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**Monitoring media
on domestic violence
*2001 & 2002***

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Monitoring Media Coverage of Domestic Violence **2001 – 2002**

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Tirana 2003

Briseida Mema
AFP correspondent

...This monitoring, accompanied by recommendations, makes journalists more conscious of staying away from created stereotypes, of observing ethics in covering reality, of keeping a distance from speculations with new information and of going deeper into the social, political and economic causes that lead to such consequences, of highlighting that part of the problem that would help change the current situation...

Martin Leka
Journalist

The authors Gjermeni and Bregu come with this publication as a missing research at the service of researchers, journalists, etc. Without a doubt, this is of value to all readers, in spite of any gender differences. In particular, the surprise of this publication will stay with reporters. As in front of a magic mirror, through the “Monitoring,” they will be able to monitor themselves in covering stories that touch upon domestic violence.

Furthermore, reporters will be able to reflect broadly over the essence of the phenomenon, not becoming just “photographers” of the violence, but also “missionaries” of eradicating this archaic phenomenon.





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Introduction

“Violence changes everyone it touches”. Direct witnesses of all kinds of abuse agree to this. Unfortunately, violence today is found all around us, near our homes, inside our homes – in the family. Every day, newspapers and the rest of the media publish reports of such cases of violence and abuse. Violence has stealthily gained a place amongst us: it lives with us and accompanies us; it is spreading uncontrollably, almost like an epidemic. People living with violence, either as victims or as witnesses, learn (among other things) to fear, and they either try to avoid abuse, or become as abusive as the abuser. In worst scenario cases, abuse leads to the ultimate tragedy; in the most “fortunate” cases, it accompanies the abused all their lives, like a ghost.

Women and children, and men alike, have the right to live a free and violence-free life. This right is generally accepted in principle, but unfortunately not practiced by everybody; in addition, the level of awareness of the entire society and its institutions in this respect leaves much to be desired. It is true that the number of women reporting and denouncing abuse has increased. But unfortunately, we are still at an unhealthy stage where we still consider domestic abuse just another part of married life and not a crime. We still remain at the stage of thinking and judging, instead of actively outlining policies for the alleviation of the problem; in short, we are still at a stage where we are



trying to rescue whatever rights women are left with, after having been abused; be it legal rights, conditioned rights, natural rights or whatever other names we choose to call them by. It is not an exaggeration to say that domestic abuse and crime have “triumphed” over other crime categories¹. The manner in which abused women are treated by the public opinion, institutions such as the police and the courts, and to some extent even the health services, depends largely on the way abuse itself is presented and justified.

In order to change the present situation, a good starting point, albeit self-evident, is for all of us to understand that women have and must enjoy the same rights as men: the right to live a peaceful life free of abuse, whatever their relation to the abuser: husband, boyfriend, acquaintance or stranger.... We need to be fully aware that abuse is a major obstacle to achieving equality, development, and peace.

The aim of this particular report is not so much to do with the process of persuasion or awareness-raising that abuse is reprehensible and not to be tolerated. Almost everyone agrees to this. Here we will not try to describe how the cycle of abuse frightens, undermines, creates dependence, and repeats itself. Rather, this time we would like to see and understand more clearly how journalists and the print media refer to and treat domestic violence.

What is the Significance of Such an Initiative?

Keeping in mind the power of the media in general and the press in particular, it is important to help the public become more aware of the role the media play in shaping and changing people’s perceptions and, consequently, the extraordinary impact they have on our opinions and attitudes. That is why the press can be used as a powerful instrument to carry out positive

¹ See monitoring results below.



(or negative) changes. The Council of Europe, in its recommendations¹ on the Equality between Men and Women (No. 84-17) emphasizes that: **“the media play an important role in creating and shaping attitudes and values, and they have great potential to lead to social change; and consequently the media are a powerful means of socialization.”**

What we see and read in the press are samples of the specific priorities and personal viewpoints of journalists about the world that surrounds us. One can never stress enough the importance of honest, true, and impartial news and other press reports. Newspapers must be open forums for the discussion of social issues. A similar message was also expressed by Arthur Miller in the beginning of the twentieth century: “A good newspaper is a nation talking to itself” (Miller, Arthur; 1915)

The wish to “discover” how domestic violence is presented in the Albanian press is an aspect that requires special attention. At the present time the Albanian society is faced with numerous challenges, but now, more than ever before, it is very important to recognize and understand the gender problems and issues in our society, to conduct awareness-raising campaigns of these issues, to promote respect for women in the family and in the wider community and to find ways to redress the problems of inequality and abuse by actively involving the entire society in the process, and these are all major elements which had to be taken into account in our work.

In conclusion, this is an attempt to bring the problem of domestic violence and its consequences to the public’s attention and to make the point that domestic violence is a crime and as such, the whole society needs to be on guard and mobilize its institutions in the battle against it.

¹ Lanara, Zoe: “Gender Equality and the Media”. Greek General Confederation of Broadcasters (GSEE), 2002



1. Monitoring Press Coverage of Domestic Violence

Press monitoring is one of the main activities of the Center for Information and Documentation – a major project of the Women’s Center in Tirana. The monitoring process aims to observe and select articles dealing with women’s and children’s issues, and store them under several categories based on key words such as “women”, “women in public life”, “women and the economy”, “domestic violence”, “human trafficking”, “children” (child abuse, child abandonment, school abandonment), etc. The monitoring of press articles started in 1996 and since then, thousands of articles have been stored and catalogued in our data base. The Women’s Center also started a new tradition of developing and publishing reports based on the monitoring of media coverage of the most acute problems of the Albanian society.

This report seeks to make a contribution to the further development of this tradition by presenting and analyzing the problem of domestic violence as reflected in the printing press in 2001 and 2002.





1.1 The Concept of Domestic Violence

Although a lot has been said in the recent years about domestic violence, there is still no clear understanding of what domestic violence really is, the forms it takes and its individual and societal consequences. Historically, the Albanian society (and not only) has regarded domestic violence as a personal problem, or a phenomenon that belongs “behind closed doors”. In order to overcome this, we will attempt to present here the concept and definition of domestic violence, its forms and consequences for women and children. In addition, we will present the facts we gathered about this social problem, which will be referred to in this report.

Violence, as defined by the **Fourth World Conference in Beijing** in September 1995, *is a universal problem (a general problem of the entire society) and must be treated as such.* The same Conference emphasized that *violence against women is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace.*

Another definition of abuse was given in the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which considers abuse as *“a manifestation of the historically unequal relations between men and women”* and describes abuse as *“a key mechanism by which women are forced to be in a lower position compared to men”* (Resolution of the General Assembly, 48/104, 1993.)





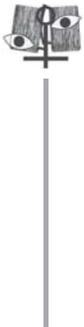
The most complete definition of violence against women has been given by the Declaration Against Violence Against Women of General Assembly of the United Nations. This definition describes violence as: **“A gender-based act, which results or may result in: physical, sexual or psychological injury, or suffering by women, and includes such acts as threats, arbitrary coercion or underrating of women in the personal or public life.”** (United Nations)

Domestic violence is manifested in the following forms:

Physical Abuse includes: pushing, hitting, scratching, pinching, biting, throwing, isolation at home, hitting with various objects, threatening with a knife or other weapon, refusing to help the woman when she is pregnant or ill, attempted murder up to murder.

Emotional Abuse includes: ignoring the feelings of the spouse, constant criticism, constant opposition, public or private humiliation, attempts to convince the partner that she/he deserves the treatment because of his/her actions, threatens adultery, constant jealousy, threatening to take the children away, keeping money from the spouse, forcing the spouse to stay home and not work, child abuse, calling names, etc.

Sexual abuse includes: treating the partner as a sexual object, forcing the partner to do striptease, forced sex, in-





sisting to touch or do whatever they want, forcing the partner to have sex with somebody else, sexual and sadistic acts, forcing the partner to have sex after physically abusing them, or demands it as a condition for the relationship to go on, adultery, etc.

Economic abuse involves control over the family finances so the partner is always dependent and under total control.

1.2 Women's Rights – Human Rights

The Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) specifically defines the promotion and protection of Women's Fundamental Rights¹ (1981), although women's rights are treated as human rights in all the UN conventions.

Another international convention for the prevention of domestic violence is **The Declaration for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW)**, (1993).

Other conferences such as the **United Nations Conference on Human Rights (1993)** and the **World Conference in Beijing (1995)**, described the problem of violence against women as one of the major areas where attention needs to be focused on.

¹ See: Michau, Lori and Naker, Dipak; "Mobilizing Communities to Prevent Domestic Violence", p. 255. A Resource Guide for Organizations in East and Southern Africa, Uganda 2002. (www.raisingvoices.org)





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Articles extracted from the above mentioned Conventions on violence against women:

- Women have the right of protection against domestic violence (DEVAW)
- Women have the right to a life free from any kind of domestic violence (physical, psychological, sexual) (DEVAW)
- Every person enjoys the right to life, freedom and safety (DEVAW)
- Women have the right to lead a life free from any form of violence, torture or punishment (DEVAW)

1.3 What One Needs to Know About Domestic Violence

Before we start dealing with the problem of domestic violence and the way it is present in media, we need to remember that:

- Domestic violence is a public and not a private issue, and as such it demands special attention from the whole society;
- The main cause of violence is unequal distribution of power in the couple;
- Violence hurts everyone; not only women;





- Women experience domestic violence more than men;
- Women experience various forms of violence (often simultaneously);
- Every person has the right to lead a life free from every form of violence (not only domestic violence);
- Every person is responsible for his/her own behavior;
- Violence is a choice. Abusers are responsible for the violence they exercise;
- Violence is never an acceptable reaction, nor is it an acceptable way to express anger, stress, or possible conflict;
- Change is possible, especially with the help of the community;
- Action against violence requires courage;
- Change is a long process. It has to face a number of obstacles and difficulties;
- There are other ways, except violence, to conflict resolution;

The whole society must contribute to the creation of a safe and violence-free environment. The creation of such an environment is beneficial to all (not only women).





I.4 Monitoring Hypotheses

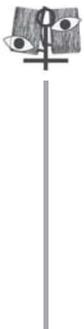
The main aim of press monitoring in 2001 and 2002 was to determine the actual place newspapers gave to issues of domestic violence and the way they deal with the problem by identifying **the most common forms of violence, its victims and their relationship with the abusers**, etc.

For this purpose the monitoring was conducted (but not limited to¹) the following hypotheses;

- Domestic abuse is mostly manifested in the form of physical and sexual abuse, while the psychological/emotional abuse, although quite common, is not widely covered by the media;
- Violence predominantly occurs in home settings (for example the victim's home) and abusers are people that the victim either knows well or lives with;
- Articles on domestic violence, in the majority of the cases, are more preoccupied with the “scoop” and the catchy headline than the treatment of the problem itself.

As can be seen from the above listed hypotheses, our aim is not only to monitor articles on domestic violence, but also

¹ As it will become clear in the course of the monitoring, the issues covered by it will not be limited to the above hypotheses, but will be expanded further.





to study and present of the collected data. We do not intend to make generalizations on the basis of the collected data; what we would attempt to do, however, is to present the reality people construct every day when they read the newspapers, as one of their major sources of information. Keeping in mind that in addition to providing news and information, the press is also a very powerful means of shaping the public opinion, we attempt to establish how much power the press wields and understand the behavioral models promoted by it.



2. Press Monitoring in 2001

2.1 Articles on Domestic Violence Monitored in 2001

In the year 2001 the Women's Center monitored seven daily newspapers (*Shekulli, Republika, Zëri i Popullit, Rilindja Demokratike, Albania, Koja Jonë, Gazeta Shqiptare*), from which it selected and catalogued about **1130 articles**. Of these, **207 articles** were about domestic violence. The cataloguing of these articles was done on the basis of key words such as “violence against women”, “emotional abuse”, “physical abuse”, “sexual violence”, “rape”, “incest”. Around **100 articles**¹ were analyzed in more detail. The 2001 monitoring report is the result of the analysis of these articles and our reflections on them.

The following table shows the newspapers from which the 100 articles on domestic violence were selected and monitored:

¹ The articles were randomly selected



ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2001



Name of Newspaper	Number of articles monitored
Gazeta Shekulli	20
Gazeta Republika	36
Gazeta Shqiptare	18
Gazeta RD	6
Gazeta Koha Jonë	15
Gazeta ZP	5

Table 1. Newspapers and Articles on Domestic Violence

The monitored articles deal with several issues and more specifically:

- **13 articles treat the problem of sexual abuse**
- 3 articles present incest cases
- 2 articles on attempted rape
- 7 articles on rape
- 1 article on sexual harassment

- **56 articles on physical abuse on members of the family**
- in 48 articles the abuse ends up in murder
- in 5 articles the abuse is attempted murder
- in 3 articles the victims choose to kill themselves

- **10 articles on human trafficking**

- **5 articles on divorce**



Pesë vjet nga krijimi i Qendrës së Këshillimit për gra dhe vajza

Thyhen tabu, në shërbim të grave viktima të dhunës

Qendra e Këshillimit për Gratë dhe Vajza është e para shoqëri që u ngrenë shërbim të grave viktima të dhunës. Ajo u krijua në vitin 1999, si një përpjekje për të filluar me shërbime psikosociale për gratë e dhun-

me. 21000 të tjerë kanë marrë shërbime të këshillimit hapërbetë. Ky shërbim ka qenë shumë i rëndësishëm dhe i mirëpritur nga shoqëria shqiptare edhe për shkak të një tabu që u bë të kapërcimë muret e shërbimeve nga kur themelohet.

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- **16 articles focus on activities organized by non-profit organizations and the civil society against domestic violence.**

2.2 Facts About Domestic Violence

From the monitoring of the articles it results that:

- The most frequently occurring forms of domestic violence are **physical and sexual abuse** while **psychological and emotional abuse**, although very common, are not widely treated by the media;

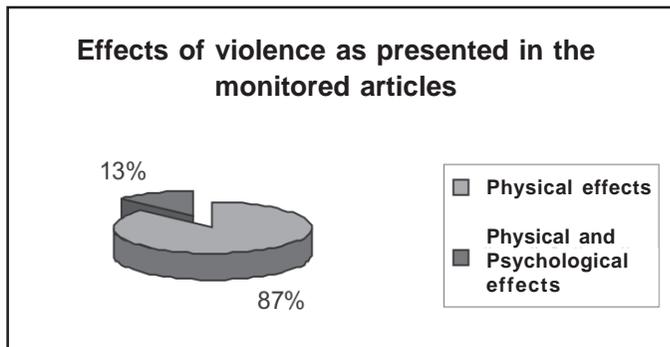


Chart I: Forms of Violence

- Violence occurs mostly in familiar **home settings**, such as the home of the victim. In 72% of the cases the violent act occurred within the walls of the family home.



ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2001

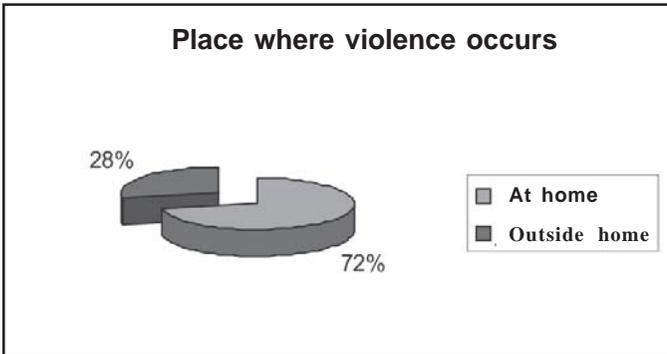


Chart 2: Places Where Violence Occurs

· Abusers are people whom the victim knows well or lives with. With regard to domestic violence, husbands and fathers are the most likely to abuse other members of the family.

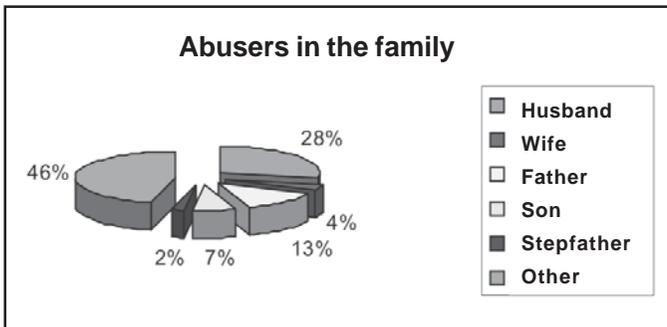


Chart 3: The Relationship Abuser–Abused





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- The instruments used to commit domestic crimes are of all kinds, including automatic guns, knives, bombs and hand grenades, hand guns, etc. Of all these the most frequently used are automatic guns, which were widely available during the social unrest of 1997.

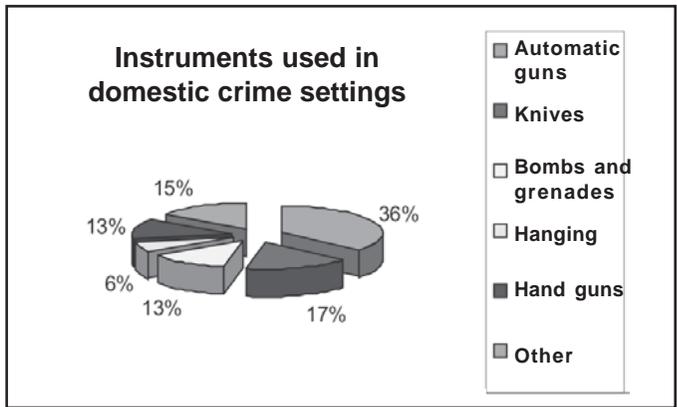


Chart 4: Most frequently Used Weapons in Domestic Crimes

- Jealousy is the main motive of domestic crime. In most cases, jealousy and domestic arguments within the couple were the main cause of domestic crime. Mental health problems, drugs and alcohol abuse are other important factors that affect domestic crime.



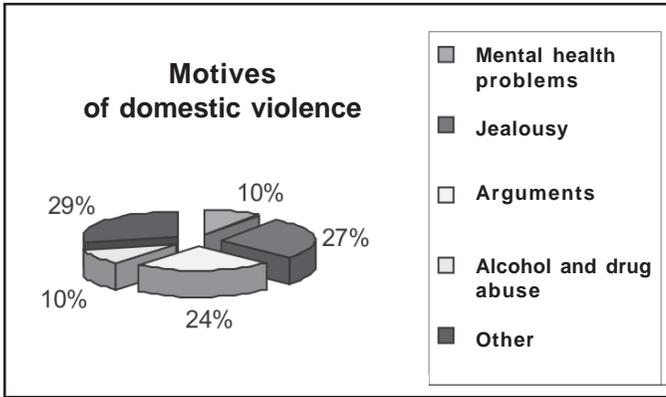


Chart 5: Motives of Domestic Violence



3. Analysis of the Monitored Articles

The classification and analysis of the monitored articles was conducted on the basis of the main social problem they treat, which we grouped into four categories, more specifically: 1) sexual abuse at home, 2) physical abuse at home, 3) trafficking in human beings, 4) the role of the civil society in preventing and combating violence.

3.1 Sexual Abuse at Home

In the course of press monitoring and analysis, 11 articles were singled out as treating the problem of sexual abuse. These articles appeared in the following newspapers: *Shekulli*, *Republika* and *Gazeta Shqiptare*. According to these articles, the districts where sexual abuse is encountered more frequently are Tirana (28%), Berat (27%), Kavaja (9%), Shkodra (9%), Gjirokastra (9%), Fier (9%) and Kruja (9%).

First, there is a title - one that tries to be catchy and which recurs several times in the body of the article. Words like “rape”, “systematic rape”, “devastating consequences”,



Emigranti vret gruan,
pse i shiti zjähën

TIRANË - Këshohet nga Greqia, ku kishte shpërthyer një krizë ekonomike, për të ndihmuar familjet dhe të rinjtë në mesin e tyre ka qënë shkak për të bërë që të fillojnë grumbujt e gruanë të familjes Osmani. Shkaktori i vritës të kaluar, grumbujt të cilat më pas kaluan në tragjedi. Ruzhdi Osmani familje kanë vazhduar ditë. Para syve të vëmijëve, Ruzhdi, kështojtur e gruanë, e fryerë, deri sa një natë arriti të bëjë edhe të fundit, e dergon atë më duart e veta në varr. Pas tragjedisë, ata që kishin dëmtuar familjen me se të jenjëse e pa përshrahje, janë femijet. Janë pesë femijë jetimë, të cilët as-

“sexual abuse”, “pedophilia”, “incest”, “tragedy in the family,” are the most frequently occurring ones. Very often one gets the feeling that a catchy headline is more important than anything else, regardless of whether it actually has any bearing on the subject of the article or not.

“*My father sexually abused me*”
My father sexually abused me ... the poignant story of an 18 year old, with a history of anxiety and fear weighing on her shoulders. A jealous and possessive father who wants to control and possess the body of her daughter.”
Republika, January 27, 2001

Second, what catches the eye is a tendency to fully depict the scene of the event and, in most cases, give the full names of both victims and abusers. The following excerpts illustrate this conclusion:

“*Brother rapes his 11-year old sister*”
Letim Alushi had two previous convictions for burglary and grievous bodily harm. The seventeen year old from Dibër took his younger sister out and raped her 500 meters away from home.
Shekulli, February 8, 2001

¹ We didn't put the name of the abuser for ethical reasons.





The special rubric “Family Stories” in *Republika*, is a positive attempt in this direction and provides an example of how to treat these problems. Many of these articles start with a definition of the problem and go on to describe the consequences suffered by the victim. What makes these articles more complete is the expert’s opinion on the causes and effects of sexual abuse. This is how *Republika* treated an incest case.

“***My father sexually abused me***”

These kinds of cases typically involve adults who have been refused or humiliated by other adults, so they turn to children, who do not pose the demands or conditions adults may come up with.... The girl falls into a depressive state or becomes angry with the parents who fail to protect her. Because of the feeling of guilt, anger and hatred, the girl might have sexual difficulties with her future partners. She could even resort to prostitution, use of drugs or even suicide.

Edmond Dragoti (psychologist)

Republika, January 27, 2001

However, this is hardly enough. The reader is served only with the consequences of abuse such as sexual difficulties, drug abuse, suicide, etc. – which, of course, are important aspects of the public right to information, but they must necessarily be accompanied by some form of addressing the problem. Left at this point, the message looks more like a





As seen in the articles, the media articles label women as incapable of escaping the reality, thus falling prey of gender stereotypes. These stereotypes are also the models followed and internalized, especially by the female readers.

Fifth, the articles on domestic violence pay special attention to the consequences suffered by the victims. As the following graph shows, the physical effects of sexual violence have priority over the psychological effects. This because of a series of factors, such as the journalist's lack of information about the psychological damages generally suffered by victims of domestic violence and how they can be treated; lack of knowledge of and experience with reporting techniques most appropriate to domestic violence in general and sexual abuse in particular.

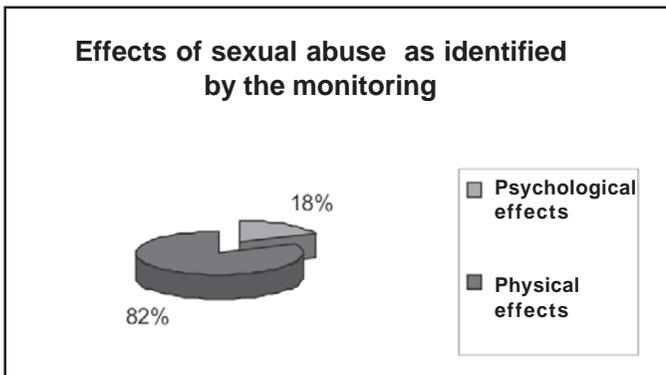


Chart 6: Effects of Sexual Abuse as Identified in the Monitoring



Sulltana: Kështu më sakatoi burri i dehur

TIRANË - Një grua e mbetur invalide. Një femijë i mbetur në baba. Një baba që aspiron në burg. Këtu tar ka pësuar familja e shtetasit Roland Myrtezai, me banim tek "Shkolla e Partisë", në Llaprakë. Tashmë gruaja jeton e ndarë nga burri i saj. Ajo ka më shtatë

i saj ishte kthyer në shtëpi në mbrenje. I dehur. Sapo ishte futur brenda kishte parë gruan dhe menjëherë kishte marrë thikën dhe e ka qëlluar në krah. Pas këtij veprimi burri ishte larguar të kushinjtë e tij, ndërsa gruaja ishte dërruar në shtatë. Die desh-

MONITORING MEDIA

3.2 Physical Abuse at Home

Sixty seven articles on physical abuse were monitored from these newspapers: *Republika*, *Rilindja Demokratike*, *Gazeta Shqiptare*, *Koha Jonë* and *Shekulli*. According to the articles, the most frequent physical abuse cases are encountered in the districts of Tiranë (13%), Shkodër (12%), Korçë (9%), Kukës (5%), Krujë (5%), Lushnjë (5%).

An analysis of the articles on physical abuse at home reveals its main causes. Crimes are the most frequently occurring form of violence in the family. Titles such as "Crime in the Family: Brother Kills Sister" (*Shekulli*, 27th March 2001), "Uncle and Nephew Hit 70-year old Grandmother with a Lever" (*Shekulli*, 25 November 2001), "Son Attacks Parents with Hand Grenade - Mother Dies" (*Shekulli*, 11 January 2001); "Father Shoots his Only Daughter" (*Shekulli* 10 March 2001), "Mother Stabbed to Death with Kitchen Knife" (*Koha Jonë*, 8 Shkurt 2001), "Executes Wife and Mother-in-law Then Kills Himself With the last Bullet Left" (*Republika*, 17 February 2001).



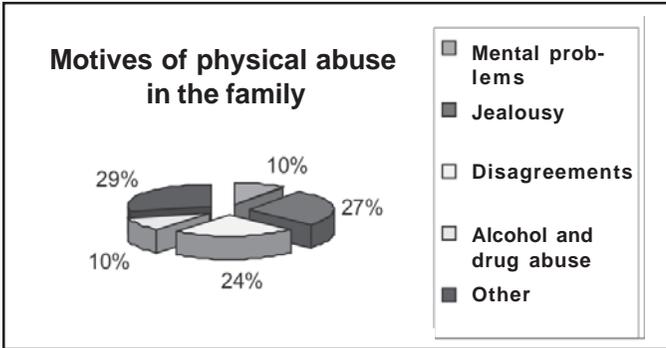


Chart 7: Motives of Domestic Crimes

It is clear from the above chart that jealousy is the main motive of crime within the family “Husband Hits Wife with a Sledge Hammer: Suspected she was Having an Affair.” (Republika, 15 November, 2001); “Man Killed Wife Because She Moved too Much During Sex” (Koha Jonë, 12 August 2001); “Love Dies; Jealous Man Kills Girlfriend Before Turning to Himself” (Republika, 22 June, 2001); “Man Cuts Wife Up with Axe” (Republika, 25 October 2001), are some of the titles encountered in the print media. It is a pity that women continue to be seen as property in the Albanian society and this is one of the major factors that lead to the women’s victimization. This victimization is further exacerbated by the manner various journalists treat the problem. The following excerpts illustrate these conclusions:





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“*Terror. Massacre: a man kills his wife and his 39-year old son with a Kalashnikov. A 72-year old man, fueled by jealousy of his wife, exterminates his family. Father of four children turns into a murderer, although the public opinion thinks the head of the household, Azem, is the guilty one.*
Republika, September 29, 2001

“*Husband hits his wife with a sledge hammer. He suspected she was having an affair. The crime occurred in the village of (Pogradec), where Fidai Pero struck his wife with a sledge hammer on her head while she was sleeping. His wife, Refiko Pero is in a coma because of the hard blow to her head.*
Republika, November 15, 2001

It must be emphasized that the increase in the number of domestic crimes has been accompanied by a more comprehensive press coverage of this problem in the print media. Researchers and analysts have presented the causes of this phenomenon and its effects on the Albanian society, especially in the recent years.

In one article about the criminalization of the Albanian family, the editor-in-chief of the *Korieri*¹ newspaper empha-

¹ Alfred Peza, *The Criminalization of the Albanian Family*, Women's Center Bulletin, Nr. 25, September 2002.



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sizes: “The most recent cases show that the logic of protecting the family honor according to the “Balkan macho dignity”, by taking the law into one’s own hands, by trying to solve the problems “keeping the finger at the trigger”, as well as the lack of an effective judiciary and the weapons widely available, have made it easier for crime to penetrate into the Albanian families.”

In spite of the attempts to treat the problem, the monitored articles lack detailed analyses that seek to discover the nature, causes and ways of preventing these crimes. Only four of the monitored articles make an attempt to analyze the violent acts and present their consequences. “The Threat that Ruined Her Life for Ever: What the Psychologist Says” (*Republika*, 28 April, 2001); “Man Stabs His Own Mother: Catches her with Lover: What the Sociologist Says” (*Republika*, 19 May 2001) are two such articles that appeared in *Republika*. However, the role of the media leaves much to be desired with respect to the promotion of state and society measures for the prevention of domestic crime and the introduction of positive models of conflict resolution in the family and the whole society.

Domestic crime manifests itself in various ways, but murder is top of the list with the highest percentage. As can be seen from the following chart, 70% of domestic crimes are murder cases, which once again is proof of the crisis that the Albanian families were experiencing at the time. In the meantime, if we refer to the monitored articles, in most cases, it is the husbands, fathers or sons that commit the majority of



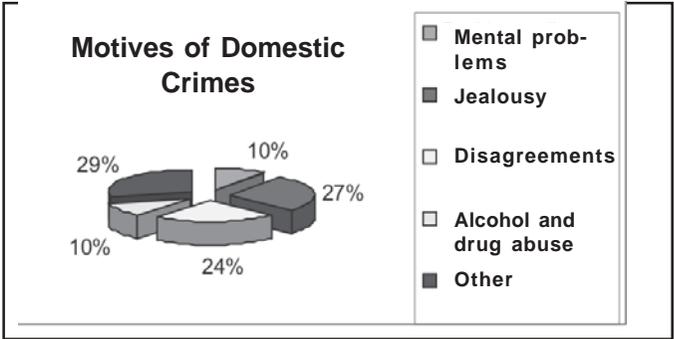
Narkomani tenton të vrasë me thikë nënën dhe motrën

biro do t'i përdorte për të siguruar "pluhurin e bombës". Kaj ëshë një dëshmitar që Edmond Herri të nënë një shtrirë të papastë në shtrirë e tij. Është me njësi përme policore kësaj të ditur në 25-vjeçari ka qënë i ndikuar nga murgu e markonëve dhe i ka dhënë situata jashtë kontrollit. Fillimisht, ai ka kërcënuar nënën e tij. Larmturia në mënyrë që ajo t'i japë shumën e parave. Por, kur ka hapur në kundërshtimin e parës të saj, Herri ka marrë një thikë. Ai e ka hapur në nënë,

të shpëtojë nënën e saj nga thika e vëllit, por është gendur edhe vetë nën presion. Rreth orës 23 e 30 minuta ato kanë mundur të shpëtojnë Edmondin, i cili është larguar me pas nga shtëpia. Të ndodhura rreth kërcënimit e Edmondin, Larmturia: Balajza dhe vajta e saj, Suela Herri kanë shkuar në mjediet e komisariatit numër 3 të policisë. Aty, Larmturia ka denoncuar të birin, i cili kërkoi të marrë ta vriste vetëm pak centë më pastë. Ajo është shpëtojë me një biletë komerciale, ku është

kyer vajzës e saja me të birin, i cili kishte kalë që përdorte blundë narkotike. Më pas, nënë e bije janë këtyrë në shtëpi, të shpëtojë nga forcat e policisë. Si pas policisë, këto e ditur në banonë e Edmond Herri ka qënë e sursvejar, deri në qazin që ai është këtyrë në banonë. Rreth orës 12.00 të së premtës është bërë i mundur arrestimi i 25-vjeçarit narkoman. Pasi është arrestuar, ai është dërguar në mjediet e komisariatit numër 3 të policisë, ku edhe mbahet i akuzuar për

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the crimes in the family, with weapons such as guns, knives, grenades, axes, picks, spades, and sledge hammers.

Husbands and sons are the most common perpetrators (39% and 13% of the cases respectively).

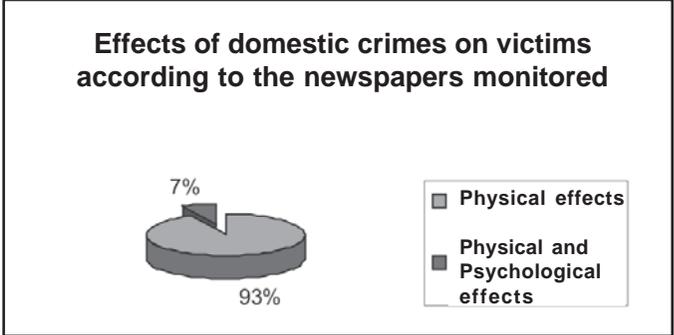


Chart 9: Effects of Domestic Crime



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dren some guidance in life. The fear that their children, especially daughters, may fall prey of vices and perversities generated in today's society, such as drugs, prostitution, human trafficking, which are part of everyday life, especially for many mothers whose children are abroad somewhere ... The main cause of this problem is poverty, which has left many Albanian families at a complete loss. At the same time the schools do not have strong foundations to strengthen their students' morals.

Republika, May 19, 2001

Another element one notices is the focus on orphaned children, as seen in the articles “Domestic Crimes Leave Orphans Behind” (Shekulli, 25 March 2001) and “Man Kills Wife, Mother of Eight Children” (Shekulli, 7 July, 2001).

“***Man Kills Wife:*** She left home for two weeks without asking his permission. Afërdita Loci leaves four children behind...

Gazeta Shqiptare, 9 October, 2001

The crisis the Albanian families are experiencing in this painful and long transition period is widely covered in the print media. Crimes within the family, previously unheard of in the Albanian society, are proof of its crisis and its dimensions. Patriarchal attitudes towards women are historically





well known in the Albanian society, and women often got the blame for the gender of the new-born children but the following example shows that sometimes these attitudes go beyond any notion of normal behavior.

“*Man Seeks Revenge For Want of a Son. He was frustrated because his wife did not bear him a son and that is why he wanted to kill her and their three daughters with three hand grenades ...*

Koha Jonë, September 27, 2001 (Crime Column)

Equally shocking is the crime committed by another man, a returned emigrant, who reserved a macabre death for his wife because of his pathological jealousy. It is difficult to find the right words to describe this tragedy.

“*I killed my wife because she was too active when we had sex. When we made love she would move too much; she had never done that before. She asked for things that had never been part of our sexual practices.*

Koha Jonë, 12 Gusht, 2001

We think that the journalist must have found it very difficult to describe the scene of the crime: “Her head was split open with a spade and after that he stoned her and covered her with oak branches.” In spite of the efforts to provide a



Edhe në Shqipëri kishte abuzuar me motrat më të vogla

Abuzoi me të bijën e mitur, arrestohet në Itali

TORINO - Arrestohet në Itali meqenjtë shqiptar, për një për ndashje meqenjtë që kishte kryer në vendin për një abuzim seksual. Policia italiane i ka vënë pengam Azizi Dugan, 40 vjeç, qmë në abuzim për kryerjen e veprave të abuzimit me të bijën, 14 vjeç, dhe një djalë të vogël të tjetër me 7 vjeç, për të cilin prindërit e tij nuk kanë mundur të raportojnë për një krim të tjetër.

Emri i kësaj gruaje e detyrimi që ka bërë publikisht në gazetën e shtetit në abuzim meqenjtë të saj. Që nga ajo kohë në Itali, në qendrën e policisë, ka bërë të përkrahur dhe mbështetur të tjerë që të bëjnë të njëjtën gjë. Dhe në fakt policia italiane ka arrestuar të gjithë ata që kanë praruar në një krim të tjetër, një krim që është abuzim seksual, një krim që është abuzim seksual dhe një krim që është abuzim seksual.

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clear picture of the event and the community response as expressed in several interviews, the article still remains in the realm of news and information, and no attempt is made to fulfill the other role of the media – education of the public.

The increase in the number of divorces in the Albanian society is often treated by journalists as the cause of destruction of the family unit and its values, and as a result of the excessive freedom that women and girls now have. On the other hand, it must be admitted that divorce has not yet gained the right to full citizenship in our society is hardly ever accepted without any resistance by the men in such a patriarchal society. Very often, as can be seen from the following excerpt, women’s request for divorce triggered a horrible domestic tragedy.

“Man killed wife in the presence of his two children, aged 4 and 7 years old. She was “guilty” because she had filed for divorce. Witnesses say the conflict started two years ago, when the victim, mother of two children, told her husband she wanted a divorce.

Republika, December 5, 2001



In this article, just like in many other articles analyzed in the course of the monitoring, the careful eye of the reader can

Shkëlqim



clearly see that the violence is gender-motivated, i.e. men violate their wives or girlfriends. Article headlines such as the following: “I Wanted to Kill my Wife and not my Good Son,” (*Republika*, 7 October, 2001); “Latest Hour News: Massacre in Libohova: Vladimir Xarbo Kills Mother and Daughter” (*Gazeta Shqiptare*, 26 June, 2001); “Terror, Massacre: Man Kills Wife and Son with an Automatic Gun” (*Republika*, 7 October, 2001); “Elbasan: Domestic Scuffle: Man Cuts Up Wife with an Axe” (*Republika*, 25 October 2001); “Husband Beats her Up: She Plunges to Her Death From the Third Floor.” (*Republika*, 16 January 2001); “Woman’s Body Found Three Days After Murder” (*Republika*, 21 August 2001); clearly show that violence is gender motivated, that women and children are the most likely victims, and that the crimes are the result of a series of social, economic and cultural factors. In addition, it has to be emphasized that patriarchal tradition and mentality create and instill distinctly different gender roles in men and women in the family. These gender roles learned and internalized in the socialization process, which is different for boys and girls, form the bases of the status and position of men and women in society. Because the Albanian society accepts the aggressiveness of boys and regards it as an expression of their manliness, it tacitly condones the violent acts against women and girls, who are taught, by the same society, to be submissive and obedient.

Psychologist and gender issues researcher S. Miria in her work *Violence Against Women and the Psychosocial Taboos*



Denoncimi: “Burri na rreh,
ka edhe kallash”

Një 50 vjeçar nga Ti-
rana ëshë arrestuar dje
nga ana e policisë së
kryeqytetit, nën akuzat e
ushtrimit të dhunës bren-
da familjes dhe për

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That Favor It! says “Gender studies in our country suggest that violence against women is in direct proportion with the degree of women’s dependence on the men in their lives.”

In the few newspaper articles that describe violent acts carried out by women, it is clear that they reacted against the constant violence suffered at the hands of their husbands. With this we do not want to justify any of the crimes committed, because every violent act is a crime and must find its appropriate punishment. But, as we emphasized earlier, in covering these cases the journalists must not only describe the crime scene, but also make an analysis of the causes that led to the act. As one battered woman said, “For twenty years my husband used me like an animal... every night when he returned home he completed the ritual of beating me savagely. I passed out several times...” (*Shekulli*, 10 March 2001).

3.3 Trafficking in Human Beings

It has to be said that the print and electronic media have extensively covered the issues of the trafficking of human beings. Statistically, the greatest number of articles on human trafficking (10 altogether), about 74%, appeared in *Republika*. The districts where human trafficking is more evident are Berat (25%), Fier (21%), Korça (10%), Vlora (23%), Tirana (19%).

1 Miria, S. (1996) *Violence Against Women and the Psychosocial Taboos That Favor It*, p.8. Tirana: Refleksione.



TIRANË - Vëllimë pak orë i shoqëruar në ambientet e policisë dhe më pas është lirë i linë. Këq i ka kuzhuar 32-vjeçari nga Tirana Altin Bogdani, dhuna që ka ushtruar ndaj një 24-vjeçareje pona kryeqytet. Pas denoncimit të kryer nga vëllë familjarit e vajzës së dhunuar, 32-vjeçari është shoqëruar në çorimat e paraveqendrimit të komisarit nr.3 dhe më pas është liruar. Nënës 24-vjeçarja është shtuar në spital, ku ka marrë edhe mykëmin e parë për ndotjen e thyer. Ngjarja ka ndodhur tre ditë më parë teksa vajza nga Tirana ka qënë në shoqërinë e një shoqes së saj dhe të

Katodromit, kur Altin Bogdani, i shoqëruar nga miku i tij, Arben Metshu, shoferi i makinës me targë diplomatike ia kanë bërur në lokal, 32-vjeçari i është shtuar tavolinës ku 24-vjeçarja ishte në shoqërinë e shoqes dhe të huajtarit të saj dhe i është dërguar këq të fundit duke e kërcënuar që të mos flite se do të përgjigjet me jellën e tij. Më pas ai ka lëshuar nga blaza 24-vjeçaren, e cila ka rezultuar dhe nuk ka dashur të pohojë nga tavolina. Por tuta e 32-vjeçarit Bogdani ka veshtruar një tej dënie e qëlluar me grusht, çka i shkaktoi dënie të rënda në notull. Pasi ka lëvizur në

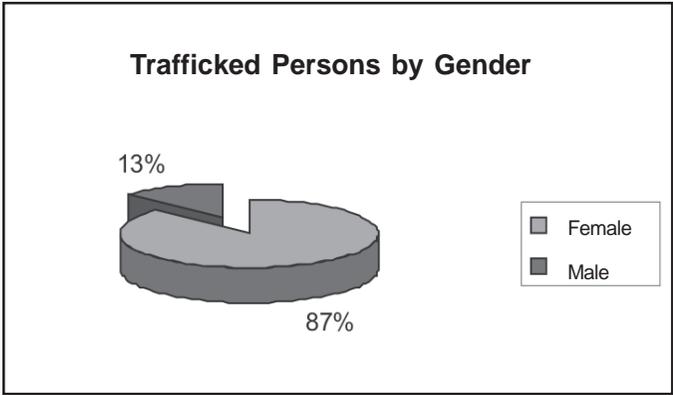


Chart 10: Trafficked Persons by Gender

With regard to the gender of the trafficked persons, 87% were female and 13% male, as shown in the following chart:

Unfortunately the trafficking of women and girls has assumed considerable proportions; a direct result of the various factors that accompanied the development of the Albanian society in the recent years. Such factors as “poverty, high rates of unemployment, lack of political stability in the country, lack of law and order, the country’s abrupt coming out of a long period of communist isolation, lack of hope for the future, domestic violence, lack of information, etc.”¹ contributed to the explosive proportions this phenomenon assumed in the

¹ Miria, S. and Sala, V. (1999) A Study of the Written Contribution of the Women’s Movement in Albania 1990-1998: Women as Victims of Multiple Abuse. Tirana: Refleksione.



Tenton të vrasë gruan prangoset nga policia

TIRANË- Forcat e Komisarariatit Nr 3 në kryeqytet arrestuan në flagrancë shtetasin Fatmir Sulejman Shima lindur e banues në Tiranë. Arrestimi Shimës, u krye pasi para dy ditësh ka tentuar të vrasë gruan e tij me një automatik të cilën e mbante pa leje. Po sipas burimeve

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that economic hardships force parents and relatives to put their children in the way of trafficking circles. This is what a child says to *Republika*:

“I go out to get some money ... My friends at school don't know anything. Paralyzed in one arm, he skips school and starts his daily “work”. The poignant story of the 11-year old with one paralyzed arm. His stepfather gets drunk and forces him to beg ...

Republika, February 24, 2001

3.4 The Role of the Civil Society in Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence

Articles aiming at raising the awareness of the society are another means to focus the attention on the problem of domestic crime.

“January is not over yet and there have been over 10 suicide cases. The unfortunate people used handguns, Kalashnikovs, ropes, poisons, or even threw themselves from the heights of apartment buildings or towers, to put an end to their lives. Their ages ranged from 18 to 70 years old.

Home News, January, 2001



Denoncon burrin: Më përdhunon e më rreh

TIRANE Denoncimi i bashkëshortes për dhunë të vazhdueshme, madje edhe marrëdhënie seksuale me dhunë ka çuar në shoqërimin për të disatën herë të Rustem Sulgjekës. Burime zyrtare

“*The crimes of parents against their children, be it gun crimes, or selling their children for prostitution purposes, getting in debt to feed their children and so on, are numerous and with no apparent solution. Investigators: “It is horrible. We do not know how to act. There are major gaps in the respective articles of the Criminal Code.”*

Republika, July 13, 2001

It is not rare that the articles themselves show traces of prejudice. The image of women in these articles is discriminatory and the women’s roles and society’s expectations of women are deeply “engraved” and seemingly, very difficult to uproot.

“*Catches her with a lover and stabs her ... Miranda had changed a lot and her mother (like all mothers in this world) noticed that her daughter was behaving strangely and had lost her normal calm.*

Republika, May 19, 2001

Special attention is given to organizations operating in Albania in the field of domestic violence.

For some time now the civil society has been actively involved in the efforts to prevent and combat various social ills and problems. Gradually, the print media began to report this contribution in its pages, in articles such as: “Gender Abuse – Two Weeks of National and International Activi-



4. Press Monitoring in 2002

The newspapers monitored in the year 2002 are: *Shekulli, Koha Jonë, Gazeta Shqiptare, Korrieri, Republika, Zëri i Popullit, Albania*. Four of these are independent newspapers and three are part press. The idea is to see whether there are any differences in reporting domestic violence in general and violence against women in particular between the independent press and partisan press.

The total number of monitored articles referring to violent events: 1244.

Total number of articles on domestic violence: 124.

The following table gives the number of articles on *domestic violence* for each newspaper in 2002.

NEWSPAPER	NUMBER OF ARTICLES
Shekulli	25 articles
Koha jonë	13 articles
Gazeta shqiptare	17 articles



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Korrieri	15 articles
Republika	28 articles
Zëri i popullit	17 articles
Albania	9 articles
Totali	124 articles

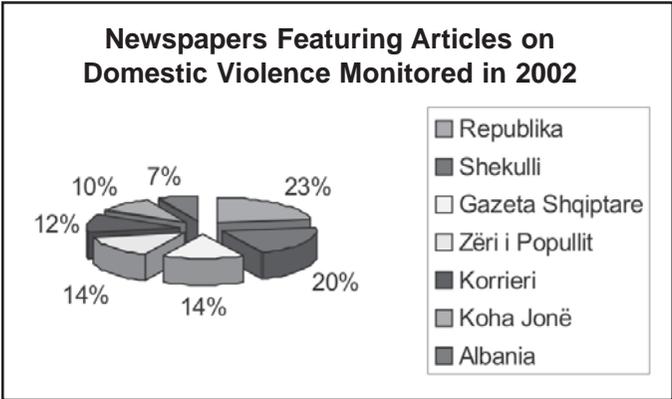


Chart 1: Newspapers Monitored in 2002

What Catches the Eye While Leafing Through the 2002 Print Media?

Articles on domestic crime have filled the “social” and “crime” columns of newspapers during 2002, year with a large number of domestic crimes, where the classic case was “jealous man kills woman.” It does not take long to understand that



ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2002



- 1 article on burglary and use of torture in Vlora
- 13 awareness raising articles
- 4 Articles which seek to uncover and explain the causes, or report activities against abuse.

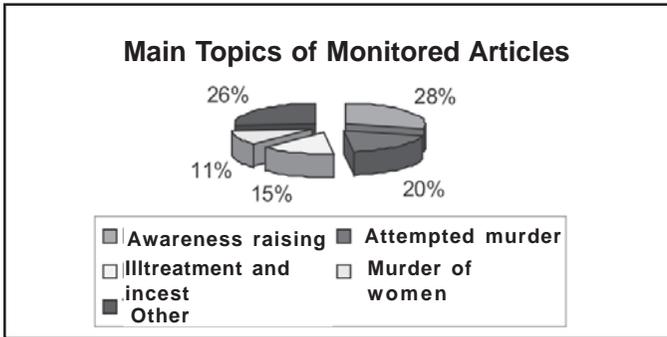


Chart 2: Main Topics of Monitored Articles

For example, according to the statistics from the Ministry of Public Order, during the first four months of 2002:

- 23 people were killed
- 7 people were injured
- four cases of men killing women
- two cases of women killing men
- four cases of relatives killed (daughter in law, cousin)



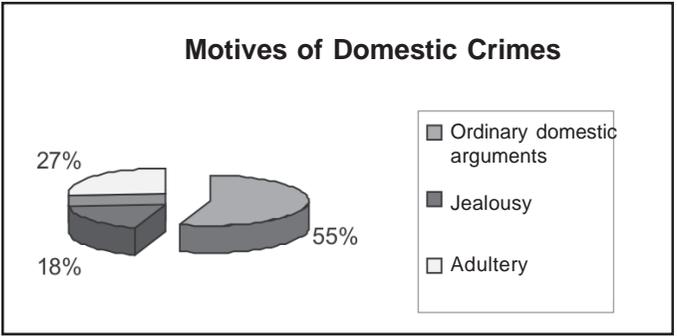


Chart 4: Motives of Domestic Crimes

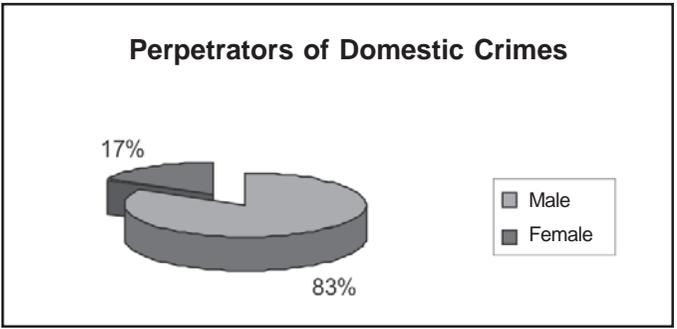


Chart 5: Perpetrators of Domestic Crimes

How many were punished?

Unfortunately there are no available data on domestic crime. The Ministry of Public Order and the Ministry of Justice categorize domestic crime simply as crimes of one person



Narkomani tenton të vrasë me thikë nënën dhe motrën

TIRANË- Një 25-vjeçar për-
derrës i lindur në Tiranë, ka
përpjetuar në shtëpi me thikë nënën
e tij si dhe të motrën. Njëzet
gjatë ditëve të fundit, narkomani
është duke shfaqur sjellje të
agresive dhe të rrezikshme.
Në ditët e fundit, ai ka tentuar të
vrasë nënën dhe motrën me
thikë. Ai është arrestuar nga
policia dhe është detyruar të
shkojë në spital për trajtim
psikologjik.

Edmond Haxhi, 25 vjeç, u hap nga policia për tentativë omocidi... Kërkoi liri menjëherë për të mos detyro
Njëzet gjatë ditëve të fundit, narkomani është duke shfaqur sjellje të agresive dhe të rrezikshme. Në ditët e fundit, ai ka tentuar të vrasë nënën dhe motrën me thikë. Ai është arrestuar nga policia dhe është detyruar të shkojë në spital për trajtim psikologjik.

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against another. There are no separate entries and no further break down of statistics!

From the articles one can see that the cases reported in the media are mostly those of attempted murders. Attempted murders are not considered “news” if the story is not special in some way, so they are often covered by simply publishing a public notice from the Ministry of Public Order.

“Attempts to Kill Wife, Ends up in Handcuffs ...The police forces of Police Precinct No. 3 arrested citizen F.SH. ..

According to police sources the cause of the incident was an ordinary domestic squabble...

The blue uniforms seized an automatic gun of the type “PPS” which will be used as material evidence...

Koha Jonë, 02/06/02

One can clearly see that the majority of the articles, even those that aim to raise the awareness of the public, do not contain an analysis of the phenomenon or of the event, just an occasional explanation of the situation from the point of view of an expert.

With regard to figures and statistics, it is not clear whether the figures represent the situation at the national level or in certain districts.





In some cases, the journalists try to explain in one single article major issues such as the factors that lead to the immigration of women.

“**Albania, 22/05/02.**

Why do women immigrate?

They are promised a very good future in Italy or elsewhere and promised concrete jobs.

It does not take much to persuade poor women that they deserve much better than the life they are leading at present with their partners.

At home, in the street and in various social settings women and girls are faced with male aggressiveness, which is a source of great concern and distress for them.

This is what makes them seek a new life in a new country

....

Very often, eager to present their information as coming from a reliable and “official” source, the journalist says nothing whether the information is the result of a study or research on the given phenomenon.

Personal convictions become assumptions and generalizations, and these often remain unsubstantiated. We cannot say this is a just sign of lack of professionalism on the part of journalists. But this is another argument in favor of the necessity for social research and empirical studies on social phenomena, to be carried out by scholars and information and media researchers. This would make it easier for jour-



Policia: Nuk kemi të ojme me nje vetevrasje. Në vendngjarje u
Misteri, gjendet e vrarë r
Mira Qarku, 31 vjeç, është qëlluar në shpinë me pes

SHKODË - Ekatë gjetur e vrarë në vrachinë shqiptare me një 31-vjeçar nga Thelbi. I gjetur në afërsi të vrachinës së Shkodrës. Mira Mark Qarku, 31 vjeç, është gjetur e vrarë në 5 plumbat në shpinë. I gjetur në banesën e saj, 31-vjeçarja e pamartuar, me profesion mësuese, është qëlluar me pistoletë në shpinë me 5 plumbat në vrachinë të Shkodrës. I gjetur në banesën e saj, 31-vjeçarja e pamartuar, me profesion mësuese, është qëlluar me pistoletë në shpinë me 5 plumbat në vrachinë të Shkodrës. I gjetur në banesën e saj, 31-vjeçarja e pamartuar, me profesion mësuese, është qëlluar me pistoletë në shpinë me 5 plumbat në vrachinë të Shkodrës.

dikur drejtuesit e shkollës në Thelbi dhe qytet në vrachinë të Shkodrës. Mira Mark Qarku, 31 vjeç, është gjetur e vrarë në 5 plumbat në shpinë. I gjetur në banesën e saj, 31-vjeçarja e pamartuar, me profesion mësuese, është qëlluar me pistoletë në shpinë me 5 plumbat në vrachinë të Shkodrës.

Mira Mark Qarku, 31 vjeç, është gjetur e vrarë me 5 plumbat në shpinë, brenda në banesën e saj, 31-vjeçarja e pamartuar, me profesion mësuese, është qëlluar me pistoletë



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nalists to discuss, cover, and make analyses of events and problems that are not part of normal everyday life.

Sometimes, a courageous opinion appears inaccurate precisely because it is not based on a proper analysis or study. For example, even though the tone of the following article is ironical and refers to the patriarchal part of the society that almost always blames women, it sounds a little “frivolous” and indifferent.

“When a woman decides to emigrate, her family and friends, her neighbors and acquaintances strike her off the list of honorable and respected women.”
 (Albania, 22/05/02)

How are crimes justified?

Honor and jealousy – or rather, dishonor - are the main motives for the crimes. In certain cases, crimes are not a result of “severe psychic shock”, but calculated in cold blood much later. But after reading about an event like this, rather than feeling informed about the tragedy, one ends up with tens of unanswered questions. The most obvious one: Was this the real cause?

“Italian Handcuffs for the Killer of His Own Sister” (Korrieri 22/02/02).
 ... I killed my sister, it was a matter of honor ...
 The reason why he wanted to take revenge on his sister





was that she had gotten married to citizen X without the permission of her family and had had a child with him. Nikolla himself has admitted committing the crime and said he had killed his sister for restoring moral and honor to his family:

Resistance and assertiveness, like in the above example, is perceived as a direct offence to the male dignity, humiliation and challenge of the inherited and learned roles of the head and patron of the family.

“ **A Family Massacre in Durrës.**
(*Korrieri 2/11/ 02*)

...The two partners had never washed their dirty linen in public. ...However, after asking one of the witnesses, it was clear that the argument before the crime had been around accusations of jealousy on the part of the husband

The same event described by another newspaper, Republika, offers a more accurate version of why the crime took place:

“ *It is suspected that the argument between the partners started after the wife had failed to bring her 14 year old daughter back home from Italy. The forty-three year old had gone to Italy to meet her five children living there and had also taken her 14 year old daughter along. Then the wife had come back home without the daughter. The fourteen year old had stayed behind with her brothers and sisters.* ”



Trafiku i të miturve, 7 miliardë USD në v

Italia mbahet pika kryesore e hyrjes për të mitur e fëmijëve që shtrihen në fëmijë e përcaktuesit, që largohet nëpër rrethet mbahet miliardë dollarë të afrohuara në vit. Kjo u deklarua në një konferencë mbledhje të trafikantëve dhe të shërbimeve nga agjencitë e ndërkombëtare. Po sipas tyre, çdo vit rreth 6000 fëmijë të mosbahen 12-16 vjeç janë viktimë të trafikantëve dhe një shumicë të familjeve të kryer nga organizatat joqeveritare.

shërbimeve të miturve "Dispozitat në ligjin italian që garantojnë mbrojtjen dhe të drejtën për t'u arsimuar për të miturit përfaqësojnë një përparim, të cilin ato duhet t'i japin zgjidhje", tha Teresa Albano, përfaqësoreshë e Organizatës Ndërkombëtare të Inspeksionit "Politika aktuale ndërojnë dhe shpesh i përkrahin trafikantëve fëmijë. Familjet e mitur fëmijë e tyre të vepër që tani që të gëzojnë mbrojtje dhe të arsimuar".

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“**Kills Wife With an Axe Because she Refused to Live in Town (Korrieri 2/11/02)**

... His words irritated the wife who had said that she would go back to her parents and dump him for ever. This touched her husband's "manliness" and he picked up his axe in the shed and massacred his wife in the presence of the baby. After ensuring that she was dead he informed the parents, grabbed the last savings of the family and went into hiding

“**Drug Addict Kills Cousin, Injures Mother and Neighbor (Korrieri 2/11/02)**

...27-year old Arben Shkalla, under the influence of drugs, with no apparent cause at all, starts to beat up his mother and hits her with an axe.

A triad of articles on domestic crime – all in one page, in the same issue of the Korrieri newspaper. The events have nothing in common, except the fact that the crimes happened within a 48-hour span in three different locations. The detailed description of the events is based on the version of the story presented by the coroner or the accused. The question is, to what extent are details necessary and when does the use of details become abuse? And do all journalists use the same yardstick in deciding these issues?





“*Arguments Caused by Jealousy*” (Republika 21/07/02)

A man attempted to strangle his second wife Friday night. He had a previous criminal record, because twenty years ago he had killed his first wife whom he had married when very young. ...They were sleeping in bed when he woke up at midnight and tried to strangle her

It is clear that this is not a case of domestic arguments or fights! Then why should we lessen the seriousness of the act by calling it “Arguments Caused by Jealousy”?!

Let us stop here for a moment:

What is the power of jealousy?

Solomon describes jealousy “cruel as the grave”, while Shakespeare calls it “a semblance of the evil eye”. To be jealous means to suffer and to be the object of jealousy means to be frightened. And sometimes jealousy is fatal.

According to psychologists *jealousy is the reaction to the perception that a relationship is threatened, a reaction that is not always based on reality.*

Usually jealousy is generated by the perception that a partner is attracted by somebody else¹” (Bunk & Bringle, 1987) In general, jealousy is linked with feelings of inequality and unsuitability in a relationship². (White, 1981). “But more a

1 Buunk & Bringle , “Jealousy in love relationships”, 1987

2 White,G.L “A model of romantic jealousy” 1981



KEQTRAJTIV



Mësuesit e shkollave në vend të parë, për të

57 për qind e fëmijëve di

Sociologët: "Dhuna ndaj fëmijëve është rri.

Shprehjet e frikësive të shprehura
për dhunën në shtëpi, ndaj prindërve
dhe mësuesit në shkollat dhe
shtëpitë, mbretëreshat për mënyrën e të

shprehjet e të frikësive të shprehura
për dhunën në shtëpi, ndaj prindërve
dhe mësuesit në shkollat dhe
shtëpitë, mbretëreshat për mënyrën e të

shprehjet e të frikësive të shprehura
për dhunën në shtëpi, ndaj prindërve
dhe mësuesit në shkollat dhe
shtëpitë, mbretëreshat për mënyrën e të

shprehjet e të frikësive të shprehura
për dhunën në shtëpi, ndaj prindërve
dhe mësuesit në shkollat dhe
shtëpitë, mbretëreshat për mënyrën e të

MONITORING MEDIA

powerful feeling of jealousy is potentially more destructive, and tends to increase when sexual exclusivity is threatened¹”(Reis 1986)

What are the stages of jealousy?

According to Gregory White (1981) the jealous experience goes through four main phases.

Phase one is when the individual realizes that there is a threat to the present relationship. And the one who is less sure and more dependent on the relationship is more likely to feel under threat.

Phase two is when people start to analyze the situation and think about the ways to overcome it.

Phase three is the emotional reaction of the individual. Jealousy may produce a range of emotional reactions. More usually these are negative feelings of stress, confusion, suspicion, hostility, anger, or positive (excitement, love, liveliness).

Phase four involves the perceptions and thoughts of the individual about jealousy. Here destructive acts may be committed.

But whatever the motive, some of the newspaper articles use a very insensitive language, sometimes with folk and humorous tones, which in Albanian carry connotations of amusement and lack of seriousness....



¹ R eis, I.L. “ A sociological journey into sexuality”.Journal of marriage &family. 1986



“*From January 22 People Killed in Domestic Incidents, and Here are the Motives*” (*Gazeta shqiptare, 24 /04/02*)

In less than five months, 23 people kicked the bucket as a result of domestic crime. In less than five months it seems domestic crime has continued to swallow the lives of many people, even whole families, with such an appetite!

In over half of the articles one can notice that the responsibility for what happened is rarely blamed on the men, but is always the fault of the environment, the social circles, other people's influence, and sometimes, to some extent, even of the victim herself. Thus a good part of newspaper articles on domestic violence (especially in *Gazeta Shqiptare*), adopt an angle that is influenced by the myths and legends of honor and honesty of certain individuals. So powerful is the reluctance to blame males for their irrational fits of jealousy, that most of the journalists do not seem able to escape this trap; for that matter even the researchers sometimes find it difficult to break away from it. There is almost a feeling of inappropriateness with regard to intervening in a case of jealousy.

It is a pity that a macabre crime, whatever the cause or motive, is described in an almost jocular language. Here, for example, is how the murder is described when the victim is caught “red-handed”.



**Ekzekutohet nëna
një fëmijë 3-vjeçar**
e kreu krimin makabër.
"mijën e viktimave". Bash-
epse nuk ndodhej në shtëpi

**Vrasja e ciftit
Sula në 28 janar**
Arrestohet autori
Ishte i çmendur



“**Lezhë , Man Kills Wife and Her Lover” (Gazeta shqiptare 23 /05/2002)**

Dedë Dushku has got his name entered in the list of betrayed husbands; but he was not one to keep the shame on himself. His victims, wife File 44 years old and Tomë Gjuraj, 35 years old were left dead one on top of the other. ... He had come back from work as usual, but found a “replacement” in his bed. This was enough for Dedë Dushku from the village of Marlecaj in Lezha to become a murderer ...

What is the code by which the great insult of adultery can be measured?

It would be useful to stop here and identify two viewpoints:

First: The language used in describing events such as murders caused by marital infidelity and the atmosphere created by some articles are almost humorous.

Second: If we accept the more evident, more studied, and more easily measurable fact, that the long period of transition in Albania is accompanied by what the sociologists and anthropologists call “cultural apocalypse”¹, the situation is more than dramatic. To take these phenomena of the “modern” times lightly, (although I do not like to label them like



¹ De Martino, Ernesto. “Apocalisse culturale” 2000



that at all), is not just partial judgment, rather, it is a prejudice. Especially in cases of crime and use of violence. This is more than “cultural apocalypse” - it means to lose touch with the present and lose hope for the future.

To us, the present time is heavily laden with violence, crime, gender discrimination and offence. To describe it in a simpler way: the solution to the puzzle of the stubborn WHY-s of the increase in domestic violence cannot be found by just describing and explaining the details of a violent act, whatever motives are offered to make excuses for it! An impression has been created that couples today give far less importance to conjugal loyalty as a result of greater pseudo-freedom in the way of life and understanding of the various situations. If we accept this reasoning a-priori, then the language may seem justified.

- Hesitation in the formulation of intervention strategies is another element noticed in a number of articles.

In the article “Domestic Crime - No Individual Responsibility” published in *Zëri i Popullit*, on 14/04/02, there is extreme ambiguity in the wording of the alternatives that would lead to a reduction of domestic crimes (this is not so much the fault of the journalist, than of the responsible structures which have not been able to develop intervention policies), to the extent that four times in the article, suggestions are presented in the form of assumptions and explanations.



hapur në hyrje të shtëpisë tragedia e dytë e familjes

dytë shkon në Greqi dhe divorcohet dy herë

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...nisi dhe babai ka rënë nën kufom, mbito siç ka qenë dhe ka hapur si grupë të thirrë në bashkëpunim të gjatë me streshen e shtëpisë dhe të kësaj gruaje, duke i vënë mbi syrin e tyre. Hapur në hyrje të shtëpisë e dëshur... Ndërkohë, ka marrë gruas forcërisht me vetë, si për nënë e drita dhe është larguar prej shtëpisë, si të mos kishte ndaluar gojë? Kur janë çuar prej gjumit të mjetit. Familja tani 18 vjeç, dikur 17 vjeç dhe Ermen 13 vjeç në besuar se moshë e kësaj gjatë ditë. Në shtëpi kishte dyshuar meher, që ai është zhdukur, por



“*Maybe the police are right ...; Maybe intervention in the problems of the community would reduce the number of crimes; but maybe this is very difficult to do anyway ...)*
Zëri i Popullit, 14/04/02

Part of the crimes and violence are evident not only in marital relations but also in love relations.

“**Man Arrested for Beating up Girlfriend**
(Gazeta shqiptare, 24/07/02).
The story of two lovers in the capital ends up in violence and legal action by the District Prosecution Office. After she learned that the man of her dreams was married and with children, T.K. decided to put an end to her relationship with M.P. But the family “cavalier” would not hear of it and insisted that in spite of everything he had to frequent his new girlfriend, even if it meant forcing her into it.

Some of the articles have inaccurate generalizations of the phenomenon.

“**Sixty-nine Per Cent of Young Women in Durrës Abused (Gazeta Shqiptare, 18/05/02).**
According to statistics of the Counseling Center in Durrës, abuse is more widespread in highly educated families, which make up 34% of the cases (!!!)





However, nothing is said about what the 69% represents – is it 69% of all young women in Durrës; 69% of the young women who called the counseling center; 69% of the age group they are part of? These inaccuracies give the phenomenon greater dimensions and reduce the reliability of the article’s findings.

I think the problem today lies in the tendency we have to overestimate the role of systemic changes on the code of moral values and norms of the society. It is equally surprising to see the great efforts made to explain male behavior by examining female characteristics!!! Even worse when, in the attempt to find a catchy title, the truth is distorted and psychologists’ opinions are misrepresented to the point of being dangerous!

“**Domestic Crimes, Total Lack of Individual Responsibility**” *Zëri I popullit 14/04/02*

Motive:

“Albanian women choose the way of crime in search of independence and assertiveness!”

Of course, domestic crimes are caused by the lack of individual responsibility, but to say that “Albanian women choose the way of crime in search of independence and authority”, is more than an inaccurate title, it is total lack of professionalism and work ethics, it is superficial judgment and truncated logic!



...dijetore të reja të policisë së shtetit në Kosovë. Në 17-18 vjeçerë, përmasat e krimit të rëndësishëm në Kosovë janë rritur në mënyrë të dukshme. Për të parashikuar, sipas ekspertëve të policisë së shtetit, këto tendencat do të vazhdojnë të jenë të njëjta në të ardhmenë.

Fëmijët nuk kanë kurrë demokracinë

“Demokracia e vërtetë në fëmijë përfundon kur ata bëjnë zgjedhjet e tyre të parat për të shprehur mendimet e tyre në mënyrë të lirshme dhe të pavarur. Në moshën 6-12 vjeç, dhe 13-18 vjeç, ndihet se të kësaj lloji të demokracisë nuk ka asnjë gjë në mënyrë të vërtetë.”

...dijetore të reja të policisë së shtetit në Kosovë. Në 17-18 vjeçerë, përmasat e krimit të rëndësishëm në Kosovë janë rritur në mënyrë të dukshme. Për të parashikuar, sipas ekspertëve të policisë së shtetit, këto tendencat do të vazhdojnë të jenë të njëjta në të ardhmenë.



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Reeth 58 për qind e fëmijëve të ankettuar të 13-18 vjeç pranojnë keqtrajtimin emocional dhe 13-18 vjeç pranojnë përforcimin e ndryshimit të tyre, sidomos ato

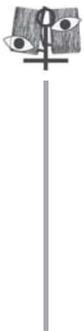
I recall a book by the American psychologist, Dr. William Ryan, who in 1966 wrote the book “Blaming the Victim”. At that time America was experiencing similar social problems as the ones we have now; unemployment, problems of education, housing, and so on....

“Because we tend not to accept our responsibility for the social situation and social problems, we develop the habit of transferring the problem and the blame to the victim ...

- A number of articles can be classified as awareness-raising. Women are asking for help but they will no longer accept to live in the tiring position of the victim.

“**Man in Handcuffs. Threatened his Wife**”
Republika 30/01/02
He physically abused his wife and constantly threatened her with guns. This was why the 37-year old from Vaqarri ended up in handcuffs.

“**Convict my Husband**”, **Koha jonë 23 /06/02**
He said he felt pleasure when he beat me up - said the wife, who in addition to filing for divorce wants justice to be done by giving her husband a conviction.



ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 2002



This is truly one of the rare cases when the woman publicly denounces her husband as the cause of her suffering, but the interview itself is very shallow. Questions like, “What do you think about the actions of your husband?” or similar ones, are stereotypical questions that neither offer nor seek information, nor do they have a focus, especially when the answer is self-evident.

It is true that there are very few life stories that are told accurately and objectively in the newspaper pages. This is one of the major drawbacks, maybe because conducting interviews in order to tell someone’s life story is not an easy job, but it could also be the result of the haste to publish a scoop.

- Alcohol dependence is one of the most frequent causes which lead to the abuse of family members.

In fact the attempted crime ended up in court. However, it is not known what conviction the abusers received and how much of it they actually served. There is no follow up of events. News remains just news!

“Attempts to kill wife and daughters - ends up in prison.”

Shekulli 30/04/ 02

The head of the household was a regular alcohol consumer.

“Fifty-three Year Old Hoxha Ends up in Handcuffs for Trying to Kill his Wife”

Shekulli 27/03/02





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“*Woman Reports her Husband: He Rapes and Beats me.*” *Gazeta shqiptare, 22/05/02*

“*According to experts working for the investigating authorities, the thirty three year old declared that her husband has been ill-treating her systematically for a long time and the source of his fury and resentment is jealousy.*”

• Sometimes domestic violence transcends the relationship within the couple, especially in extremely patriarchal families. From the monitoring it is clear that articles on domestic violence and domestic crimes make no attempt to analyze the entire social situation in stead of treating them as individual unconnected cases. One can hardly ever find more than a situational description of the event.

“*Man Ties up Wife*” *Republika, 17/08/02.*
After a long period of heated arguments at their home in Sukth of Durrës, arguments about the most trivial of things, including motives of jealousy, husband together with his brother tie up M. hands and feet and hit her with whatever they could find





4.4 Trafficking for sexual exploitation

“*Ends up in Handcuffs for Killing his Prostitute Wife” Shekulli, 20/08/02*

G.H has been detained under suspicion of having trafficked in his wife, S. Kulla, 20 years old for prostitution purposes. The latter was found massacred and stabbed to death, and dumped in a garbage can in the outskirts of Genoa in Italy.

The Declaration of the United Nations, signed by 80 countries in the year 2000, defines trafficking as:

“a form of slavery and forced labor, abuse of power by the stronger person over the weaker; a state when a person or group of persons control the activity of another person for profit purposes and works by using deceit, force and kidnapping of the person.”

I do not want to get into too much detail about the wording used about women’s trafficking for prostitution purposes; however I noticed one thing. The trafficking cases covered in the media during the year 2002, generally involve trafficking by a family member, relative or husband.



Në policinë e Durrësit ka denoncuar vetë viktimën. Arrestohet babai

Babai rreh dhe i djeg rrobat vajzës 18-vjeçare

shokun im të fundit
e dy ditëve më parë, kur babai
i saj po veshin e ka rrahur, por
dhe i ka djegur rrobat e trupit
dhe veshjet e tij më së miri, në
një vlerë prej 500 mijë lekësh.
Në një situatë të tillë, vajza e ka
patur rrogë qyte, përveçse r'i

drejtuesit d'uvern të policisë e
cila ka ndërhyrë dhe i ka
hedhur prangat babait "prosti-
tutës" me akuzën e frengje-
rrahjes dhe goditjes së vajzës
së tij. Arrestimi i babait 38-
vjeçar Sh.Simoneca është bërë
dhe në lagjen 13 të qytetit të
Durrësit. Me të njëjtin akuzë

për rrahje dhe goditje me pa-
sojë, policia e Durrësit ndaloi
dhe N.Kasemin 46-vjeç, bur-
sore në lagjen 18 të qytetit. Si-
pas burimeve, 46-vjeçari, në
22 prill të këtij viti ka rrahur
burbanisht një 16-vjeçare, duke
i shkaktuar plagë në trup.
Abden Shkëmbi

MONITORING MEDIA

“Mother - Prostitute”. Shekulli 26/03/02.

Husband sold his wife for 30 thousand leks. Later he took his four year old daughter to the traffickers"... This was the fate of a twenty nine year old now living with a child that she has left with her parents, while she stays in the facilities for the rehabilitation of prostitutes at the Police Station in Fier.

The case and its story need no comment. It is unfortunately one of the most shameful patterns of women trafficking. The above-mentioned article had a big-lettered headline: “Mother - Prostitute”. With all due respect to the style of each writer, it is now time to abandon once and for all the stigmatizing and stereotyping practices, which do nothing else but label the situation. The police station in Fier cannot be a rehabilitation center for prostitutes, just a temporary shelter for victims of trafficking, which ended up as prostitutes. The word “prostitute” cannot replace the phrase “trafficked woman/girl”, just as saying “thirty five females repatriated” is not the same as “thirty five women and girls repatriated”. The difference is easy to tell, in the first case the focus is on the gender, in the second, on the role! Furthermore, when one reads the above-mentioned article, one cannot help feeling disappointed at the fact that the headline bears no relevance to the story itself. Because of the divine role of mothers in the life of their children, one cannot juxtapose the words ‘mother’ and ‘prostitute’ and insult and offend them in the title: In the above-mentioned case, this oppressed woman had the misfortune of being separated





from her four year old son. That is why her drama is two-fold and the headline is fallacious!

· But there are also cases which hardly make it to the pages of the press. These are cases when there is no conviction because of lack of sufficient evidence or when the perpetrator, even though convicted, does not serve any of the sentence. One gets the impression that the public and the media are more eager to read about sensational stories that create anxiety and confusion and make people feel unsafe and at a complete loss.

“***Man Freed: Raped Twenty-four Year Old Woman***
Koha Jonë 14/10/02

The twenty four year old woman was admitted to hospital where she received care for her broken jaw Although the family of the 24-year old reported the case to the police, this only cost B. several hours at the police station, and nothing else.”

In my opinion this article does not make any lasting impression, nor does it convey complete information. “Why only several hours at the police station?” We can speculate that domestic violence is still considered as a matter of the couple; the police and the judiciary are not yet prepared to come hard upon those who commit acts of violence in the family; or even worse, there is corruption in the system



69 për qind e vajzave durrake dhunohen

DURRES – Sipas statistikave të ofruara ditët e fundit nga Qendra për këshillimin e Grave dhe Vajzave 69 për qind e femrave durrake dhunohen në mënyra të ndryshme. Sipas statistikave të saj dhuna është më e përhapur në familjet ku partnerët janë me arsim të lartë. Kjo zë 34 për qind të rasteve. Ndërsa në familjet me arsim të mesëm shifra arrin në 49 për qind dhe me arsim të ulët 16.2 për qind. E keqja më e madhe është se një pjesë e konsiderueshme e grindeve ndodhin në sy të femijëve.

MONITORING MEDIA

that is designed to protect citizens. As a reader, I would be happy to read about such facts!

• Counseling Lines

In 2002 there were four articles about the services offered to raped and battered women. The Counseling Center for Women and Girls and its chapters in the districts are the main source of information about the state of women in Albania.

“**Telephone Counseling for Trafficked Women**”
Shekulli 28 /01/2002
“True Testimonies from the Life of Abused Women”
Gazeta shqiptare, 29 /09/02

It is a good thing to advertise the network of services available to abused women and girls, but the above mentioned article (the first) although included in the crime column, is not a crime story, and it looks more like an advertisement of the kind that the center itself publishes!

For as long as physical, verbal and sexual clashes are considered a natural, civilized, desirable and even necessary in a marriage, abuse will always be regarded as something that occurs with the consent and approval of women or is provoked by them. However, awareness-raising is a very difficult process, especially in a society like ours, with pro-





nounced patriarchal values. For this reason reporting about the above issues requires more than knowledge of the event.

The history of violence against women does not mark the end of the story – it is not a viewpoint chosen among other “anti-violence” viewpoints which often remain isolated and unheeded. At the moment when these stories shake up the reality, it is easy to doubt the identity and the value of “patience”.

4.4 Child Abuse

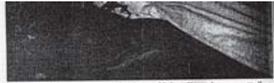
It is estimated that 160 million people in Eastern European countries live in poverty, or 40% of the population of these countries. Fifty million of them are children. Transition brought destructive consequences to Eastern European families. One of the major problems is, for example, school abandonment by children. According to the statistics, from 1989 till 1999, 15% of the children in Albania, 10 % of the children in Russia, 21% in Ukraine, and 29% in Moldova have dropped out of school.

Seventy five thousand people from Eastern European countries are victims of human trafficking for prostitution purposes.

A number of articles published in 2002 also present the gloomy reality and the unfortunate problem of child abuse and ill-treatment in our country.



konat, sepse ka vrastë
20 vjet më parë,
pranë e tij të parë,
me në cilën kashtë
lidhur jetën, që kur
ishin djalin e tij.



Ishin duke fjetur dhe në mesnatë kujtohet t'i hedhë duart në fytyrë për ta mbytur. Fqinjët dëgjojnë ulërimat dhe lajmërojnë Policinë

GRINDJA për XHELOZI

I moshuari dyshonte në tradhtinë e gruas së dytë
20 vjet më parë ekzekutoi me sëpatë gruan e parë

“*Children: Spanking and Sexual Harassment*” *Albania 05/04/02*

Children are ill-treated everyday – emotionally, physically, and sexually. This is the conclusion of a study carried out by the Center for Multidisciplinary Training for Problems of Child Abuse.”

“*Father Tortures 3-Year Old Child*” *Korrieri 22/01/02*

A woman from Tirana reported her husband Artur to the police, accusing him of ill-treating their 3-year old child. According to her, the husband punched the child, burnt him with cigarette butts and forced his head under water: after the doctor's report, the police was convinced and declared the cruel father a wanted person”

A number of articles published in 2002 tell shuddering stories of incestuous relationships between fathers and daughters. These articles are different from those on abused women, because there is more observation of ethics in presenting the story. There are no detailed descriptions of scenes, no stereotypes, they are more or less written in a correct manner. This also because children are innocent and violence against them always remains a monstrosity.



SOCIALE



Qendra e Këshillimit ofron ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike

Këshilla përmes telefonit për vajzat e trafikuar

BRINDËS – Qendra e Këshillimit për vajzat e trafikuar në shtet, të cilat janë të vendosura në shtete të ndryshme të Evropës, ofron ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit. Kështu, vajzat të cilat janë të vendosura në shtete të ndryshme të Evropës, mund të marrin ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit. Qendra e Këshillimit është e vendosur në Brindës dhe ofron ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit. Kështu, vajzat të cilat janë të vendosura në shtete të ndryshme të Evropës, mund të marrin ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit.

Qendra e Këshillimit ofron ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit për vajzat e trafikuar. Kështu, vajzat të cilat janë të vendosura në shtete të ndryshme të Evropës, mund të marrin ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit. Qendra e Këshillimit është e vendosur në Brindës dhe ofron ndihmë mjekësore dhe juridike përmes telefonit.

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“**Korça: “My Drunkard Father Raped me.”**
For a whole year he sexually abused his 14-year old daughter, until he was held by the police.
“Gazeta shqiptare” 20 December 2002

“**Durrës: Father Raped 6-year Old Daughter”**
Korrieri , 08/12/02.
Ylli B. had sexual intercourse with his six-year old daughter and then admitted having done it to his relatives. These immediately called the police, who arrested him a few hours later.”

“**Sexually Abused his Minor Daughter: Man Arrested in Italy”** *Gazeta shqiptare, 06/07/02*
A 40 year old Albanian immigrant to Italy was arrested – but not for a criminal act committed in the country across the Adriatic. The Italian police handcuffed Astrit Duqa, 40 years old, and charged him with having had sexual intercourse with his daughter, who is a minor, only 14-year old.”

Other cases of incest involve brother-sister relations.

“**Incest: Brother Rapes Sister”** *Shekulli, 16/09/02*
Durrës, a fisherman has sexual intercourse with his 15-year old sister.





But this is not the only problem. Most such crimes are not reported: they are a torment that is experienced and buried within the family. This is what happens in the cases of abusive fathers and minor daughters.

In addition to extreme cases of incest and rape within the family, one of the most widespread phenomena in the Albanian families is the physical beating of the children.

Although the titles sometimes are very pretentious, such as "Abuse, why do we beat our children at home" (*Korrieri*, 24 January 2002), the contents of the article does not justify the title, which would be more suitable for a very engaging research study. The study accurately reports the results of a study conducted by the Multidisciplinary Training Center on Problems of Child Abuse, a study carried out in the capital. It is interesting to see that the study describes mothers as the strictest discipliners of their children????!!

The same study is referred to in an article in the *Republika* of the 2nd of October 2002, i.e. ten months later, and the "strictest discipliners" of children are this time "teachers at school". Of course, we do not intend to discuss here the study itself, but the truth is there cannot be "two first places" in this classification, both mothers and teachers.

Because the data are described and interpreted so differently in the two articles, we, the readers not only cannot understand why does the study say that children are abused, but we also get completely confused about the results of the study itself!





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But there are other “surprises” as well!

Between the publishing of the *Korrieri* article “Abuse: Why Do We Beat Our Children At Home,” of the 24th of January 2002, and the *Republika* article “Ill-treatment: Fifty-Seven Percent Of The Children Are Abused”, of the 2nd of October 2002, there was another article of the 13th of July 2002, again in *Republika* entitled: “A Delicate Age: Data From The Report” where the figures this time are not that 54% and the 57 % of the children are abused but that teachers abuse 74% of their pupils (what this 74% represents is not explained in the title). It would not be surprising if another article were published eight months from now we have another study with completely different results. Where does the problem lie?

First both *Republika* articles, that of the 13th of July and the one of the 2nd of October 2002, refer to the same study of the “Multidisciplinary Training Center on Problems of Child Abuse”; in fact parts of the articles are IDENTICAL and they were written by the same journalist.

“Child abuse, like many other social problems, is present in the day-to day Albanian reality, and there are numerous cases of child abuse and ill-treatment, both within the family and in society, and so on.”

What change are the statistics, which surprisingly vary not only from one newspaper to the other, but also from one issue of the same newspaper to another.!!!





Other events related to violence against women are crimes in the community:

**“Mystery: Teacher Found Dead”
Shekulli 09/04/02**

Mira Mark Qarku, 31, was found dead, with 5 bullets in her shoulder, in her own apartment. The unmarried 31 year old, a teacher by profession, was shot with a handgun.”

**“Killer of Theth Teacher Caught”
Shekulli 12/04/02**

Mican Qarku, 20 years old, second cousin of the victim pleads guilty and says that he was a drug addict and had committed the crime while under the influence of drugs.

Another case, an attempted murder this time, again involving a drug addict.

“Drug Addict Stabs Mother and Sister.” Shekulli 09/06/02.

Edmond Herri, 25, was apprehended by the police for attempted murder. He wanted 1000 leks to buy drugs.

Abuse under the influence of drugs becomes a crime.





“*Nexhmije Gjata from the village of Muçias, tried to complain about the immoral behavior of the son of one of her co-villagers. But in stead of apologies she received injuries on her back and arm when Gëzim Redhi (the neighbor) not only continued the verbal abuse his son had started but also beat her up severely.*

“*Victim: After the Squabble. Two Women Neighbors get in a Fight. Husband intervenes. A woman gets killed with a lever. Republika, 25 July 2002*

On 11/05/02 Shekulli had an article about the ill-treatment of the director of the Employment Office in Kruja.

“*Krujë: Director of the Employment Office Ill-treated in her own Office. ... Citizen Sh.Bala entered her office, and after threatening her, he hit her and broke her arm.*

Of course, aggressiveness and abuse are found everywhere and at all times, but abusing someone in their office, especially when the office holder is a woman, is a very unusual thing. It is part of the chaos and the escalation of abuse of all kinds; it is by no means a cultural norm or a canonical value!





During the year 2002 this is the only case reported in the print media when a woman killed her husband/partner!

It is clear that crime is nothing else but a crime, and there is no justification or excuse for anyone resorting to such violent ways, but it is equally true that 90% of the women serving their sentences in Prison 313 in Tirana, killed their husbands after years and years of physical and sexual abuse

Gender differences in aggressiveness: Studies show that males are more aggressive than females: Eagly & Steffen¹ (1986) argued that males are in fact somewhat more prone to be involved in aggressive behavior than females. However, the difference is only slight. In some situations the difference is more significant. For instance, there are more differences in physical aggressiveness (males are more aggressive), than in other non-physical forms (females are more likely to have negative attitudes of non-physical aggressive behavior).

There are also distinctions in the cases where aggressiveness is provoked by the aggressiveness of the other person. Males who kill women act from a sense of ownership on the women in their lives, or because of sexual jealousy; or they react destructively to the implicit or explicit intention of the women to abandon them. While women killing their husbands/partners usually act this way because they have been frequently abused⁷. (Wilson & Daly, 1992)

¹ Eagly, A.H, Steffen , V.J. "Gender stereotypes from the distribution of women and men into social roles". 1984.



Dje u operua. Pritet të dalë nga spitali

E moshuara, dëshmitarja e vetme që do sqarojë ngjarjen

DURRES – E moshuara e shtatëvjeç, e cila ndodhet ende në spital, mendohet se do të jetë dritë kyçje i sqarimit të vrasjes së djeshme në fshatin Kullë Sëktor të Durresit. Por policia nuk ka mundur ta marrë në pyetje pasi Veje Gjoci dhe nëna ka shkruar në onit.



However, the dilemma is acute: **Why such a high degree of aggressiveness in the past few years? Why is it so mercilessly directed against women and children?**

In the history of humankind, from its origins to the present, human beings are born and die together with their aggressiveness. Why are people so aggressive then? Thomas Hobbes in the seventeenth century argued that people are vicious creatures. He called the human species *homo lupus*, or ‘human wolf’ and believed that if people were not kept in check by civilization, they would kill each-other sooner rather than later. While other scholars rely on John Locke’s “tabula rasa” theory. From birth human beings are like a wax slate where experience engraves its marks. So we learn to be aggressive.

However, one thing is certain. In spite of the situational factors accompanying the exercise of abuse, such as frustration, alcohol or drugs, severe shock, and especially the presence of guns, abuse always has a normative basis. Depending on the situation, we are rewarded by being aggressive, and models of aggressiveness are learned. Our society promotes aggressive patterns of behavior from birth and early childhood.

How is violence presented and how does this affect the public?

Killings and abuse are part and parcel of the media. Aggressiveness has become a means to achieve victory over the

¹ Wilson, M. & Daly, M “the man who mistook his wife for a chattel” 1992





others in a violent world. The violence we face everyday both in the print and electronic media decreases our sensitivity towards the real abuse and distorts the real perception of the world.

Violence affects the public in three major ways:

- a) The public learns to react aggressively;
- b) The frequent news stories on violence and violent acts reduce public sensitivity towards violence
- c) Part of the public gets scared.⁸

Studies and statistics show that the reporting of certain spectacular crimes on TV and the newspapers has been accompanied by their actual increase in the society. Faced with the numerous and frequent abuse cases we often feel unable to help. A scholar (Eron, 1980) recommends that if we want to reduce the levels of aggressiveness in the society we have to discourage boys from being aggressive from their early childhood, and to reward them for other behavior, in short, try to help them socialize in a different way, not dissimilar to the girls’.

However, if violence is seen as a social aspect and norm, as the exercise of power of the stronger person over the weaker, if cases of abuse are conceived as dissociated with each other, and as a problem of the individual, family or group where abuse occurs, if abuse is not punished, then aggressiveness will be the “unaccepted but triumphant” value in our society!

¹ Potter, James “On media violence” 1999



5. Conclusions and recommendations

Why is it Difficult to Change Media Stereotypes?

The image promoted by the media affects the role and the status of women in the society, especially in the cases of violence within and outside the family. Reports on the multifaceted role of women in the family or their contribution in the society are very rare.

There are no real differences in the way these stories are covered in the partisan press from the independent press. On the contrary, a party newspaper like *Republika* has generally been more focused and “richer” in the number of articles covering social issues. The image promoted by the media affects the role and status of women in society, especially the cases of abuse, domestic or otherwise.

Reports in the press are influenced by professional (and personal) values and norms, institutional processes and structures, audience perceptions and preferences. On the other hand, the profile of men and women in the family reflects the social and economic conditions, especially the market rules and political ideologies in each society. Because these elements require quite a long time to change, the stereotypes they carry are similarly very difficult to change.



Obstacles and difficulties:

- Women and children continue to be the main victims of various forms of abuse in the family. Lack of understanding the full spectrum of factors that give rise to and favor the existence of abuse leads to a series of problems and difficulties in the way the media treat it.
- The lack of data on domestic violence at the national level is another difficulty that needs to be overcome and measures need to be taken in this respect.
- Domestic violence is still being treated as a private problem and not a problem of the whole society.
- The gender stereotypes in the Albanian society (and not only the Albanian society) are also present in the representatives of the media, who reinforce these stereotypes with the articles they write and the message they convey to the readers.
- Newspaper pages are full of crime scenes described in detail. The articles do not attempt to make an analysis and find solutions to these social problems.
- Labeling and an unprofessional use of vocabulary show that the print media is now conceived as a business and the main purpose of its existence is profit. Reporters and journalists chase the “news of the day” which will sell the newspaper.



What can be done in this situation?

- Increasing awareness about the problem of domestic violence is a very important objective to be achieved by all the actors in a democratic society and the media can play a major role in this regard;
- We must keep in mind that each human being – every man or woman – have the inalienable right to be treated by the media in an honest and equal manner, without any prejudice and discrimination against their sex.
- It is a responsibility of all the relevant structures of a democratic society such as: the government, economic and social institutions, the civil society, the media, etc., to develop and implement measures to prevent and combat domestic abuse.
- Support the education of girls and women, their training and employment in order to ensure an equal representation of women in the media by creating equal opportunities for them in all sectors and rubrics of the print media.
- Promote equal opportunities for every individual, by realizing an equal involvement of men and women and avoiding the images created as a result of the gender stereotypes in the media.



- Improve participation of women in leading and decision-making positions in the media (in our case in the print media), in order to encourage the press to promote the role and contribution of women in the society, to ensure a realistic and sensitive approach to the problem of domestic violence and its consequences.

This requires:

- Special policies and programs which reflect gender equality in order for gender perspectives to become part and parcel of the whole society;
- Training programs on gender issues and development which aim at increasing the awareness of media representatives about the various social problems in general and especially problems of domestic violence.
- Treating and reporting acts of domestic violence as violations of human rights and criminal acts.
- More accountability with regard to observation of the journalistic code of ethics, by respecting equality, fairness and safety of all human beings;
- An on-going cooperation of representatives from the governmental and non-governmental media with the aim of exchanging information, conducting joint activities and



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training sessions, as well as ensuring expertise and professionalism in the treatment of the problems of domestic violence and human trafficking.

- On-going consultation with specialized experts who have experience in the treatment of social problems in general and domestic violence in particular.
- Analysis of social problems from the gender perspective, by analyzing in depth the causes that give rise to them and presenting alternatives, strategies, or action plans that the society needs to carry out to prevent or combat these phenomena.
- Representatives of the print media must become familiar with the international conventions on human rights in general and the rights of women and children in particular ratified by the Albanian state, and report how these conventions are implemented in practice.
- Continuous monitoring of the press from the gender perspective and publication of their results.
- Promotion and encouragement of positive models in the print media by encouraging positive attitudes, and behaviors and other ways of communication except violence.



- Promotion and development of social policies that reflect gender equality and adopt a gender perspective in all issues.
- Programs designed to sensitize media professionals with regard to reporting domestic violence and addressing the needs in this field.
- Adaptation of all manuals on media ethics, to respect the right of the individual to freedom, justice and equality.
- Monitoring of images that become a source of discrimination and violation of women's and children's rights. This is not censorship in any way; it just aims to ensure respect for human beings.

All of the above aim to build a culture which treats individuals as citizens and not as mere consumers or an audience.

In stead of an epilogue

It is painful for us to read and realize the great number of domestic crimes among all the crime cases in general.

For as long as:

- The family is treated as a “group of individuals related by blood” and the influence of traditions and society on the family is ignored;



- The family and what happens behind the family home walls is treated as “private domain” and the role of the law and the institutions in the modeling of families is ignored;
- Verbal abuse and submission of women are explained by the age-long tradition and the role of legal institutions and structures in the modeling of emotions is ignored;

...violence will continue to exist, but it will not be able to hide behind the vest of tradition and moral values!

People are the best judges of what is the best for them, but by preventing them from acting on the basis of autonomous choices, the society treats them like children. It can be said that our value system is one of paternalistic values, especially with regard to the position of women. Said differently, freedom is not only a question of having formal rights; it demands the existence of conditions to fulfill and exercise these rights; which means readiness to offer women material and institutional resources. So the structures responsible for the observance of the rights of the citizens in a country must be more involved than in the observance of fundamental human rights.

This means that our social system must recognize that human beings have got only one life to live and this is a unique and universal value; this means that silence and tolerance



also seen in the form of indifference do nothing else but destroy the individuality of the members of the society; put in a different way, the happiness and comfort of a group of individuals does not have the magic power to make the other group happy!

Women are a source of love and care. Almost in all cultures the traditional role of women is to raise children and care for the whole family, a role that is related to such qualities as altruism and attention to the needs of others.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that homes are the place where women are oppressed and violated. Even where this is not very evident, violence is sometimes instrumentalized in other more subliminal forms: women are considered a device, an instrument to fulfill the needs of others, destined to have a reproductive role, be a cook, a cleaner, a sexual object, a caretaker.

Family may mean love but also abandonment, abuse, degradation. In addition, the family reproduces what it already has; while it is often a school of virtues, at the same time and in the same way it can be a school of gender inequality, nourishing behaviors that not only turn the new family into a reflected image of the old, but also have an influence on higher political and social levels. This influence is many-fold, because the family and the emotions it experiences are modeled by the laws and institutions responsible for the well-being of the family, by children's rights and care, by the



prevention of domestic abuse or women's economic rights. If women live in families where they are seen as complementary to men and a tool to serve them, it would be futile to expect and demand equality in the institutional and political spheres. As John Stuart Mill said a long time ago: "When boys in a society are raised and educated thinking that being male makes them automatically superior to the other half of the human race, this determines the social behavior of future men, not only towards women, but also towards all citizens in general. It is the parallel to the emotional state and thinking pattern of a king, who feels superior to others, just because he was born a king."

But chances are that this will not be desirable in a democracy.



6. Appendix

Articles monitored in 2001;

Table 1: Newspapers and articles monitored on domestic violence;

Chart 1: Forms of abuse

Chart 2: Places where abuse occurs;

Chart 3: Relationships between abuser and the abused

Chart 4: Instruments used in domestic crimes

Chart 5: The motives of physical abuse in the family;

Chart 6: Effects of sexual abuse as identified in the monitored articles;

Chart 7: Forms of domestic crimes

Chart 8: Effects of domestic crime on the family;

Chart 9: Trafficked persons by gender.



Articles monitored in 2002;

- Chart 1:** Newspapers monitored in 2002;
- Chart 2:** Main topics of monitored articles;
- Chart 3:** Domestic crimes in the period January – April 2002;
- Chart 4:** Motives of domestic crimes;
- Chart 5:** Perpetrators of domestic crimes.



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