

Divorces and remarriage in Brazil: revels from vital statistics (1986-2006).

Glaucia dos Santos Marcondes

Population Studies Center(NEPO)/Brasil

gal@nepo.unicamp.br

Humberto Correa

Population Studies Center(NEPO)/Brasil

humberto@nepo.unicamp.br

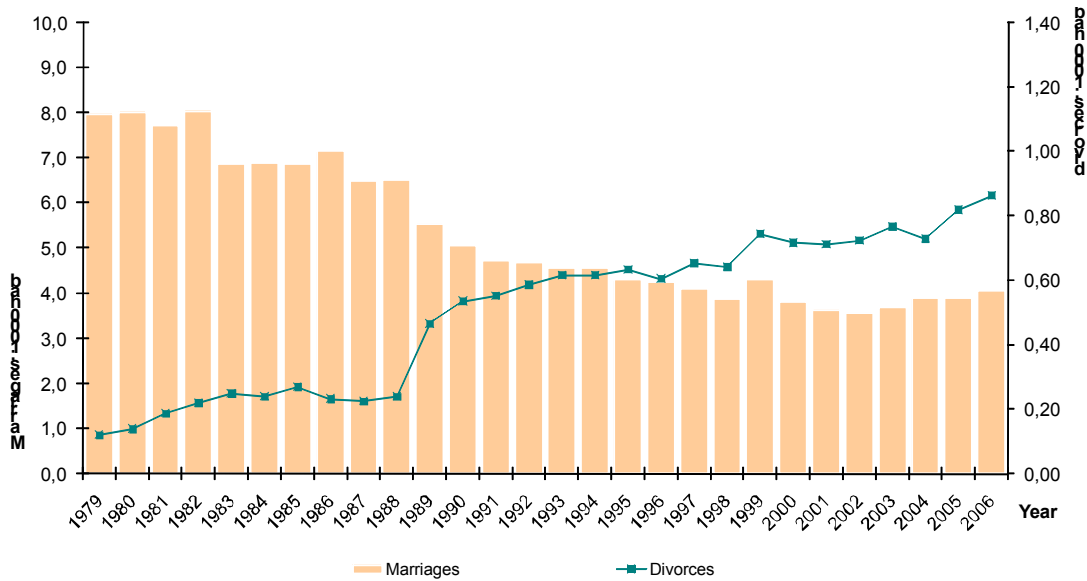
Postpone of marriage, cohabitations, people living alone, low fertility, births outside marriage, high rates of divorce, remarriage, are events that characterize the changes in family formation in Western countries after War II, and set a social context that is called in the field of population studies as a second demographic transition.

In Brazil, demographic census information and household surveys (Pesquisas Nacionais por Amostra de Domicilios - PNADs) show that in the past forty years Brazilian families apart their particular historical, cultural and social, also followed this changes. There was huge reduction in the number of family members in the households. In 1960, the average size of family was 5.1 people per household fell to 3.5 persons in 2000. Family arrangements of couples without children, single female parent and people living alone were also highlighted by the growth in this same period. These trends reflect changes in marriage and also in fertility.

This work addresses one of the aspects of these changes: the trends of divorces and remarriage in the Brazilian dynamics population. Also, this paper presents the information from Vital Statistics in the period 1986 to 2006 to provide an overview of these events in the population and discuss the possibilities and limitations that offers this kind of source to the studies about recent changes in Brazilian families. The levels of divorce are analysed by sex, age, duration of marriage, presence and number of children, responsible for the custody. This paper also explores the incidence of remarriage among total marriages, the levels and differences in remarriage rates among divorced males and females. Remarriage rates by sex are estimated using vital registration data in combination with census information.

The nuptiality rates and divorce rates allow a broader view of the changes in marital status. Since the mid of 80's, the first marriage rates decreases and divorce rates increases (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 - Nuptiality Rates and Divorce Rates
Brazil, 1979-2006**



Fonte: IBGE - Vital Statistics, 1979-2006

In considering the ratio divorces and first marriages for each year we can observe that, in 1986, there were 33.1 divorces for 1,000 marriages. This rate was 212.6 per 1,000 marriages in 2000. As regards the age of the spouses at the time of divorce, both men and women divorced in higher proportions around the age of 30 to 40 years. In the last six years (2000-2006), the age which divorce occurs seems like increasing. Several factors may be contributing to this, some of them because of the trends of postponement of marriage or people who divorced more than once.

This contingent of people divorced returns to the marriage market and can get married again. Data shows an increase in the relative proportions of widows and divorced marriages in the country. In 1986, remarriage records accounted 6.9% of all marriages, while in 2006 represented 17.6%. The highest proportion is formed by divorced men who marry with single women. In second, with smaller proportions, are the divorced women who marry with single men and, after that, couples in which both are divorced. In 2006, these marital arrangements accounted 44.4%, 22.7% and 14.9% of the records of remarriage, respectively. In regards to age, remains the tendency of men marry younger women. In the case of divorced men, such an arrangement is typical especially when they marry to single women.

In calculating a remarriage index we can note a wide disparity between men and women with regard to entry into a new marriage. Evaluating the occurrence of remarriage in contrast with the whole population widow and divorced in 2000, we see that for every 1,000 inhabitants divorced and widowed there were 32.1 men remarriage and only 10.6 remarriage women. These differences, to some sort, are explained by constrains that affect the life of men and women after divorce. The fact of women being left with custody of the children after divorce would be one of the factors that difficult the establishment of a new partnership. Indeed, this situation can be thought for a significant contingent of women who divorce every year in Brazil. Most divorces involve couples who have children, more than half are children under the age of 18

years old and, approximately, 90% the woman is defined as the person responsible for custody (Figure2).

Figure 2 - Percent of divorces in the presence of children, number of children of the couple and the person responsible for custody of children. Brazil, 2006.		
Existence of children	Without children	30,4
	With children under 18 y	48,9
Number of children	1-2 children	50,6
	3-4 children	15,0
	5 or more children	4,0
Responsible for custody	Mother	88,2
	Father	6,4
	Others	5,4

Fonte: IBGE, Vital Statistics, 2006.

Most of the data exposed represent the context of formal marriage in Brazil. Little is known about the dynamics happening in consensual unions. While allowing a partial assessment of the dynamics of conjugality and consequently about family formation in the population, the data from Vital Statistics is an important source to study the changes in Brazilian families. Knowing the individuals marital trajectories (such like type of union, time, duration and transitions occurring throughout life) helps in understanding the changes occurring in how the families are organized. As shown by the data, the divorces and remarriage are part of the reality of a growing number of people. Because of that, is necessary to conduct more detailed surveys on the social constraints and possibilities that lead people to build new family arrangements and on what basis marital and family relations are maintained.