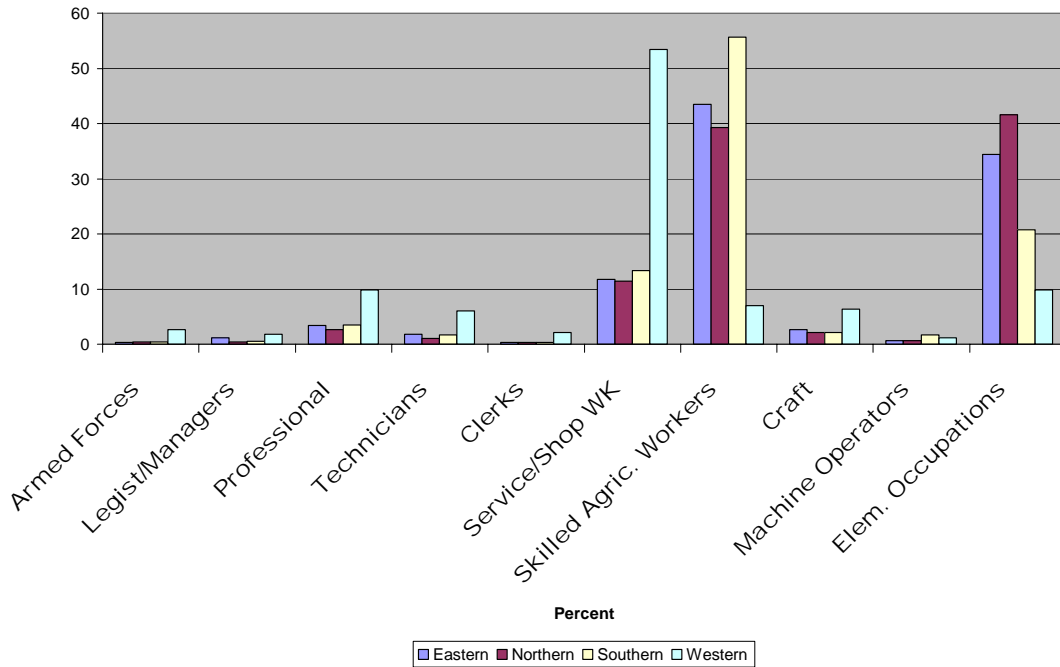


Figure 3.2: Occupational Distribution of the Labour Force (both sexes) by District

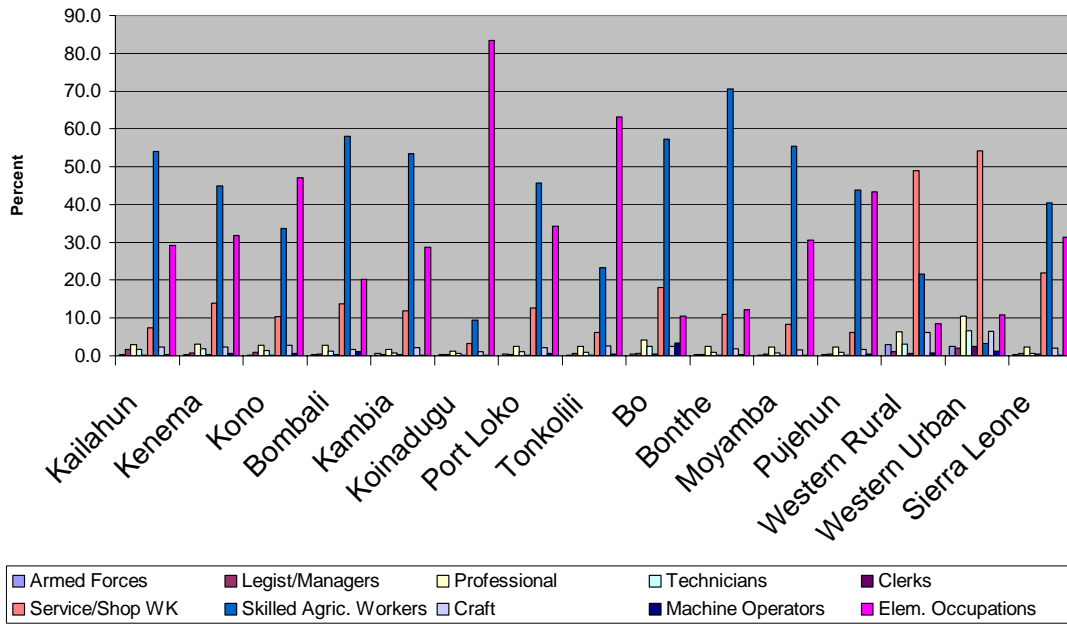


Figure 3.4: Employee Specific Occupational Unemployment by District

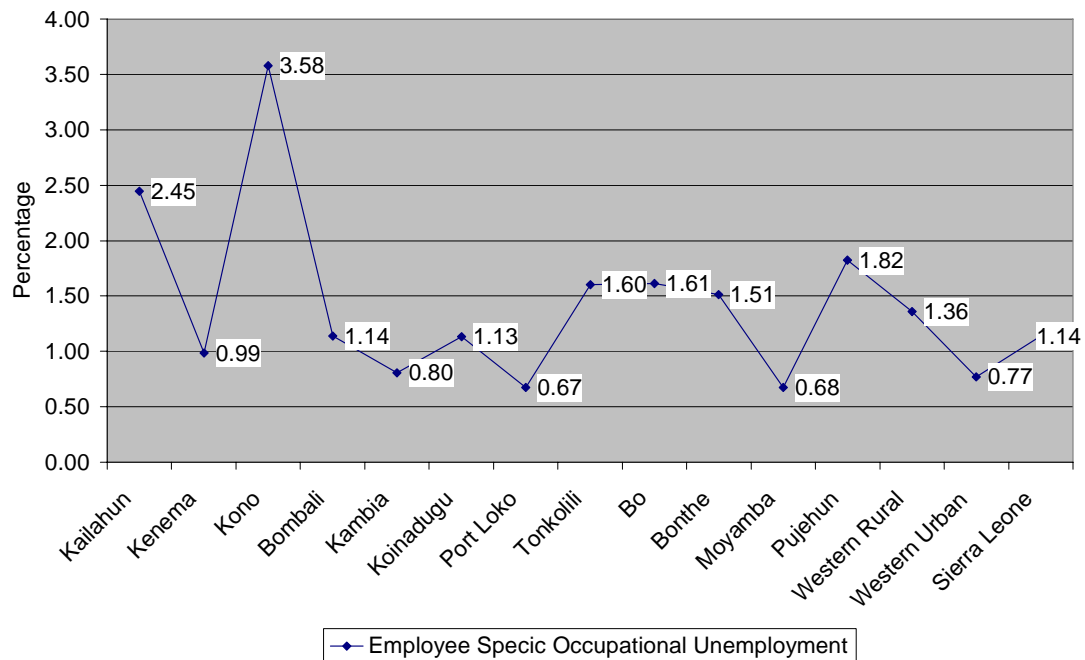


Figure 3.5: Self Employed as Percentage of the total Labour Force 15 to 64 years within Occupational Groups by Region.

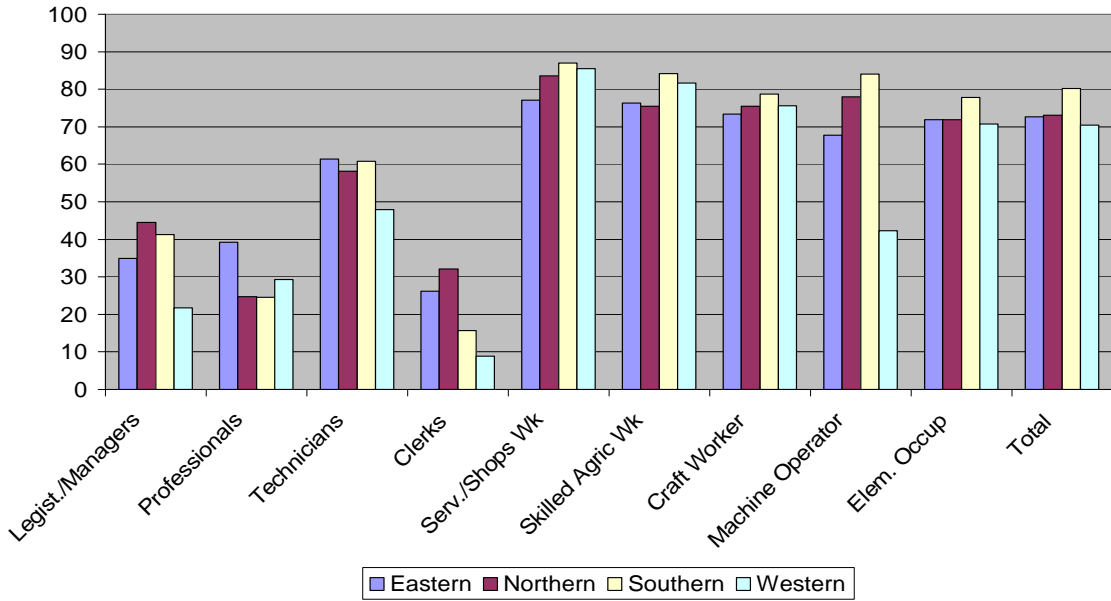


Figure 3.6: Self Employed Labour Force as Percentage of the Total Labour Force 15-64 years in Selected Occupations by District

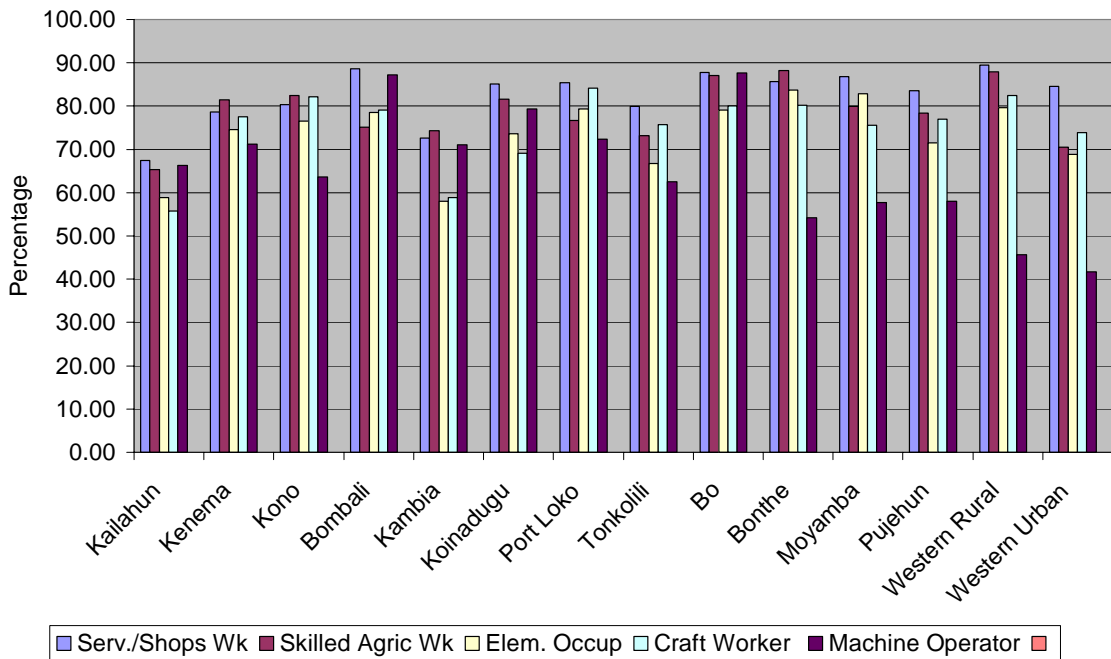


Figure 3.7 : Female share of Non-Agricultural Wage employment in total Non-Agriculture Employment

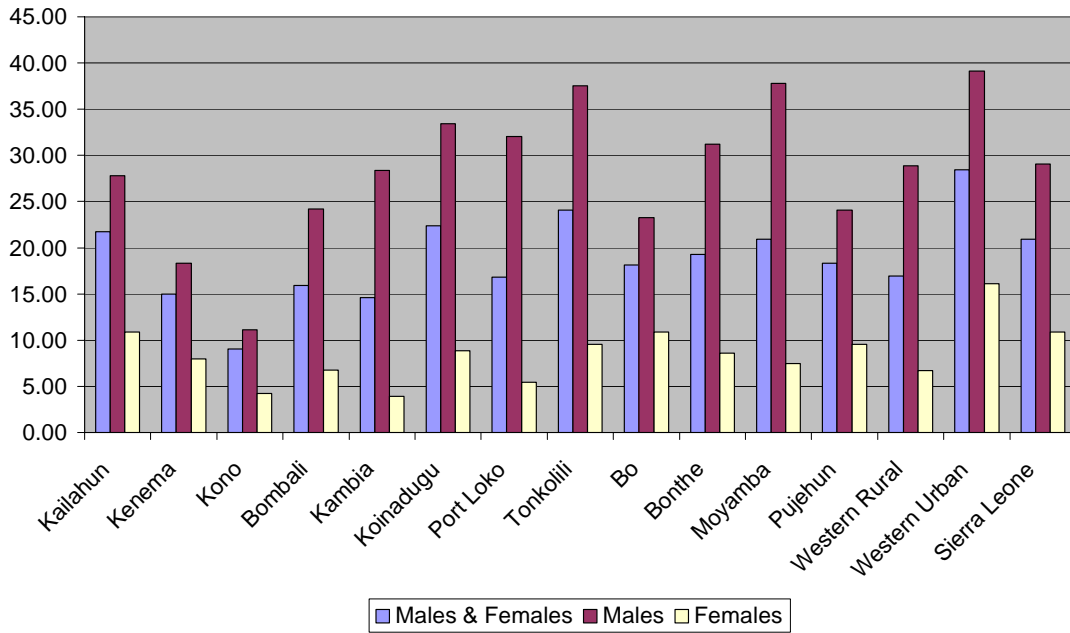


Figure 4.1: Occupational Injury per 100,000 employees in Sierra Leone

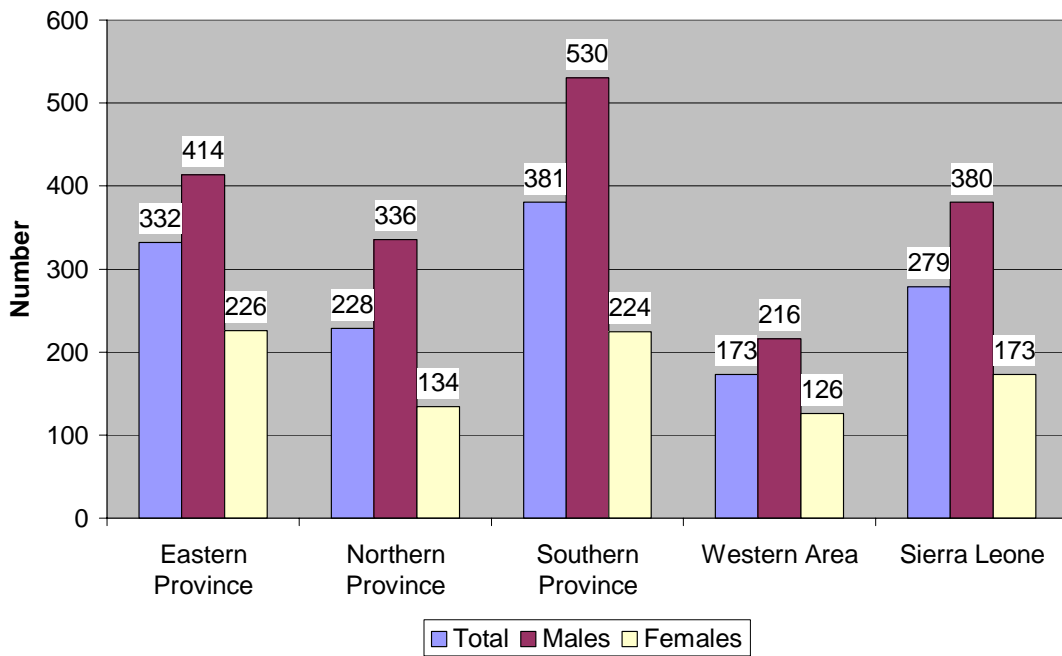


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Occupational Injury by Type of Disability

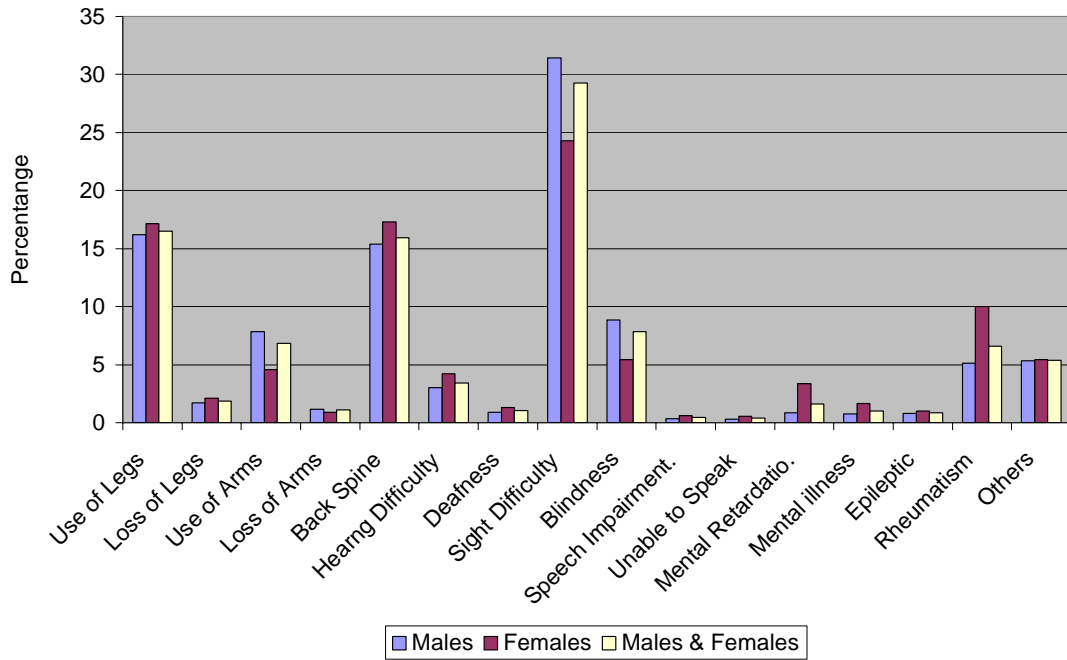


Figure 4.3: Occupational Injury per 100,000 Employees for total population 15-64 years by Educational Status

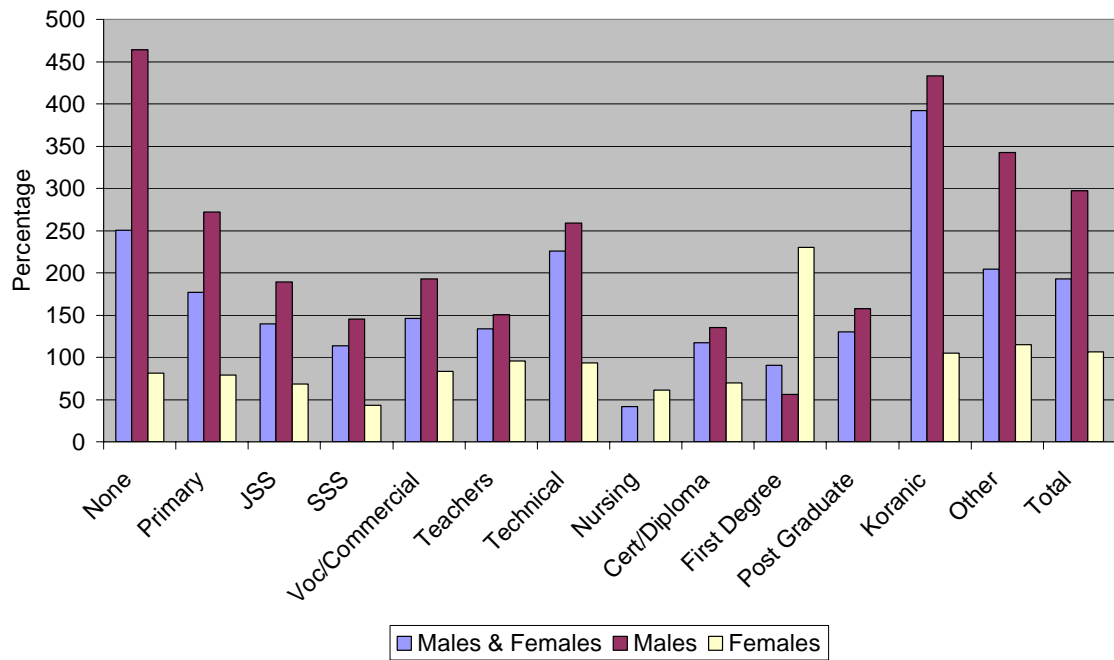


Figure 5.1: Number of Children 6 to 17 years old not in school by Region and Sex

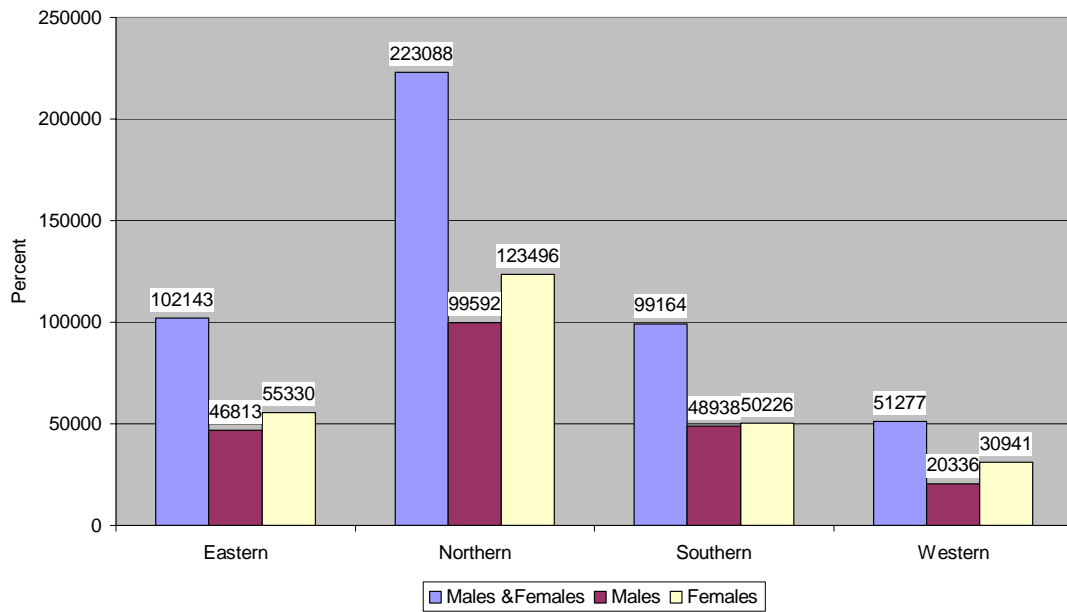


Figure 5.2: Percentage of children 6 to 17 years old not at school

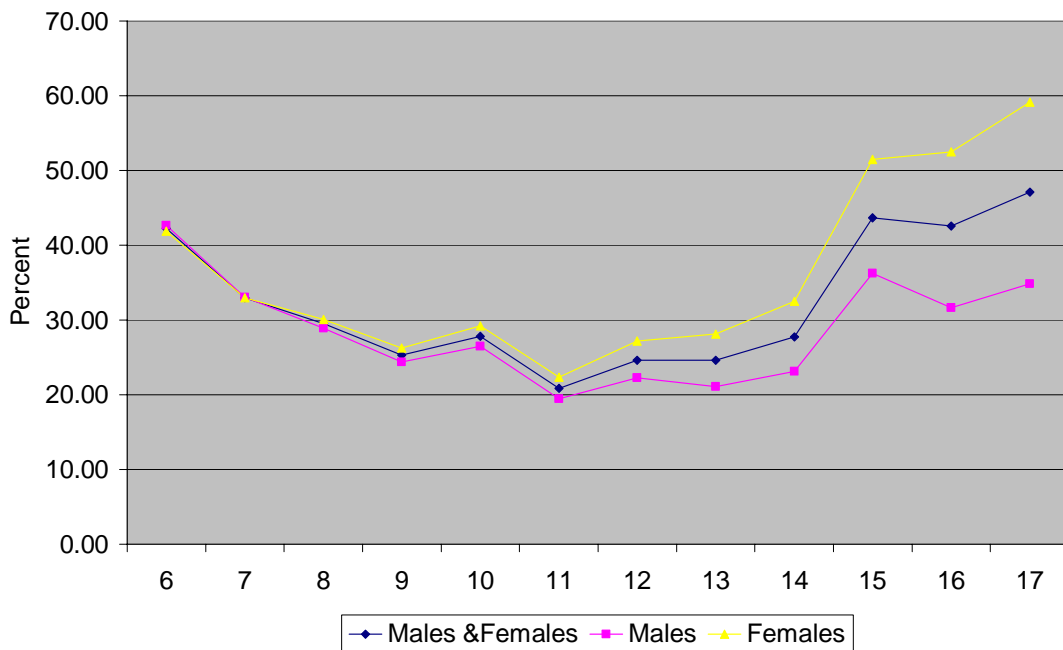


Figure 5.3: Percentage of Children 10 to 14 years old in wage or self employment by sex

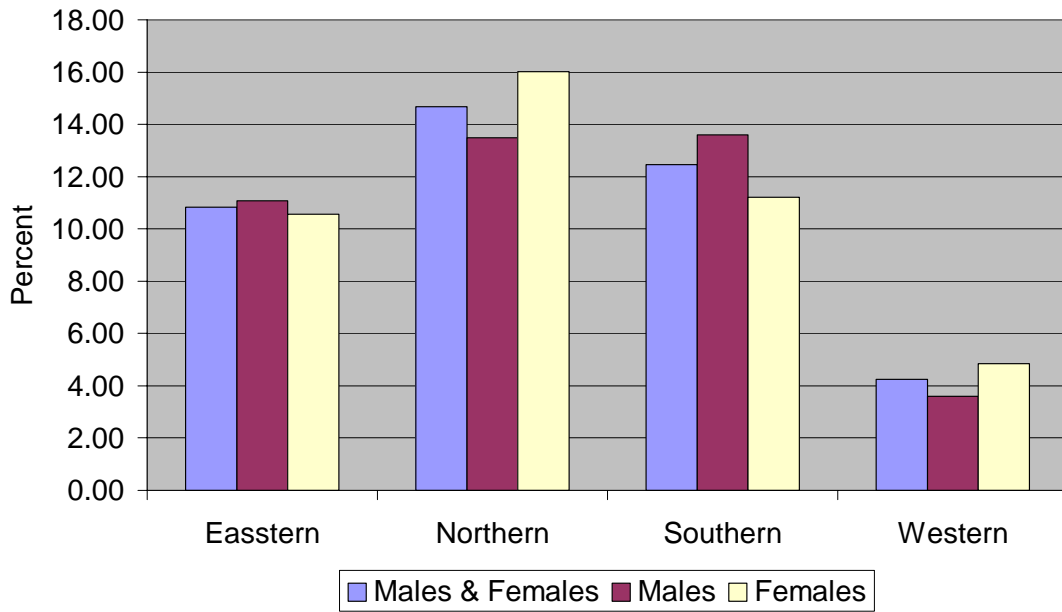


Figure 5.4: Activity Rates for Children 10 to 14 years old (Both Sexes) by Region

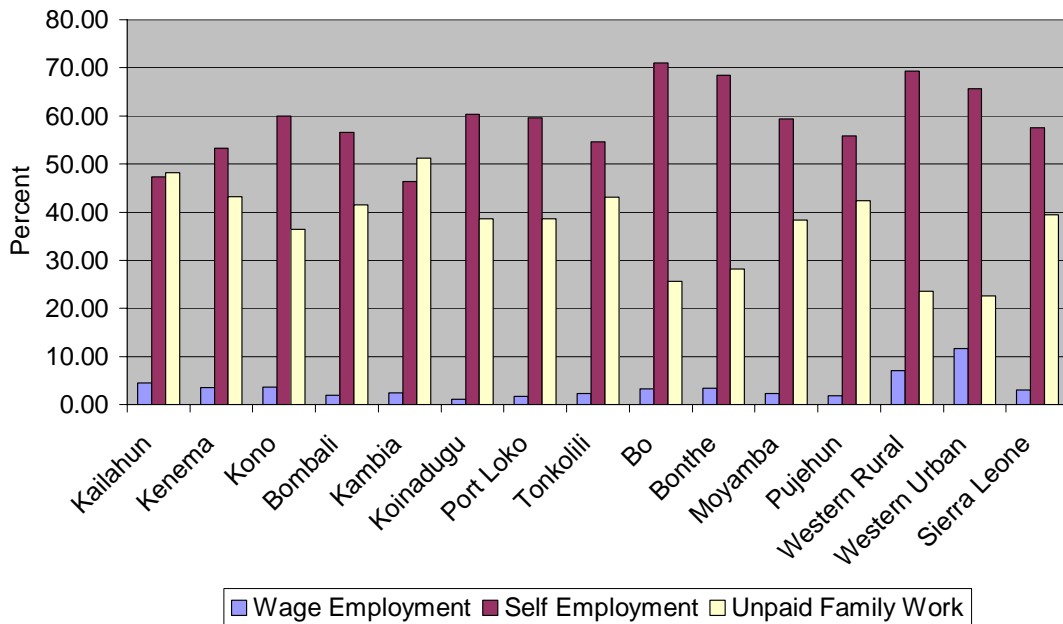


Figure 5.5: Child Labour Force Participation Rates by single ages and sex

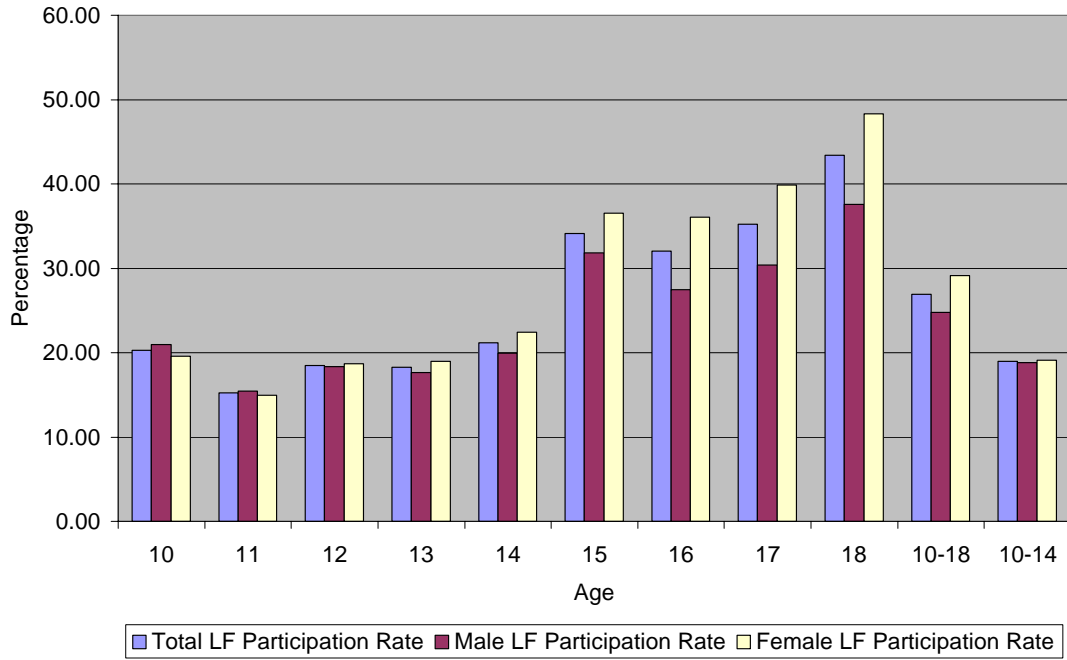


Figure 6.1: Informal Sector Economic Activities by Age and Sex

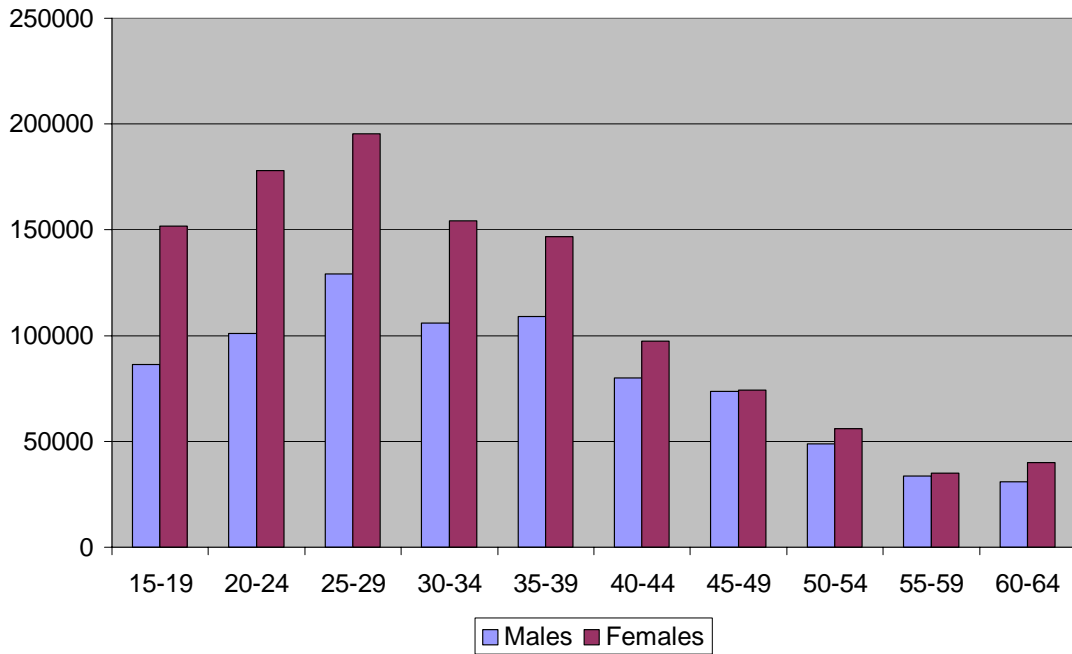


Figure 6.2: Informal Economic Activities by Region and Sex

