

## Education and Gender Issues in Albania: Kukës Region Case

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**Abstract:** This research was conducted to investigate the realities and mentalities on the education of girls and women in Albania, focusing on the case of the Kukës Region, by gathering quantitative and qualitative data. Education is one of the most important factors that contribute directly on empowering girls and women. If girls and women do not take an education and a profession, they will be unable to get involved to the waves of rapid changes of the modern society. As a result they will remain focused on their gender roles, trapped in their home duties. In this research 400 people were invited to participate in the questionnaires, 25 people in the opened interviews. The findings revealed that education for girls and women in Albania and in Kukës Region particularly, is very difficult especially because of the impact of the patriarchal society, old mentality, and gender roles.

**Key words:** education; gender issues; Kukës Region; school drop out; patriarchal society; old mentality;

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### 1. Education in Albania and gender issues

With the fall of the communist regime in Albania, there have been a lot of changes in the social, economical and political lives of the Albanian people. For more than 20-years Albania has been struggling with different challenges in her difficult way towards the development and progress; in her difficult way to meet the European standards for integration. Gender equality is one of the conditions for this integration and in my opinion it is one of the most delicate issues to be handled.

For many decades in a row, to deal with gender issues a wide range of national and international approaches have been undertaken. Some of the main important approaches we can mention here: CEDAW, The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Gender Discrimination, ratified in 1993 from the Albanian Government; The Declaration of Vienna and the Action Program, ratified in 1993; The Declaration of Beijing and the Action Platform of 1995, supported by many states and Albania; The Millennium Declaration, ratified on September 2000 on the High Level Meeting of OKB, etc. In the third objective of Millennium Development Goals is emphasized: the promotion of gender equality and empower girls and women, with the target of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and in all levels of education by 2015<sup>1</sup>.

In all of these approaches is emphasized the important role of gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women, by emphasizing the importance of prevention of discrimination of girls and women in education, politics, employment, professional growth, economical independence, decision making, etc. By ratifying these important approaches the Albanian government is engaged to work for following the direction to deal with gender inequality.

Education is very important for individuals in particular and society in general. In a society as ours, when girls and women are under the dependence and constant surveillance of their fathers, husbands and families, in general the role of education is existential. "...education is essential to secure access to the labor market and serves to legitimate the financial incomes; education is important for other strategies also to improve the life conditions, including the protection of personal rights and the possibility of participating in community institutions" (INSTAT, 2004: 14).

But the system of education itself can bring gender inequalities. According to the well-known researcher Kamla Bhasin, education does not necessarily bring gender equality: "Often even education is patriarchal; it justifies, perpetuates or does not take in account the inequalities between men and wives. Any analyze of school books and literature for children has shown that there are gender differences in them, in favor of men. This prejudice continues in almost any academic area..." (UNDP, 2005:4).

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<sup>1</sup> Beyond Access: Transforming Policy and Practice for Gender Equality in Education, 2005, p. 1

The Albanian society has changed within the years but we still find patriarchal elements in its organization, where conducting the proper gender roles is very important. Even when it comes to the system of education we find elements of gender stereotypes

During the communist regime education was of special importance in state politics, by stressing the importance of education of individuals, men and women. Institutions of education were built even in the remote villages of every city. Although most individuals could not choose the area of study because state structures decided for this, as men also women graduated in different areas of higher education. Anyway, "The socialist state never encouraged to become aware of their inner freedom, or put into question the power of men in the home" (INSTAT, 2004: 24). But with the fall of the regime, many institutions of education came out of function, by letting many children and youth without a place where to get an education. Also, the quality of education offered was falling down because many teachers quit teaching to get involved in other more profitable activities like trade or they got involved in the wave of inside and outside emigration.

Also the role of the state became weak with the fall of the communist regime, in the first year of democracy which was accompanied with the growth of a lot of disturbing phenomena, which weakened particularly the position of girls and women. The Albanian society with patriarchal elements used these events to deny to girls and women their right of education. The danger that could harm girls and women like violence, deceit, human trafficking, robbing, were used as reasons to convince girls and women that they should stay at home for their own sake. The events of 1997 further worsened the situation. The waves of these changes made girls and women to have fears and concerns for their future.

In the chaotic circumstances that were created after the fall of the communist regime, and especially after the events of 1997, a wide range of stories began to spread, which served to the patriarchal mentality to reinforce the conviction that the place of girls and women is at their home, and this not because men want it that way, but simply for their own good and safety.

During these years of strong challenges for the Albanian society, education seemed to have lost its importance, men were emigrating and girls and women were staying at their homes. Many girls interrupted their studies within the elementary system, the lucky ones at their secondary school which made even worse their situation regarding unemployment of girls and women.

Besides the above circumstances, the attitude of youth and other group ages toward education was affected by some other elements as below:

- The lack of job opportunities as the result of the destruction of the state sectors after the fall of the communist regime;
- Having a university diploma didn't imply that you could have a secure job place anymore;
- The incomes from work at the state sector were not enough to handle the needs of everyday life;
- The involvement in the private sector not necessarily needed the possession of a university diploma because of two reasons: first- the areas of the private sector developed were mostly construction, transportation, sewing or carpentry, etc. second- the rates of the development of this sector were low;
- The immediate economic incomes required to face the everyday needs for living;

All these elements weakened the importance and the role that education used to have. The youth and other group ages of society were focused in solving the most immediate needs in front of them, by not thinking of the benefits that education would bring in the future. The people living in Albania were suffering high levels of unemployment and lack of economical incomes, so they had to focus in finding ways of solving quickly this problem, education was not one of them. Men considered emigration as a means to gain economical incomes, for their family and them. As emigration was bringing more incomes than being employed in the Albanian job market, this served as one more reason especially for men to leave the attendance of school at different levels of education.

The attitude of males toward education was affected especially from the needs of economical incomes different from that of females, whom staying at home and abandoning school was sort of imposed to them. I think that both of these attitudes were affected from the patriarchal mentality of gender roles, the circumstances and the events of the '90s served as a stimulant to put, once again, men and girls and women in the position dictated by gender roles. Men had to provide incomes to support the family, as their gender role requested; girls and women had to fulfill the domestic duties, as their gender role dictated. I think that the situation and the circumstances created after the fall of the communist regime and the events of 1997 served as means that the patriarchal society used to reinforce its power.

The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the new millennium brought a new attitude toward education; many young people participated in the competitions to pursue a higher education degree. Nowadays a growing number of youth are pursuing a degree in a public or private university. Based on the data taken from INSTAT<sup>2</sup>, in the academic year 2009-2010, 95449 students are attending higher education, 54030 of them are females. As we can notice, the number of female students is higher (data taken from INSTAT 2010).

Although, the percentage of youth that pursue higher education is lower compared with the attendance of other levels of education. According to the data, for the 2008, in elementary education are included 97% of the children, in secondary school 73% and in higher school only 30% of the youth (data taken from INSTAT 2008).

Related to the number of young people that pursue Higher Education in Albania we have the table below referring to the academic year 2009 – 2010. From the table we can see that the number of girls and women that attend university is higher than that of men in those areas that historically were dominated by them and vice versa.

**Table 1. Number of students and Universities**

Nr	University	Total	Female	Male
1.	Total	116292	64130	52162
2.	Total, Public Universities	95449	54030	41419
2.	Tirana University	32884	22473	10411
3.	University of Politechnic	9812	2743	7069
4.	Institute of Gymnastics	772	127	645
5.	Arts Academy	973	390	583
6.	Durres University	4506	2524	1982

Even if the number of girls and women graduated in higher education is higher than that of men, the number of girls and women in leading positions is still low. This is an indicator of the patriarchal system, where the lower you get in the administration hierarchy the more girls and women you find in the positions, and vice versa. You can notice this by just opening the data published from INSTAT on the number of employed girls and women in different sectors of the economy. So, if we take as an example the Statistics published from INSTAT on the education system, the higher education we have the results as below:

**Table 2. Effective academic body in higher education<sup>3</sup>**

	2002 – 2003	2003 – 2004	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,704</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>1,882</b>	<b>2,017</b>
<b>Professors</b>				
Male	233	214	244	269
Female	23	36	39	43
<b>Assistant Professors</b>				
Male	228	234	234	236
Female	100	100	103	106
<b>Teachers/Lectures</b>				
Male	550	526	577	598
Female	570	649	685	765

As we can see from the table above, the number of male professors is much higher than that of women professors. As the sociologist Zyhdi Dervishi states: "...in general, the more important are considered the decision making positions in private and public structures, the lower is the representation of girls and women we find in them" (Dervishi, 2001: 99)

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Statistics, Albania.

<sup>3</sup> Professors, lecturers and assistants (p.24, Female – Male 2006).

## 2. Education in the region of Kukes<sup>4</sup> and gender issues

The Kukes region lies in the northeastern part of Albania and includes three districts: Kukes, Has and Tropoja, with a population of 111,393 inhabitants (data taken from the Kukes Regional Council). It consists of three municipalities, 21 communes, 187 villages (89 villages in the Kukes District, 30 in Has District and 68 in Tropoja).

A wide range of socio-economic issues disturbs the life of the inhabitants in this region, such as: poverty, unemployment, lack of investments, quality of educational system, and quality of medical services offered in an under developed infrastructure.

### 2.1 Why Kukes Region?

There are some important reasons that made me choose Kukes Region as a case for this study:

- Education is very important in general for Albanian society but, for Kukes Region education is crucial for its development because 54% of the inhabitants that live there are 25 years old (in average) (SZHQK, 2004: 38);
- Economical difficulties: The region suffers a wide range of socio-economic issues that make the life of the inhabitants very difficult to handle (poverty, unemployment, lack of investments, quality of educational system, quality of medical services offered, underdeveloped infrastructure);
- All these socio-economic problems were accompanied with another phenomenon, the migration of the population in other cities or abroad, especially young generations. From 1989 to 2001, 25% of the population moved from the Kukes Region (SZHQK, 2004: 36).
- The Secondary school enrollment is lower comparing to other levels of education; From the statistical data, the participation of boys and girls in the secondary school is at disproportion, something that it is not noticed at the elementary school.
- The number of Secondary schools is very low to handle the number of children that finish elementary system, especially in the villages (92 elementary schools and 20 secondary schools); These schools are mainly situated in the cities, especially the villages lack opportunities to offer secondary education for the young people that live there.
- The number of children and youth that abandon school is higher than the average in all the country;
- Mostly girls are the ones that abandon secondary school; In Secondary School, 23% of the students that attend are females, 75% are males. This is a very serious concern for the region, as this impedes girls to have the right to go further in their education. Secondary school is the trampoline for students to high school and it seems that in Kukes region, girls are the ones that abandon secondary school most; as a result their possibilities to follow higher education are stopped here.
- The lack of infrastructure and geographical distances: The problem is much more disturbing in the villages because the higher percentages of girls that abandon secondary school are from the villages<sup>5</sup>. The long geographical distance between the cities and the villages in the Kukes Region is seen by the inhabitants as the reason for the lack of development, investments and opportunities in this region. The roads are dangerous and even more dangerous during the winter months. This lacking of infrastructure affected the possibilities of youth, especially of girls to pursue education.

### 2.2 Methodology

**Instruments:** The instruments used in this study are: first, data gathered from the local institutions like Regional Education Directory, Kukes Prefecture; secondly, 400 questionnaires and 25 interviews are administered; thirdly, direct observations, a method facilitated by the fact of being an inhabitant of one of the districts of the Kukes Region.

**Participants:** In this study participated 400 people from the Kukes region, 200 of them females and 200 males. The age of the respondents included in the research was from 18 years old and above. Also, 25 respondents participated in the open interviews.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, refer to The Development Strategy of the Kukes Region.

<sup>5</sup> For more information, refer to The Development Strategy of the Kukes Region.

### 2.3 Secondary school, the trampoline to high school enrollments

As we mentioned before, dropping out of the school in one of the main problems in Kukes Region, not only from elementary education but mostly from secondary education. This is a very disturbing issues as only the ones that attend the secondary school have the right to be eligible to apply for higher education. Data for the attendance of girls in secondary school are in their disfavor, especially for the girls in the villages. In the villages the secondary schools are fewer, they usually are very far from their houses, with the mountainous landscape, lack of infrastructure, it is very difficult to attend regularly the lessons in winter time. "The decreasing number of girls that attend secondary education is a serious concern for the region and its development in the future" (SZHQK, 2004: 50).

#### 2.3.1 Why do boys drop out of the secondary school enrollment?

The respondents think that the reasons why boys drop out of secondary school are as below:

- Boys are not fond of studies, they mostly are 'obliged' from their parents to study (45% of the respondents agree); One of the respondents, 50 years old, stated that "*Parents pay more attention to the boys education because they are less concentrated than girls and do not read as much as girls do*", girls do not need to be encouraged, by nature they study more than boys.
- Education does not bring employment and the job opportunities are few, as a result boys find it useless to spend all those years in education institutions just to be 'unemployed with a degree' as the respondents say (37%);
- If you want to open a private business you can do it even if you do not have a degree, all you need to have are the material means (43%);
- Working at state institutions does not provide enough incomes for living, as the respondents state: 'state wages are girls and women wages' (57%);
- Emigration is seen as an important way for incomes (54%); Relating to the results, was noticed that the young male respondents still consider emigration as one of the most important options for their future, sometimes much better than education. Even nowadays you can hear teenage boys say that they plan to go abroad to work for some years to guarantee a better future for themselves. Because these incomes were higher than the ones they could gain from the job market in the region of Kukes, or anywhere in Albania, this served as one more reason to alienate youth, especially boys, from attending all the levels of the education system. But even for the ones that are pursuing higher education, emigration is still considered as an option for their future. The student respondents state that maybe they can go and work abroad for some years after graduating, collect some incomes, and then return and why not to work in the profession they have graduated.

Below some statements from the respondents:

*"I am studying economics because I think that it is important to have a profession so I can have a job in the future. But, after finishing my studies I think that I will consider emigration as an option. A man needs to have some incomes before starting a family, and job opportunities in Albania offer nothing, the salaries here are not enough to have coffee with friends all month. So, I think that I will go abroad, work for some years, save some money and then I can return and work in my profession."* (a student, 20)

*"I have returned in Albania ( Kukes) three years ago. I worked abroad for 13 years, and I do not see where is the importance of higher education in offering you a better future? I have learned a profession while abroad that gives me incomes to have better life than my teacher friend does. You know, I have a friend of mine that works as a teacher, well I can say that I would never enter all that trouble, to study 4 years in Tirana, live as students do, to depend all my life on a job that has a ridiculous salary."*(a man, 40)

### 2.4 The situation of girls related to education

"Generally girls see education as the main way towards their self-assertion, especially in these difficult years of transition full of all kinds of difficulties and challenges" (Dervishi, 2004: 15). But, how girls and woman react toward work (and education) is product of special circumstances, opportunities, constrains and choices they make in respect thereof or in response to them (Marks and Huston, 2002: 523).

The dropping out of school by girls is more problematic because none of the reasons regard their case. Here lays the mos difficult problem, school buildings could be built and could be well equipped with the necessary means, this requires

only financial means and good will. Whereas the problem of abandoning of school for girls is more difficult to solve and the problems this brings to society their noneducation have an effect on all the members of the society and on the general development of the society itself.

From the results of the research, the respondents agree that education is very important for girls and women (63%). *"I do not see another option for the girl from Kukes Region than education, to secure them a better future. Education is the only option girls have to challenge old mentalities and to have other activities than domestic ones. I am lucky to have a diploma, because I have a job that allows me to leave home and domestic worries aside for some hours everyday. And the most important thing, I have a salary, maybe is not much, but I do not have to ask for money all the time."* (a woman, 27). As the respondents say, education is the only opportunity especially for girls and women 'to make it in life' One of the respondents (20 years old), a student in Faculty of Law states: *'the future of society depends from education and the development of girls and women; she is the head of society'*. On the other hand, even the male respondents are positive regarding to this issue. One of the respondent, 52 years old- graduate states: *'the education of girls and women is very important because it brings development to the society and pushes the life forward. An educated girl and woman educate better her children'*. You can notice the tendency to relate girls and women with their gender roles, taking care of children.

2.4.1 Which are the impediments that stop girls to get an education and make them move away from the school desks to become "professionals" of house duties?

We mentioned above the important disturbing fact that girls are the ones that drop out of school, especially secondary school. This shows that the case of girls abandonment of school is a critical issue that needs to be treated. Respondents are asked two different questions regarding this issue: 1. Which are the factors that influence the decrease the value of higher education for girls? 2. Which are the reasons that affect the growth of secondary school drop out of girls? The answers given are different, but both of them are examples of the delicacy with which this problem needs to be handled.

According to the respondents, regarding to the factors that influence the decrease the value of higher education for girls the results are as below:

- The respondents think that girls and women in Kukes Region are paid less than man, so it is not worth to spend all those years in school when they can use their time in a more useful and productive way at home; The male respondents say that *"girls and women's salary its not so important"*, she has to stay at home with her family, this has to be the priority for girls and women (46%);
- Girls and women in decision making position in Kukes Region are a few, the ones that are, are prejudiced and rumored by others; According to the data taken, in the Region of Kukes 71 women are in decision making positions, that is only 5% of the total number of employed girls and women. If we refer to the education system in the region, although the number of female employees is higher than that of man (66% are female), only 17 of them are in decision making positions<sup>6</sup>. This serves as discouragement for girls and women to pursue higher education as a means for progression and career development.
- If girls and women want to pursue education they have to sacrifice, to choose between profession and family; to be married or to get an education; both are very difficult for girls and women in Kukes Region (48% totally agree, 28% are male);
- Education does not guarantee an occupation (27%). Kukes region is characterized by a high level of unemployment, especially for girls and women; State job opportunities are a few, and as regards to the private sector, the areas developed in Kukes region do not offer many opportunities for girls and women. Private sector in Kukes region includes the building sector, trade and transportation, etc. (Regional Council, 2006: 48-49). These areas are male dominated areas that offer little for the employment of girls and women.

The problem of abandonment of secondary school for girls is more problematic as the opportunities offered are a few in this region. If you do not pursue secondary schools and then higher education it seems that the only option left is to get married. In Kukes Region you can find courses like nursery, hairdresser, dressmaker, which can serve as a way of getting a profession and by exercising it they will have the opportunity to earn incomes and why not be economically

<sup>6</sup> Për më shumë informacion referoju Raporti të Progresit të Strategjisë së Kukësit, Shtator 2006, faq 34.

independent from their families or husbands. But these opportunities given to them are traditional female areas that usually are underpaid; they do not help girls and women to achieve a better status or to progress in their professional and social career. On the other hand the reality has shown that it is very difficult to put this knowledge in practice because the girls and women that have taken these courses lacked opportunities of employment. Also, another problem related to abandoning secondary schools is that this makes the possibilities for employment very difficult, and leave girls and women within domestic activities.

#### 2.4.2 What are the reasons that affect the growth of secondary school drop out of girls?

**The old patriarchal mentality** is very strong in Kukes Region, and still continues to affect the life of inhabitants in this region. You can notice that by a simple look at the bars and roads around, mainly male clients and passers by. The situation in the villages is even worse, *'girls and women do not go in the bars or walk alone in the streets, it is a shame for them and the families that allow it. They have to be accompanied by a brother, father or husband'* stated one respondent (40 years old). You can not dare to pass twice in the same road if you do not want to be rumored about by the male spectators. As long as the patriarchal system will dominate the situation of girls and women will not change, the domestic sphere will be still their duty, and the breadwinner man's duty (Grint, 2005). *'The women are judged by fanatic and unemployed people, who do not have anything else to do all day long'* (woman, 43). *'men prejudge women, they judge every step a woman makes, they do not miss any occasion to make fun with their friend when hanging around bars all day long'* (woman, 35). 53% of the respondents agree that old patriarchal mentality is one of the main factors that affect the growth of secondary school drop out of girls, 34% of them are female.

Girls and women that pursue the higher education, which work or are in leading positions are attacked by the old social opinion. The more successful the girls and women are the more they are attacked. Old mentality does not ascribe her success to her skills but they always want to find what is after this success.

**Gender roles and marriage in young age:** Domestic duties historically have been considered attached to girls and women. The debate of how and why these roles are attached to girls and women continues even nowadays. The importance of this debate lays in the fact that these gender roles are the ones that impede girls and women to succeed in other areas (Dervishi, 2004), where girls and women can make an important contribution, like politics, economy, law, education and so on. It looks like the role of the housewife has become equal with the terms girls and women. In the patriarchal society of Kukes region these roles are clearly divided, you can find out by a simple quick look in the roads of these region, filled with men, or just knock on the doors of the houses to find these girls and women, cleaning, washing, cooking, taking care of children and so on. And as long as gender roles will not change it will be very difficult to change the position of girls and women (England and Farkas, 1986).

From the results we found out that the respondents agree with the statement that: *'for girls and women, caring about children and family comes first'*. Almost 67% of the respondents agree with the statement (37% of them were male and 30% female). We can notice that not only male respondents agree but also the percentage of female respondents is considerable. It looks like girls and women have accepted their gender roles, and seem naturally to sacrifice professional and public career if they are needed at home, and they always are.

Marrying at young age is considered as an obstacle for the education of girls, especially in the villages (46% of the respondents consider marriage as an obstacle for education, 24% are female). At the first years after the fall of the communist regime, marrying at young age became normal and getting married was seen as a priority for girls. It was usual to hear people say that *"if girls do not marry till their twenties, they will stay single forever"*. Even today continues this trend, girls get married at young age, and usually they have age differences with their husband, who are much older than them. This trend caused girls to commit themselves to the new family obligations by giving up pursuing further education.

Below some statements from the respondents:

*'Why do you have to invest all that energy and money for at least five years to educate girls, when the job that she will do will be badly paid. It is not worth to go through all that stress by reading and taking exams. Besides this, us parents, except for the expenses, why do we have to go through all that stress by worrying if something happens at her, if she can be robbed or violated, if she has an accident, etc. Do you think it is worth all these troubles when the result is the same. Better for her to stay at home, then marry and create her own family.'* (a woman, 52)

*"I do not see another option for the girls from Kukes Region than education, to secure them a better future. Education is the only option girls have to challenge old mentalities and to have other activities than domestic ones. I am lucky to have a diploma, because I have a job that allows me to leave home and domestic worries aside for some hours everyday. And the most important thing, I have a salary, maybe is not much, but I do not have to ask for money all the time." (a woman, 37)*

*"I can not use the words people say for girls at universities...I do not understand these people, how can they say those things, they may have their relatives at school in the future...."(a woman, 28)*

#### 2.4.2 A branch of the Economic University is available in the city of Kukes- an opportunity to be taken

In the Academic Year 2007 – 2008, a branch of the Faculty of Economics, University of Tirana, opened in the Kukes region. This gave the opportunity to attend the higher education to many young people including girls and women, which for various reasons couldn't attend the University in Tirana or in other cities in Albania.

From the data taken from this faculty it results that the Academic Year 2009-2010, 390 students were enrolled, from which 239 were females and 151 were males. From the data taken from the interviews among the reasons for this high attendance of girls and women are fewer economic expenses, the vicinity to their homes, the physical security of girls, etc. An interviewee states: *"girls are safer here, they can come home in the evening, there are fewer risks here than in Tirana."* The people interviewed were asked if this high attendance of girls and women was an indicator of an attenuation in the mentality and prejudice for girls and women. From the data we noticed it was mostly men (60%) who thought so rather than women (20%). The data shows that girls and women don't think the mentality and prejudice has become easier. Anyway they see it as an chance to be taken in order to fulfill their desire or their need to get an education degree.

Another respondent interviewed states: *"The attenuation of mentality? I don't think this is the reason for the attendance of the faculty here by females. They are allowed because they can be surveilled. They make sure the girls come straight home from school, the father, the brother or the husband chaperons them from the house to the faculty and vice-versa".*

#### 2.5 In Conclusions

The reasons for dropping out the school by boys and girls stated by the respondents are different, but the consequences of school abandonment are harsher on girls than boys. The reality has shown that although boys abandon school they have managed to find other ways or activities to organize their life and for providing incomes, on the other hand, for girls this has resulted very difficult, like an imprisonment at home, in the domestic sphere.

But if we want to place girls and women in their positions in the areas above and to prevent discrimination, girls and women need to have a profession and the proper education. I think that the main factor in girls and women empowerment is education, especially the higher education attendance. The modern and developed society needs educated people, graduated professionals that are able to offer qualitative services, to produce and invent new ones. If girls and women do not take a profession they will be unable to get involved in the waves of rapid changes of the modern society. As a result they will remain focused on their gender roles, trapped in their home duties.

Education gives the girls and women in the Kukes region a peaceful weapon to fight against gender inequalities. With it girls and women have one more chance to climb the steps of a professional and social career. But for girls and women various step backs come across in her way to see her back in attending the different levels of education. The girls and women from Kukes face these step backs and independently from those many girls and women have studied and continue studying up to the highest levels of education.

One of the step backs for the "setting free" of girls and women will be those girls and women who have been deeply impregnated with the prejudices and mentalities of the society regarding their role and place, rather than the difficulty to step back from these roles and express a different opinion.

Looks like the mentality, the customs and the tradition have played their part, the inculcation of the roles for females and males in that degree that the men need not continually emphasize them or as much as before because are the girls and women themselves that contribute to this process.

School buildings can be put up, but the problem of dropping out of school by girls and women is deeply instilled in the mentalities of people with emphasized patriarchal elements, the clear division of gender roles, prejudices and despicable opinions about them.



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