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Ladies or Criminals: An Exploratory Study of Patterns of Female Criminality in the Republic of Macedonia

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Abstract

Women, as well as in many other aspects of society, also in the area of criminological research have been evaded and poorly researched. The patterns of women’s criminality are a reflection of their social and cultural position. In most cases women commit crimes because they are pushed on the margins of society, trying to find the best solutions for their suppressed lives. This paper makes an analysis of women’s criminality in Republic of Macedonia, using data from the State Statistical Office covering the period between 1995 and 2015. It analyses the most important characteristics, such as volume, dynamics and structure of female criminality and it connects them to the current social and cultural position of women in our country.

Keywords: Crime, Pattern, Position, Women.

Introduction

Proclaiming itself as modern one, Macedonian society is still struggling between patriarchal relations and gender equality. Women are still underpaid according to the State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, and unfortunately still perceived as the less worthy in society. Analysing data given by the State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia we can conclude that women’s positions regarding education, employment and incomes are worse than those of men. According to the data from the 2002 Census of the Population, Households and Dwellings in Republic of Macedonia, the number of pupils in primary school was 48% females and 52% males, in secondary school 47% females and 53% males. In the academic year of 2006/2007, there were 31, 052 female students and 25, 959 male students, and at the same year 4, 021 females and 2, 178 males have graduated from Macedonian faculties (State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, 2008).

Regarding employment and economic activity in 2006, 38% of the female population was employed, opposite to 61% male employees. The unemployment rate

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among women was lower compared to men, 41% (F) and 59% (M), but if we compare this to inactivity rate, then women were far more inactive than men, 64% females and 36% males (State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia, 2008). During the period of 2011, the employment rate among women was 40%, the unemployment 39%, but the inactivity rate among women was high and it represented 64%. The employment rate of women was higher in urban areas or 43.8% in comparison to the one in rural areas, 33.7% (State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, 2013).

In 2016, though, less female children graduated from secondary schools (47%), data showed that more women (54%) enrol in Universities, even higher percentage graduated (57% are women), but still the employment rate among women (33.7%) was lower compared to employment rate among men (50.5%). The activity rate for women was even lower (44.9%) than the one of men (68.9%). The difference between rural and urban areas represents a very difficult social situation for women that is very common in society and has deep roots inside socially divided relations in traditional families. The activity rate among women in rural areas was 38.7% and the employment rate 29.6%. On the other hand, in urban areas the women activity was 49.6% and the employment rate 36.7% (State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, 2016).

The number of women working at Universities is lower than the one of men, 2,095 men are academic staff opposite to 1,885 women. Women are mostly clerical support workers, technicians and associate professionals, service workers, shop and market sales workers. They occupy less than 20% of job positions such as legislators, senior officials and managers (State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, 2016).

Using the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report for 2016, Republic of Macedonia, in 2016 is ranked 73 of 144 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index measurement, in contrary to 2006 when it was ranked on 28 out of 115 countries. The labour force participation was 52% females and 48% males, but the estimated earned income yearly was significantly lower among women, or illustrated in numbers 10, 114 US dollars for females and 16, 962 US dollars for males. Women are mostly employed as professional and technical workers (53%), and rarely are legislators, senior officials and managers (24%). Also, in the area of political empowerment, there are 33% women in parliament, 8% females in ministerial positions and in the last 50 people, there has not been a female head of state (Global Gender Gap Reports, 2016).

Such set of relations in Macedonian society results in underpaid women's working positions, their lower status in social connections, strain emergence and a criminal activity which is a reflection of their social and cultural position.

Patterns of Female Criminality in the past

During prehistoric and archaic period, when a mother showed her child in public that wasn't accepted by the father, she was punished for her act. During the classical period, the interest of the society was moved from private towards collective which had influenced the process of moving the boundaries to homicides, heresy, incest, adultery, perjury, thefts, and deceit. Witchcraft and poison trafficking were crimes

common to women, as well as marrying a foreigner and abortion. In the time of the Hellenic period women were more present in the public area, which resulted in committing crimes such as frame - up, deceit, theft, the inability to take care of the parents and breaking an oath (Meier, 2005). Egypt during the Antic period is known for imposing punishments on women for adultery and prostitution (when it was practiced in holy places and temples) (Robins, 1993).

In Medieval Europe women had their own *modus operandi* which differed from the one of men. Violent crimes differed in regard to *instrumentum operandi* and attacked object. Thus women mostly attacked other women, and as instruments to commit the crime they used their teeth, hands and legs. Weapons were rarely used (Durstun, 2013). This period is also characterized by few crimes typical for women, such as infanticide. Unmarried women, very often, were offenders of such crimes, because of their position as priests' lovers or servants in rich families, unmarried women in their early twenties, newly married women and widows. The children were born outside of marriage, so they couldn't take care of them, and their only choice was to kill them. Mostly used *modus operandi* by women for committing infanticide was drowning, strangulation, suffocation or deprivation. Females rarely used beating, neck breaking, knifing, burning or throwing the baby to the pigs as *modus operandi* (Spence, 2010). As criminals, women were rarely caught committing deceit or forgery, but they were often accused of thefts. Property crimes were committed differently than those committed by men and directed towards different objects than those in male crimes. Females committed property crimes so they could steal small objects which could be consumed or sold immediately after they had committed the crime. They were servants who were stealing from the homes they worked in, nurses who were stealing from their patients or workers from the catering industry whose victims were their guests (Dean, 2014). It is obvious that gender differences, gender roles and social position of women, were among the most influential factors for the low rate of female criminality, but also a factor connected to the differences between the specific aspects of male and female *modus* and *instrumentum operandi*, and of course the other two important characteristics of crime, *locus* and *tempus operandi*.

Gender - Crime Relation

Inside criminological research, the fact and conclusion that the level of criminality among men is higher than that of women is easily reached. Statistics from different time periods reflect to male criminality as higher and severe than the one of females. "Gender gap" is a known phenomenon in criminology and its existence until today has not been adequately explained.

The number of committed severe crimes is lower among both genders. Also, the age of criminal offenders is approximately the same among both genders. The only difference between them is connected to prostitution, mostly because female prostitutes are younger than male prostitutes. Women mostly commit property crimes that result in smaller material damages for the victims. Violent crimes are characterized with less serious injuries. Crime carriers and recidivism are less possible among women. Women in most cases are sole perpetrators, but when they are part of organized crime groups they are in roles as co - offenders and are never involved in higher positions in the hierarchical steps (Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996).

Gender of criminal offenders has never been a sole determinant, but it has always been connected to social, economic, cultural, political and other variables. Since past times until today, it has been shown that crime is a male occupation. Some authors give ratio of 1:5 for women and men as convicts; 1:20 for women and men as inmates and 1:20 for juvenile females and males (Aslimoski & Stanojoska, 2015; Arnaudovski, 2007; Stanojoska, 2011). Such differences are known as “gender gap” or “ratio gender - crime”. Women commit less and easier crimes; they withdraw without hesitation; they reach critical age earlier than men and rarely commit professional crimes (Aslimoski & Stanojoska, 2015; Maguire, Morgan & Reiner, 2010). This is the result of the different nurturing of genders. Girls are educated to be calm and nice, in contrary to boys being seen as strong. Many authors find those differences in the natural role of women for motherhood. This gap is not only connected to their sexual nurturing and education, but also to the whole social codex (Aslimoski & Stanojoska, 2015; Stanojoska, 2011; Sutherland & Cressey, 1978).

The ratio between women and men in the Republic of Macedonia during the period of 1995 and 2015 varies between 5.27 in 2001 as the lowest and 10.66 in 2014 as the highest ratio. The average number of convicted women in the 21 year period is 554 women a year, which is around twelve times lower than the one of men.

Methodology

The research is exploratory in nature and is based on secondary data gathered by using the yearly publications of the State Statistical Office of Republic of Macedonia. Judicial statistics are based on data gathered by regular statistical surveys on perpetrators of criminal acts. Data presented in the publications are gathered by individual statistical questionnaires filled in by public prosecution offices and courts of the first instance, while data processing is done at the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia. The data refer to adult perpetrators against whom charges were brought from the public prosecutor office and the criminal proceedings were effectively completed with a court decision in the course of the respective year. Therefore, the total number of adult convicts includes those who are sentenced to the penalties that are provided in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia, convicts where no punishment was imposed and those penalized by a court reprimand or one of the correctional measures stated in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia, such as measures of intensified supervision or assignment to some correctional institution. The crimes are classified into groups of crimes, based on the Classification of Crimes, which is derived and based on the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia by articles and paragraphs of a particular crime. The analysis includes a period between 1995 (when the first publication was published) and 2015.

The main objective of this study is to analyse and describe the patterns of women’s criminality in Macedonia.

In direction of a better explanation of criminal activity by females in our country, a few different hypotheses are developed. Those hypotheses are:

Hypothesis 1: Women in Republic of Macedonia commit crimes connected to their social positions in their families and society.

Hypothesis 2: Women in Republic of Macedonia mostly commit property crimes as a result of their economic situation.

Hypothesis 3: Women of marginalized groups have higher possibilities to become criminals.

Hypothesis 4: Women being the physically weaker gender are expected to commit less violent crimes.

Results

Table 1. Convicted offenders rate and convicted women rate per 100, 000 criminally liable citizens, and convicted women rate per 100, 000 criminally liable women in the Republic of Macedonia

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)

Year	Total number of criminally liable/responsible citizens (Age 14 years - more)	Total number of criminally liable men (Age 14 years - more)	Total number of criminally liable women (Age 14 years - more)	Total number of convicted perpetrators	Total number of convicted women	Number of convicted perpetrators per 100 000 criminally liable citizens	Number of convicted women per 100 000 criminally liable citizens	Number of convicted women per 100 000 criminally liable women
2007	1, 667, 690	830, 604	837, 086	9,639	622	578	37	74
2008	1, 678, 404	835, 865	840, 539	9,503	635	566	38	76
2009	1, 689, 265	841, 122	848, 143	9,801	695	580	41	82
2010	1, 698, 313	845, 516	852, 797	9,169	669	540	39	78
2011	1, 706, 069	849, 304	856, 765	9,810	661	575	39	77
2012	1, 711, 140	851, 792	859, 348	9,042	624	528	36	73
2013	1, 717, 353	854, 737	862, 616	9,539	701	555	41	81
2014	1, 721, 528	856, 864	864, 664	11,683	1126	679	65	130
2015	1, 726, 369	859, 324	867, 045	10,312	865	597	50	100

Macedonian crime statistics show no difference from global trends of women's criminality. Females are in most cases connected to violent, property, traffic and

crimes against family and marriage. Also, until the decriminalization in 2013 there were many women convicted of the crimes of defamation and insult.

Table 2. Base and Chain Index of the total number of convicted perpetrators and convicted women

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)

Year	Total number of convicted perpetrators	Base index	Chain index	Women	Base index	Chain index
1995	7,711	100	–	554	100	–
1996	6,341	82.23	82.23	406	73.28	73.28
1997	4,732	61.37	74.62	312	56.32	76.85
1998	6,128	79.47	129.50	373	67.33	119.55
1999	6,783	87.96	110.69	372	67.15	99.73
2000	6,496	84.24	95.77	357	64.44	95.97
2001	5,952	77.19	91.62	298	53.79	83.47
2002	6,383	82.78	107.24	374	67.51	125.5
2003	7,661	99.35	120.02	394	71.12	105.35
2004	8,097	105	105.69	463	83.57	117.51
2005	8,845	114.71	109.24	574	103.61	123.97
2006	9,280	120.35	104.92	560	101.08	97.56
2007	9,639	125	103.87	622	112.27	111.07
2008	9,503	123.24	98.59	635	114.62	102.09
2009	9,801	127.10	103.13	695	125.45	109.45
2010	9,169	118.91	93.55	669	120.76	96.26
2011	9,810	127.22	106.99	661	119.31	98.8
2012	9,042	117.26	92.17	624	112.63	94.4
2013	9,539	123.71	105.5	701	126.53	112.34
2014	11,683	151.51	122.48	1126	203.25	160.63
2015	10,312	133.73	88.26	865	156.14	76.82

The percentage of women in conviction rates in other Balkan countries (in 2010) was 6.8% (270 convicted offenders per 100, 000) in Albania, 6.6% in Bulgaria (517 convicted offenders per 100, 000), 10.2% in Croatia (547 convicted offenders per 100, 000), 11.7% in Greece (384 convicted offenders per 100, 000), 9.8% in Serbia (319 convicted offenders per 100, 000) and 10.9% in Slovenia (411 convicted offenders per 100, 000). The percentage of convicted women in Macedonia in 2010 was 7.2% from 540 convicted offenders per 100, 000 criminally liable citizens (European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, 2014). Developed countries have higher percentages of convicted women, which is expected, especially if we

know that women's position in these societies is different compared to the one in developing and less developed countries. For example, Germany has 18.8% women from 994 convicted offenders per 100, 000 citizens, Finland 19.8%, Denmark 18.9%, Sweden 17.4%, Austria 14.5% (European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, 2014).

Table 3. Structure of female criminality in the Republic of Macedonia between 1995 until 2006

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)

Crimes	Year											
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<i>Total number of convicted women</i>	554	406	312	373	372	357	298	374	394	463	574	560
Crimes against life and body	137	87	69	69	65	56	42	44	44	43	60	52
Murder	1	2	/	1	2	3	2	5	3	3	/	3
Negligent murder	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	1	/
Infanticide	/	2	4	2	/	/	1	1	2	/	/	2
Bodily harm	/	/	53	50	52	42	29	24	25	35	38	35
Grievous bodily harm	6	3	4	6	7	5	5	5	6	3	8	3
Participation in a brawl	3	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	6	3
Threatening with a dangerous instrument during a brawl or a quarrel	17	6	8	9	4	5	1	5	5	2	4	6
Crimes against freedoms and rights of humans and citizens	13	8	13	5	6	2	2	4	5	16	6	9
Crimes against work relations	3	2	/	/	/	3	2	1	2	4	1	1
Crimes against honor and reputation	73	49	43	41	45	34	29	33	42	37	45	27
Defamation (I и III), (II)	8	13	9	12	9	3	6	5	5	9	14	8

Insult	65	36	34	29	36	30	23	27	37	27	31	18
Crimes against sexual freedom and sexual morality												
Crimes against marriage, family and youth												
Abduction of a child	12	13	/	/	/	14	8	15	17	13	8	10
Neglecting and mistreating a child (I и II)	14	3	4	12	4	5	7	12	13	11	25	23
Non-payment of maintenance	/	/	2	1	5	2	4	7	7	10	13	15
Crimes against human health												
Crimes against environment and nature												
Crimes against public finances, payment operations and economy												
Counterfeiting money	/	/	4	3	4	8	5	4	9	5	10	6
Tax evasion	5	1	3	6	6	4	7	5	11	10	16	10
Crimes against property												
Theft	70	52	/	/	/	40	28	44	42	53	74	68
Aggravated theft	12	17	/	/	/	11	11	24	22	21	30	32
Robbery	1	1	/	/	/	2	2	1	3	/	1	2
Armed robbery	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	1	1
Embezzlement (IV)	1	2	/	/	/	12	11	9	4	17	11	8
Fraud	16	9	/	/	/	28	10	24	30	28	37	33

Crimes against official duty	34	25	7	6	12	5	13	10	5	9	19	14
Misuse of official position and authority	8	5	3	1	3	1	6	7	2	4	14	8
Crimes against the administration of justice	1	8	6	1	3	6	6	5	4	7	8	11
Crimes against the public order	/	/	11	22	16	16	8	10	13	18	22	34
Autocracy	/	/	4	12	10	4	2	3	7	9	9	21
Crimes against legal transactions	/	/	22	25	33	32	26	35	28	33	42	48
Falsifying a document	/	/	21	25	28	31	24	33	28	31	41	46
Crimes against the general safety of people and property	4	5	4	3	1	2	2	1	5	1	4	/
Crimes against traffic safety	57	53	42	57	58	52	42	47	40	55	51	70
Endangering traffic safety	56	52	42	57	57	51	42	46	40	55	51	70
Crimes against the armed forces	/	/	1	/	3	/	1	1	1	/	1	/

Table 4. Structure of female criminality in the Republic of Macedonia between 2007 until 2015

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)

Crimes	Year								
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Total number of convicted women</i>	622	635	695	669	661	624	701	1126	865
Crimes against life and body	34	40	61	62	50	63	55	63	61
Murder	/	1	1	2	1	2	2	/	3
Infanticide	1	/	1	/	1	/	/	/	/
Bodily harm	25	33	46	46	43	50	43	51	48

Grievous bodily harm	4	4	8	7	4	4	5	7	3
Participation in a brawl	1	1	2	1	/	4	4	/	1
Threatening with a dangerous instrument during a brawl or a quarrel	2	/	2	4	1	3	/	5	6
Crimes against freedoms and rights of humans and citizens	8	14	19	15	14	13	18	19	19
Endangering of security	5	6	9	7	8	8	9	10	13
Crimes against elections and voting	/	/	1	3	/	/	2	/	/
Crimes against work relations	/	/	/	2	1	6	/	1	3
Crimes against honor and reputation	39	45	38	38	30	37	5	/	/
Defamation	6	11	8	10	11	9	/	/	/
Insult	33	31	30	27	18	28	5	/	/
Crimes against sexual freedom and sexual morality	7	2	2	2	/	4	5	2	/
Crimes against marriage, family and youth	59	53	45	58	56	48	53	56	64
Abduction of a child	17	17	17	13	19	16	9	12	14
Neglecting and mistreating a child	13	16	16	19	5	7	10	11	6
Non-payment of maintenance	23	11	6	16	22	20	21	26	37
Crimes against human health	5	9	14	6	31	22	12	14	13
Unauthorized production and release for trade of narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors	4	6	11	6	18	18	10	11	13
Crimes against environment and nature	1	3	6	3	1	3	3	3	/
Crimes against public finances, payment operations and economy	27	34	19	24	28	25	44	38	34
Counterfeiting money	4	5	4	8	5	6	8	5	5
Tax evasion	12	13	3	9	12	10	22	16	17

Crimes against property	179	196	243	229	213	189	286	289	352
Theft	93	109	109	90	86	64	100	99	107
Theft of electricity, heat energy or natural gas	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	42	56
Aggravated theft	28	25	33	34	26	62	66	49	77
Robbery	1	2	4	3	1	3	2	4	1
Armed robbery	/	/	3	/	/	/	1	/	/
Embezzlement	6	10	10	9	6	5	11	10	8
Fraud	38	35	45	41	46	43	72	48	57
Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle	/	2	1	/	2	/	/	1	/
Concealment	7	2	6	9	7	3	5	6	21
Crimes against official duty	18	35	23	21	28	32	27	46	43
Misuse of official position and authority	11	25	20	15	15	21	20	35	23
Crimes against the administration of justice	15	11	19	18	20	20	18	20	14
False reporting of a crime	12	5	12	10	7	6	14	16	8
Crimes against public order	37	28	25	18	22	18	19	42	30
Obstructing an official in the performance of official duties	/	7	2	2	5	3	3	8	5
Act of violence	3	2	3	2	4	7	5	6	4
Autocracy	25	10	11	2	3	2	2	1	4
Crimes against legal transactions	65	47	50	63	63	47	36	414	142
Falsifying a document	56	44	45	59	55	45	29	41	26
Use of a document with false contents	8	2	3	3	4	1	6	373	115
Crimes against the general safety of people and property	3	/	7	5	3	10	9	11	9
Crimes against traffic safety	104	106	114	95	97	83	104	105	71
Endangering traffic safety	103	105	114	94	97	82	104	105	71
Crimes against humanity and international law	2	3	5	2	2	2	5	3	10

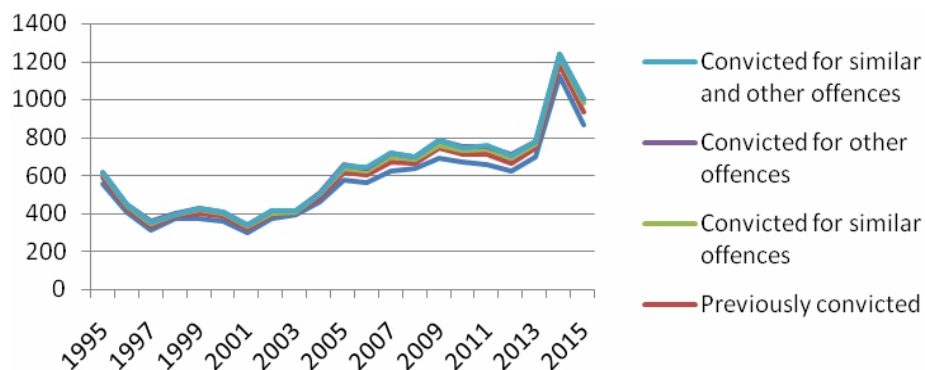
Table 5. Recidivism among female offenders in the Republic of Macedonia, between 1995 and 2015

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)

Year	Total number of convictions		Previously convicted	Convicted for similar offences	Convicted for other offences	Convicted for similar and for other offences
	All	Females				
1995	7711	554	34	22	11	1
1996	6341	406	22	15	6	1
1997	4732	312	23	10	12	1
1998	6128	373	13	8	5	/
1999	6783	372	30	18	10	2
2000	6496	357	28	16	8	4
2001	5952	298	22	14	6	2
2002	6383	374	20	8	11	1
2003	7661	394	12	4	4	4
2004	8097	463	22	18	4	/
2005	8845	574	41	23	18	/
2006	9280	560	42	22	16	4
2007	9639	622	50	28	19	3
2008	9503	635	32	18	13	1
2009	9801	695	48	19	26	3
2010	9169	669	41	25	16	/
2011	9810	661	49	27	19	3
2012	9042	624	43	25	18	/
2013	9539	701	42	22	18	2
2014	11683	1126	58	40	17	1
2015	10312	865	69	44	23	2

Figure 1. Recidivism among female offenders in the Republic of Macedonia, between 1995 and 2015

(Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia)



Discussion

The scientific interest in the field of criminal offenders in recent years included many studies and researches where crimes that are part of the organized crime group were mainly researched. Because of the lack of research in the area of women's criminality, we decided to use the available data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia and conduct our own research in this field. But, this study has its own limitations. Even though we get a sense of which crimes women commit in our country, still the results lack different and important aspects of those crimes, such as information regarding social and economic situation of the female offenders; the factors influencing the criminal situation; the connection between the perpetrator and her victim; their previous relation; etc.

In the Discussion section we will also use conclusions that were made in several previous studies we had conducted regarding female criminality.³ The purpose of the use of these conclusions is to fulfil the gaps which have been noticed in the data given by the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

H1: *Women in Republic of Macedonia commit crimes connected to their social positions in their families and society.*

H1 has been not rejected, because our research has shown that women in Republic of Macedonia commit crimes in connection to their social positions inside their families and society. Mostly, developmental processes and policies for gender equality have changed institutional perception towards women and their position inside Macedonian democratic society, but unfortunately they still haven't influenced the patriarchal framework which is strongly attached to micro communities. Out there, women shouldn't have professional carriers, have their own opinion, shouldn't leave their homes, and just have the roles of wives and mothers. Crimes committed by women originated from the life in such communities, even families, portray those patriarchal values and social positions. Crimes are the result of a long frustration process and pressure and are perceived as the only exit. Also, this is the main problem with other cases of violent behaviour. As we already mentioned, most of violent females act criminally against other family members, which is a result of family conflicts and family misunderstandings.

Being in such suppressed position, women are either unemployed or have underpaid working positions. Such living conditions result in difficulties when finding employment or in satisfying simple, everyday necessities. These two factors working together, produce a circulusvitiosus where women use criminal activities (property crimes) so they can survive. If we add ethnic marginalization to these factors, then we have Roma women who commit mostly deceits, gaining material and financial benefit, not being able to gain finances in other legal ways and with other, legal means.

Crimes against family and marriage are also very often regarding to female criminality. These crimes begin with divorce as a mean which results in dysfunctional families and divided parental rights. Women as this type of criminals, have custody over their children, but do not act accordingly to the court decisions and do not respect the right of the father to see the children. Also, women avoid paying

³ These studies are not available for public use, because they are still in the process of publication.

alimentation in cases when the custody is given to the children's father. But, in these situations there is a collision between female economic situation and their obligation to pay monthly alimentation, which results with acts different than those expected by the courts.

H2: *Women in Republic of Macedonia mostly commit property crimes as a result of their economic situation.*

H3: *Women of marginalized groups have higher possibilities to become criminals.*

H2 and H3 have also been not rejected. Property crimes in Macedonia cover around 75 - 80% from the total number of committed crimes yearly. The situation is no different in cases where women are analyzed. Property crime is also the dominant type of criminal activity among females. The mostly committed crimes from this group are "Theft" and "Fraud", but we mustn't forget the "Theft of electricity, heat energy or natural gas" which was criminalized as special type of theft in 2014 (what is interesting for this crime is that older women have been punished as offenders, with criminal situations not being righteously analyzed and appreciated. Is there a possibility for women between 70 - 80 years of age to be able to connect electric cables beyond the main electrical network or can they climb the electric columns and connect the cables there? We don't agree with such conclusions and think that these women were characterized as criminals only because their electricity bills are addressed to them.) Thefts are committed by women with poor living conditions, unemployed, and they've told the court that because of financial difficulties they have used criminal means to solve those problems.

"Frauds" on the other hand are crimes with two main and different groups of female offenders. The first one is Roma women, who commit frauds as soothsayers. Being systematically pushed on the margins of society, they are perceived as less important, and as a result of that they have very low levels of education, mostly 4th grade or primary school, but there are Roma women which are illiterate and these results in them being poor and unemployed. The other group consists of women with secondary school or bachelor degree. These women gave false promises to their victims of finding a good job position and employment in western countries and of course, never fulfilled their obligations towards the people who later become their victims.

H4: *Women being the physically weaker gender are expected to commit less violent crimes.*

H4 has been partly not rejected, because even though females commit less violent crimes than males, still the numbers represented in Table 3 and 4 shows that women often commit violent crimes. Women offenders of violent crimes dominantly can be divided into two groups. One by age and the other by education and living area (rural or urban), having in mind that all of them intersect. Younger women as violent offenders are between the age of 25 - 35, as for their level of education most of them are secondary school graduates and live in urban and rural areas. Their victims are in most cases their mothers in law with whom they live. The crimes are either "Bodily harm" or "Grievous bodily harm" which derives from domestic violence. The criminal situation is a culmination of a longer frustration process and strain that emerges between both sides, especially regarding the position of women in dominant

patriarchal families. It is a collision between different opinions and different set of values: modern women who are not perceived as housewives, but strong and independent; and traditional women perceived as wives and mothers, which should be their primary and only roles in life.

The other group of violent women are those in between 45 – 65 year of age. They are characterized with a lower level of education, mostly primary school, living in predominantly rural areas. These female offenders also become violent in cases of domestic violence, with their daughters in law as victims. Criminal situations in these crimes mostly have the same core factors as in the cases described in the previous paragraph, this time having the same conflicts culminating from the opposite side, the mother in law as perpetrator of violent acts.

“Murder” on the other hand among female offenders is quite rare. The cases we have analysed show that the profile of female murderers is the one of mothers and partners which have lower level of education (primary or secondary school), ethnic Macedonian, between 30 – 50 years old, unemployed or with no specific employment, women who were not previously convicted, psychologically introvert, with violent past and low or average IQ. The modus operandi includes intent (*dolus*) and instrumentum operandi that illustrates women’s social positions. The means used are either kitchenware or other tools which are part of every household. The criminal situation includes domestic violence (where children or their parents are victims and the murder is committed during domestic violence or when the woman offender has been the victim for a long period of time and the process of maltreatment by her husband or partner has ended with committing murder); psychological conditions, such as schizophrenia; an unwanted pregnancy; alcohol abuse or situational conflicts. These women have shown cruelty and inhumanity with their acts, but a high level of remorse during the court proceedings.

With the development of vehicles, traffic crimes, unfortunately, have become part of the dominant side of criminal activity. Although most of those criminal acts are negligent, they are connected to the human violent nature. Women, today, commit traffic crimes more than in the past, naturally, because of their social inclusion, they are given the permission to drive and become drivers; they are more active in everyday life, independent and “modern”.

Recidivism is the result of unsuccessful re-socialization. It is the negative side of society’s positions to prevent criminal activity and change the core meaning of sanctions which are perceived as repressive measures. In Republic of Macedonia, female offenders are serving their sentences in KPD Idrizovo (female sector), the only penitentiary institution for female criminals. In this institution, juvenile and adult female offenders are placed together which is completely opposite to the obligations given with key international documents. Also, it is under discussion how effective the process of treatment can be in such institutions.

But, despite such conditions in our penitentiary female institution, women have a very low level of recidivism, especially in cases of multiple past convictions. The special recidivism is around 5 – 10% from the total number of convicted women in each year, and the general recidivism is a bit lower, with around 2 –3%.

Conclusion

Female criminality in Republic of Macedonia analyzed by using data from the State Statistical Office, during the period of 1995 to 2015, has shown a steady, very low variable volume of convicted women offenders. The variations follow general trends of criminality in the country and have increase or decrease according to the changes in general numbers of convicted perpetrators in Macedonian courts. But, it shouldn't be forgotten that during the analyzed period, each year, the number of female criminals is around 5 - 8% from the total number of convicted offenders.

Women in the Republic of Macedonia mostly commit crimes which are incriminated in four different groups in the Criminal Code of our country. Those groups are crimes against property; crimes against life and body; crimes against marriage, family and youth and crimes against traffic safety. In each of these groups there are several criminal offences which females mostly commit. In the first group those are Theft, Aggravated theft and Fraud. In the group of crimes against life and body, those are Bodily harm and Grievous bodily harm. In the latter group, females mostly commit Nonpayment of alimentation and Neglecting and mistreating a child. And in the final group of traffic offences, women in 98% of the cases had committed Endangering traffic safety.

From the results and discussion we should not only make conclusions, but also get and give direction course for future studies of female criminality. The State Statistical Office should broaden its questionnaires' of the available data in the court cases and include several other aspects regarding each crime. In this way its publications will give a more real picture of criminal offenders overall and female offenders in particular.

In order to overcome the limitations of data given by the State Statistical Office and fill in the gaps in its publications, researchers should direct their studies towards courts cases analysis which will give them a broader framework of information and data regarding absent aspects of female criminality.

This research should be a guide for future studies of female criminality in the Republic of Macedonia, taking into account that it is the first one done after 30 years.

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