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DO WOMEN IN KOSOVO AND METOHİJA HAVE THEIR NICHE AND THE CAPACITY FOR INDEPENDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS?

Abstract: Since the time when women cultivated the land, in order to feed their families, to this day, when numerous opportunities offered by modern life can help them fight for their financial independence, very little has changed. 107 female respondents who took part in this research stated that the primary economic activity they are engaged in is still agriculture. Fear of failure, as well as social prejudices that are increasingly highlighted as formidable and major barriers which, despite emphasizing the importance of the concept of gender equality, directly affect women's decisions about starting their own business, did not deter them from expressing their great determination and willingness to get involved in the process of switching to organic production and thus start their own business in the foreseeable future. Bearing in mind the aforementioned, it is evident that, under difficult business conditions, adequate financial and moral support from all possible relevant sources is necessary to maintain and support the entrepreneurial spirit of women in the province of Kosovo and Metohija.

Key words: women in Kosovo and Metohija, female entrepreneurship, agriculture, organic farming, male entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

In history, women represented a significant factor in the development of society and were the initiators of numerous social changes, where they actively participated in the modernization of society, entering new roles and fighting for liberation from patriarchal restraints. Back in ancient Egypt, women at all levels of society were engaged in agriculture and weaving, and those who were gifted and dedicated were engaged in organized music. Also, in their modest workshops, many of them made hair wigs by hand, and there were also those who worked in cash registers in order to provide existential conditions for life. Women had the right to education and from an early age they learned geometry and the basics of hieroglyphs, and in medicine they were highly valued (Peseshet stood out in particular). Unlike women in ancient Egypt, women

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in ancient Greece had fewer rights, they could not vote, own or inherit land, so their position was inferior to men. Their primary activities were focused on household maintenance, taking care of children and cultivating the land, whose profitable fruits were used to feed the household. On the other hand, in Rome, women lived by making handicrafts, agriculture, numerous crafts, making clothes, spinning wool, writing calligraphy, and some were midwives or nurses (Borić 2019).

Each period of history has influenced the social construction of women and their role in the family and society in a different way, imposing different expectations and rules, but constantly emphasizing the struggle and desire for (financial) independence. Based on the records and information about life in the medieval Balkan states and the Byzantine Empire, certain assumptions can be made about the position of women in those communities. In exceptional situations, a woman could have an occupation, which was a frequent case in the medieval littoral. History paid attention to women only if they were prominent rulers, and the reason for this is that in the shadow of every successful ruler stood a very successful woman. Medieval states abound with notable female rulers who helped their fathers, husbands and sons in running the state, but at the same time left a great impact on religion, culture, art and education. Following the jurisdiction of female rulers from the distinguished ruling dynasties of the Byzantine Empire, but also the dynasties of the medieval states in the Balkans, it is clear that their activities changed and became more complex depending on the political, social and theological changes that took place in the territories of their countries, all as a consequence of war conflicts and increasingly frequent border changes. In the role of founders, endowments, founders of folk kitchens, schools where girls of high and low birth were educated, communities where skills of handwork and intellectual conversation were mastered, the female rulers nurtured their traditions and kept their craftsmanship from being forgotten. In this way, they left a special mark on the time in which they lived, emphasizing even then a high degree of ability and independence to perform numerous tasks without material support.

Starting from Anna Dalassene, a Byzantine noblewoman, the mother of the entire Komnenoi dynasty and the founder of the endowment to Christ Pantepoptes (the All-Seeing), the powerful women of Byzantine history and culture who marked the Middle Ages were lined up and distinguished. Empress Irene Doukaina regularly carried out humanitarian actions for the poor. Unlike her, Empress Irene Piroška did not participate in state affairs, but was remembered as a benefactor, as evidenced by the home for the elderly that was built by her order within the Pantokrator complex and the leprosaria outside the monastery. The Byzantine noblewoman and member of the Palaiologos dynasty, Theodora Synadene, was the founder of the monastery of Our Lady of Certain Hope, where she founded a sisterhood of 30 nuns, and was especially dedicated to the education of novices. It is known that Bulgarian princesses, Maria Bulgaria, Anna of Kumanovo, Anna Maria of Hungary, Theodora Vlashka and many others participated in the construction of the medieval culture of the Balkans, as educated and capable women who, in addition to engaging in political life and leading diplomatic missions, also engaged in various forms of creativity.

Observing the Serbian medieval state, one realizes that the most significant women of Serbian medieval history belonged to the Nemanjić dynasty, which gave Serbia and

the Serbian people identity, culture and statehood. From the wife of the Grand Prince of Raška Stefan Nemanja, Ana Nemanjić, a symbol of a pious ruler and saint, to numerous princesses who came to Serbia as queens and empresses, there was a period of creativity in which they were remembered as excellent embroiderers and writers. At the Church of the Holy Mother of God, Stefan Nemanja's first endowment, the work was organized and supervised by his wife Ana. At a time when there was no great interest in girls' education in Europe, Queen Helen of Anjou, wife of King Stefan Uroš I, founded the first women's vocational school and boarding school for girls. In the insufficient number of data on the education of female children, the medievalists often quoted the words of Archbishop Danilo II from the Life of Helen of Anjou:

„She commanded in all her area to gather the daughters of poor parents, and feeding them in her home, she trained them in every good order and manual work, which was suitable for the female gender. And when they grew up, she married them to their husbands and they went to their houses, and in their place she took other girls like the first ones” (Tomin 2015: 14).

Following the example of Helen of Anjou, Empress Jelena, the wife of the first Serbian emperor Dušan, also founded schools for girls of high and low birth at her court, with whom she worked on Greek copies of minays (contain variable prayers) and liturgical books. Empress Jelena advocated for the restoration and maintenance of numerous monasteries, and she was the founder of the Karej Cell on Athos. Another heiress of the Nemanjić dynasty, Princess Milica, acquired numerous skills and knowledge in the field of biblical theology and liturgical poetry, which she later passed on to the girls who lived and were part of numerous workshops at her court.

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, women, as well as men, began to be attracted and captured by the European spirit in the way of life in general. However, fundamentally, the woman remains for the most part a very strong guardian of the patriarchal way of life. Women were engaged in pottery, weaving, embroidering, crocheting and sewing, which represented an honourable and valued source of income, which at the same time enabled a difficult, but decent and honest life. The products that were created as a result of their dexterity and dedication were sold, which was then a symbol of the status and prestige of a household. However, in today's modern conditions, women's crafts have been adapted to the new demands of the market, and family traditions have evolved into business. The ubiquitous marginalization within the most diverse social activities is one of the essential problems faced by women today, and with which they have struggled throughout the history of civilization in its various transformations. Today's time of modernization of society, the process of education and emancipation of women in various fields, enabled the promotion and rise of women in society, which enabled them to secure survival in the main social streams. Unlike their ancestors, women today do not often engage in the challenges of starting their own businesses, and female entrepreneurship is on the margins. Increasing insecurity, despite the great availability of information and developed projects and visions on the Internet, keeps even an educated woman away from the idea of starting her own business. In addition to insecurity, insufficient support, lack of financial resources, lack of

education, especially in rural areas, worries about household chores, worries about children and the dominant position of men in society, are additional reasons why women's ideas disappear even at very beginning. A woman entrepreneur should recognize an opportunity for her activity, and then look for resources and ways to realize her business idea, in the conditions and social environment in which she is at that moment (Чеко, Врбанац 2020: 83).

Women as the emergent economic power influence the shape of the global economy (Batool, Ullah 2017). Women's entrepreneurship today represents one of the three growing entrepreneurial activities in the world. According to the *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor* (GEM 2022), and based on the research conducted in 2020, it is estimated that 274 million women globally are involved in starting their own business, 139 million women are business owners or managers, while 144 million women represent informal investors. It is interesting that women in Europe have the lowest rate of entrepreneurship (5.7%), compared to the world average of 11%. The main reason is that women living in European countries are less entrepreneurial than women living on the other continents. The very process of transition of Eastern European countries from the 90s of the last century led to the emergence of new entrepreneurial traditions and new business cultures, both in the countries of the Western Balkans and in Turkey. The aforementioned changes have influenced the evolution of female entrepreneurship from a social to an economic category, with the fact that women still face more disincentives and a large number of obstacles when entering the labour market. Namely, as the Balkan countries are in the transition phase, the market is free and open mainly to big players, creating economic impossibility and lack of freedom for the majority (Dokmanović, Cvetićanin 2020). In the countries of the Western Balkans, female entrepreneurship is on the agenda of development policies, with the greatest advances made in the creation and implementation of various strategies. Analysing *SME Policy Index* (OECD 2019), female entrepreneurship in the Republic of Serbia has the highest average score in Southeast Europe (4.35), followed by Turkey (4.17), Montenegro (3.46), Bosnia and Herzegovina (3.26) and Albania (2.62). In Bulgaria, for example, since the moment it became a member of the European Union in 2007, a significant amount of financial resources has been allocated to support female entrepreneurship, who most often choose to develop business in the field of retail, catering services and textile production.

It is clear that there are many ideas about empowering women to engage in different jobs, however, the authors of the paper have opted for one of them, which is the strengthening of female entrepreneurship through organic production in Kosovo and Metohija. The position of women in Kosovo and Metohija has been difficult for centuries, all as a result of the conservative understanding of their role in society. Despite the aforementioned difficulties, over time, women's schools and craft societies became an important factor in the enlightenment of women in Kosovo and Metohija, both in the economic and humanitarian fields. The first female school on the territory of Kosovo and Metohija was founded in 1836 in Prizren. As a result, in this city, in 1909, the Women's Charitable Society Srpskinja was founded, whose goals were to gather women and girls "to work on their own improving, to prepare poor girls for good workers, to nurture humane feelings, to help the poor and the unwilling" (Миљошевић 2021: 409).

Furthermore, in 1920, a women's craft school was founded in Peć, the formation and work of which was greatly influenced by the Sub-Committee of the Serbian Sisters, which was founded one year earlier, i.e. in 1919 (Видосављевић, Круљ 2021: 477). After its founding, the society organized various types of charitable actions, looking after children without parental care, and it also organized courses for nurses, literacy, all for the sake of employment and improving the position of women.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The authors of the paper designed an original questionnaire that was used as the primary research tool. As regards the structure of the questionnaire, it is worth noting that it consists of two parts. The first part includes the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, such as: gender, age, municipality where the respondents live, household size, education, total average income and total area of arable land they own. The second part of the questionnaire refers to questions to do with activities that the respondents are engaged in, the type of production they engage in on their farm, the agricultural crops they grow, the barriers they encounter in production and marketing, the need for capacity expansion, the sources of financing they most often use, the importance of subsidies, the amount of subsidies they need for business, as well as the possibilities of attending various education seminars. The research was conducted in 2021, from July 1 to August 21, in four districts in Kosovo and Metohija: The Kosovska Mitrovica District, Kosovo, Kosovo Pomoravlje and Prizren districts, that is, in 16 municipalities forming part of the mentioned districts: Kosovska Mitrovica, Zvečan, Leposavić, Zubin Potok, Vučitrn, Priština, Obilić, Gračanica, Štrpce, Lipljan, Kosovska Kamenica, Novo Brdo, Vitina, Gnjilane, Ranilug, and Prizren. After data collection, their processing was done in the statistical program *IBM SPSS Statistics-version 26*. The data processing itself referred to descriptive statistics, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, cross-tabulation, and the Pearson correlation coefficient. This paper lays the emphasis on women and the opportunities for the development of female entrepreneurship in Kosovo and Metohija, with a comparative analysis of the views of male respondents who participated in the research. Similar research related to the development of entrepreneurship in Kosovo and Metohija is very scarce and, accordingly, this was the first limiting factor when writing the paper. Furthermore, since 1999, the Republic Institute of Statistics of the Republic of Serbia has not published statistical data related to the area of Kosovo and Metohija, and this is another limiting factor.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Since ancient times, women in Kosovo and Metohija, striving for economic independence, have done various jobs. With or without support, they have shown determination and perseverance in putting their ideas into effect, thus leaving a mark on the era in which they lived. Women entrepreneurs, harboring ambitions of engaging in numerous economic activities, continuously confirm their determination and persistence particularly in light of the fact that starting a business in modern conditions

in municipalities inhabited by non-Albanian population should represent a challenge and a desire for success, not fear and insecurity. The very fact that female entrepreneurship today represents one of the three growing entrepreneurial activities in the world, but also that research on this topic is inexhaustible, speaks volumes about the fact that the process of evolution from a woman who deals with various trades to one who starts innovative businesses through her management skills, was very complex. In developing countries, where a large part of the population lives in rural areas, female entrepreneurship is viewed as a social category, bearing in mind the fact that in these countries entrepreneurship is predominantly practiced by those population groups that had no other choice on the labor market, among whom women comprise the majority (Поповић, Паутић 2019: 144). Namely, women in rural areas, in spite of numerous obstacles they encounter, often successfully make the most of their own talents and create new values by starting a business independently.

107 female respondents and 189 male respondents participated in the research. The largest number of respondents are aged 21-30 (37.4%) and live in families comprising between four and five members (55.1%), and their average income is greater than 60 000 dinars (31.8%). As regards male respondents, the research findings indicated similarities with female respondents in terms of age and size of the household in which they live. Namely, the male respondents are on average between 21-30 years old (28%), and they, like the female respondents, live in families having four or five members in the household (50.8%). According to Bojičić and Tripković (Bojičić-Tripković 2022: 555), in Kosovo and Metohija there are mostly two-generation families, or extended families where, in addition to parents and their children, another relative lives in the family household, grandfather or grandmother. As a result of modern processes, traditional families in Kosovo and Metohija in the post-war period began to change their physiognomy, but also the process of internal (family) organization and division of labor within the household. The delegation of family authority affected the traditional understanding of the concept of family, whereby its new form took on a completely different dimension, scope and function. On the other hand, in contrast to female respondents, male respondents mostly received secondary education (39%), while those possessing a university degree account for 18.5%. Moreover, gender differences are noticeable in the amount of income, so unlike the female respondents, the male respondents stated that their average income is more than 80 000 dinars. And this research confirmed the long-known fact that the male gender is an epithet for someone who is the “head of household” and who has higher average incomes resulting from jobs from which women are excluded, and which require hard physical work, professional knowledge, and skills necessary for conquering new markets, but they are also reflected in personal and professional promotion. Analyzing the place of residence, the largest number of respondents are from the municipalities of Leposavić (25.2%), Kosovska Mitrovica (21.5%), and Zvečan (15.9%), while the least number of those with permanent residence are from the municipalities of Kosovska Kamenica (0.9%), Vitina (0.9%), and Ranilug (0.9%). Unlike the female respondents, the male respondents are mostly from the municipality of Obilić (23.8%), which belongs to the Kosovo district. Also, male respondents from the municipalities of Prizren (1.1%) and Novo Brdo (1.6%) participated in the research.

Figure 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Age	Number of female respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Number of male respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
21-30	40	37.4	53	28
31-40	23	21.5	36	19
41-50	28	26.2	35	18.5
51-60	8	7.5	39	20.6
60 and more	8	7.5	26	13.8
Level of education	Number of female respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Number of male respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Primary education	2	1.9	3	1.6
Secondary education	33	30.8	75	39.7
Vocational degree	12	11.2	20	10.6
Bachelor's degree	27	25.2	35	18.5
Master's degree	33	30.8	55	29.1
Doctor's degree	/	/	1	0.5
Income	Number of female respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Number of male respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
up to 20 000 dinars	9	8.4	4	2.1
from 20 000 to 40 000	15	14.0	21	11.1
from 40 000 to 60 000	25	23.4	40	21.2
from 60 000 to 80 000	34	31.8	55	29.1
80 000 and more	24	22.4	69	36.5
Household size	Number of female respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Number of male respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
1-3 members	24	22.4	45	23.8
4-5 members	59	55.1	96	50.8
6-7 members	22	20.6	47	24.9
8 and more members	2	1.9	1	0.5
Place of residence (district)	Number of female respondents (N)	Percentage (%)	Number of male respondents (N)	Percentage (%)
Kosovska Mitrovica	84	78.5	114	60.2
Kosovo	19	17.6	58	30.7
Kosovo Pomoravlje	4	3.6	15	8
Prizren	/	/	2	1.1

Source: Authors' research

The areas of Kosovo and Metohija are some of the poorer areas in Europe, and more specifically, in the Balkans. This fact directly leads to limited business opportunities for Serbian entrepreneurs, which, for primarily practical reasons, is mostly related to the area in which they live or to *majority-Serb areas* (Младеновић, Бојичић 2021: 157). According to Bojičić and Mladenović (Младеновић, Бојичић 2021: 157), female entrepreneurs in Kosovo and Metohija mostly opt for jobs such as retail trade and small production (production of food and service activities that do not require too much effort), while transport, larger production, wholesale trade, are reserved for men, as well as other services and industries that employ more workers. The need for women to start a business in the Kosovska Mitrovica, Kosovo, Kosovo Pomoravlje, Prizren and Peć Districts still exists, albeit to a lesser extent, which is a corollary of decades of conflicts, as well as the existence of social prejudices, local restrictions, and above all, ethnic differences in the region in question. However, economic cooperation between entrepreneurs from different ethnic backgrounds is among the first forms of cooperation on a larger scale that developed after the conflict in Kosovo and Metohija, according to an analysis of the state of the economy in majority-Serb communities (Јаковљевић, Мијачић 2021: 11). Even though there are no accurate demographic data on the Serbian community in this area, the aforementioned research showed that the economy in majority-Serb towns consists of 6 440 companies, 3 735 of which are based in the north, and 2 705 in the south (Јаковљевић, Мијачић 2021: 11).

Figure 1. Economic activity done by female respondents

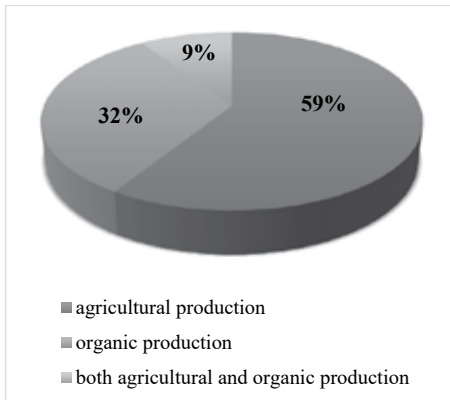
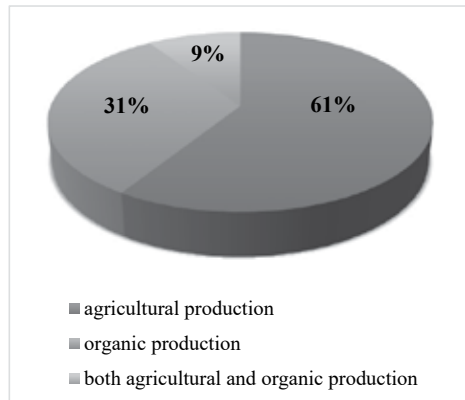


Figure 2. Economic activity done by male respondents



Source: Authors' research

According to Eurostat's data (Eurostat 2020), women comprise 49.7% of the working-age population in Kosovo and Metohija, while 80% of working-age women do not participate in the labor market. The main economic activity done by the female respondents is agriculture (59.0%). The findings are not surprising considering the fact that as much as 60% of the population in Kosovo and Metohija live in rural areas, so agricultural production stands out as the main source of income in these areas. Nevertheless, intensive and economically lucrative agricultural production in Serbian enclaves has been hindered for many years by a number of factors

(Максимовић-Милошевић и др. 2015: 138). Despite the above-mentioned, and taking into account the respondents' responses, it is clear that the agricultural sector in Kosovo and Metohija represents two sides of the same coin. Namely, on the one hand, there are farms that apply the principles of established practice, do not include reduced use of inputs and use old machinery, and on the other hand, there are many modern farms that apply organic agriculture as one of the increasingly popular technical solutions (Бојичић, Тришковић 2021: 457).

Gender differences in the motives for starting a business increasingly emphasize that women experience fear of failure (Sánchez-Escobedo et al. 2011), whereas men are more motivated by financial success and innovation (Carter et al. 2003). Of course, financial success is also relevant for women, but the desire for independence takes precedence (Carter et al. 2003). Due to numerous bureaucratic obstacles, political influences, and increasingly frequent nepotism, women entrepreneurs, compared to men, find it increasingly difficult to overcome the mentioned difficulties in order to achieve a certain degree of autonomy in the business world. In this regard, it is not surprising that more than half of the respondents (60.9%) cite economic gain as the prime motive for starting a business. Namely, the very process of improving agricultural production can provide women in rural areas with the opportunity to enter the public sphere of work, which in turn would stimulate the process of gaining economic independence, which is directly related to the improvement of the quality of life. Although economic independence can be achieved in multiple ways, female entrepreneurship is considered to be its postulate, as it leads to the empowerment of women, their employment, and poverty reduction.

Male entrepreneurs in Kosovo and Metohija are faced with barriers in their business, such as fear, mistrust in the provisional institutions of self-government in Priština and their unpredictable reactions in certain situations, fear of the introduction of taxes, reciprocal measures on license plates. However, all this does not prevent them from starting, improving and expanding their business (Младеновић, Бојичић 2021: 165; Jakšić, Vuković 2021: 217), and thus, 39.7% of male respondents stated that they need and plan to expand production capacity in the municipality where they live. On the other hand, 26.7% of respondents stated that they have the need, but not the conditions, to expand production capacity, due to losses that occur due to weather problems (73.3%) and unstable markets (55.6%). Differences in the respondents' views on the possibilities and needs for expanding production capacity are also attributed to the fact that female respondents own up to 3 hectares of arable land (69.8%), whereas almost half of male respondents (43.3%) carry out agricultural production on slightly more than 5 hectares of land. The larger area of arable land they own, as well as the financial support of the European Union and international institutions, such as the World Bank, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), USAID, the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and GIZ, provides male entrepreneurs with opportunities to consider the need to expand production capacity, but also self-realization and personal development in business. The above-mentioned implies that female entrepreneurs in Kosovo and Metohija need support, which must be specified in the form of adequate financial or other assistance, and not only in the form of moral support,

which is undoubtedly valuable, but in most cases insufficient. As the women's entrepreneurship sector is in the initial stage of development, it is increasingly obvious that the problems and challenges faced by women in the process of agricultural production, whether conventional or organic, are related to the lack of financial resources. As many as 97.8% of the respondents indicated that a certain form of subsidy would be beneficial as an incentive for the development of agricultural or organic production, and they specified 4 000 euros (28.9%) as the appropriate amount. The specified financial support is aimed at strengthening the governance structure, which is assumed to ensure safe market exchange and free economic relations, for the purpose of harmonizing the social order in the province of Kosovo and Metohija with entrepreneurship, private property, and market price mechanisms (Zupančić et al. 2017).

The relationship between the „size of household” in which the respondents live and the „area of arable land” they own is highly statistically significant ($p = 0,001$), with Pearson's correlation coefficient ($\rho = 0,325$), which indicates that there is a positive yet weak relationship between the mentioned variables. The larger the household, the larger the area of arable land owned by the respondents, which also provides them with relative satisfaction in terms of food self-sufficiency of the family members. In Kosovo and Metohija, family agricultural households prevail, in which the family business is passed down from generation to generation, together with knowledge, experience, tradition and special practices. The role of the woman, as the pillar of the family, is reflected in the preservation of the structure, functionality and identity of a household, which, especially in this region, is exposed to numerous uncertainties that are typical of the agricultural sector. In spite of the uncertainties, women engaged in agricultural production strive to improve their entrepreneurial and management skills, as well as individual achievements, aiming to generate higher incomes and gain economic independence. In this regard, a highly statistically significant relationship ($p = 0,025$) was determined between the variables „household size” and „average income of respondents”, with the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient ($\rho = 0,217$). The weak positive relationship indicates that, unlike two-generation families, women in extended families also have additional income, and most of them, in addition to the business they do at home, keep a regular job, if they have one.

Although there is a highly statistically significant relationship between the variables „respondents' average income” and „type of production you are engaged in” ($p = 0,020$), the Pearson correlation coefficient is low ($\rho = 0,226$). Female respondents living in the municipalities of Leposavić, Kosovska Mitrovica, Zvečan and Vučitrn have higher average incomes compared to respondents living in the municipalities of Zubin Potok, Obilić and Štrpce. Therefore, the amount of income directly affects their decisions on whether to engage in agricultural or organic production. The respondents expressed a keen interest in growing ecologically healthy food, which not only confirms their multifunctionality, but also emphasizes their role as creators of strategies designed for the well-being of the family and wider social community. The fact that organic production has minor economic importance currently in Kosovo and Metohija must not discourage women from “getting to grips” with growing natural produce, but on the contrary, it is necessary to make additional efforts so that this

production takes root in the local market, becomes economically profitable and acceptable for the end consumer. Consequently, a slight negative relationship was established ($\rho = -0,265$) between the variables „*type of production you are engaged in*” and „*engagement in agricultural/organic production in the immediate vicinity*” and it is highly statistically significant ($p = 0,006$).

Pearson's correlation coefficient ($\rho = -0,387$) between the variables „*respondents' age*” and „*state support*” indicates a medium-strong yet negative relationship, with high statistical significance ($p = 0,009$). Younger respondents insist on greater support from the state when starting a business, and are more willing to take on numerous challenges and risks in order to implement their ideas, unlike older respondents, who have a strong fear of failure and lack of motivation. According to Нићин, Булатовић (Нићин, Булатовић и др. 2018: 521), research on female entrepreneurship shows that women decide to work independently at different ages, but those who come from families with a tradition of craftsmanship or a free profession start earlier, and accordingly they adopted the basic patterns of entrepreneurial culture through socialization. Unlike female respondents, no statistically significant relationship was ascertained between „*age*” and „*state support*” in male respondents, as one of the motivators for starting a business ($p = 0,551$; $\rho = 0,071$). The „*state support*” required by the female respondents is weakly and negatively related to the „*agricultural crops*” they grow in their households ($p = 0,023$; $\rho = -0,338$). In relation to the female respondents who grow vegetables, herbs, cereals and gather honey, the female respondents whose production is based on fruit processing point out that they need the support of the state when marketing their products. The areas of Kosovo and Metohija have excellent agroecological, climatic and technical conditions for directing conventional fruit production towards organic production. This undertaking requires the support of the state, as well as the enhancement of production efficiency and improving knowledge.

„*The needs/conditions for the expansion of production capacity*” have a medium-positive relationship with „*entrepreneurship education*” ($p = 0,009$; $\rho = 0,385$). In view of the respondents' awareness of the possibility of advancement, their need for attending various forms of educational seminars directly depends on their age, level of education and average level of income. Entrepreneurship education is necessary not only for shaping the mindset of women, but also for providing them with skills, knowledge and attitudes that are crucial for the development of an entrepreneurship culture. By intensifying theoretical lectures, creative workshops, analyses of case studies, and also by organizing entrepreneurship motivational conferences, motivational lectures delivered by successful women entrepreneurs from the governmental and non-governmental sectors, women in Kosovo and Metohija would be provided with adequate knowledge and information that they can use to promote their own ideas on labor market.

Based on the conducted research and presented findings, the authors of the paper identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the development of male and female entrepreneurship in Kosovo and Metohija through a SWOT analysis. It is apparent that current barriers do not undermine the existing potentials that directly affect future development in the field of entrepreneurship.

Figure 2: SWOT analysis of male and female entrepreneurship in Kosovo and Metohija

FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP	
<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ growing interest in diverse economic activities; ✓ growing interest in starting a business; ✓ strong motivation and desire for independence; ✓ increasing number of women entrepreneurs; ✓ predominantly agricultural land provides opportunities for the development of agriculture; ✓ male entrepreneurs' support to start a business. 	<p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ lack of financial support for the implementation of planned activities; ✓ insufficient support from local and state authorities; ✓ lack of information about examples of good practice in the neighboring countries; ✓ inadequate education of women; ✓ insufficient information and knowledge about creating a business plan; ✓ lack of statistical data on classified women entrepreneurs in business (women entrepreneurs and managers).
<p>OPPORTUNITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ natural potentials provide opportunities for engaging in various economic activities; ✓ creation of a business networking model for women entrepreneurs; ✓ doing training in self-employment, starting and development of business; ✓ empowering women in rural areas; ✓ opportunities for greater economic independence. 	<p>RISKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ underdeveloped institutional infrastructure; ✓ political situation in Kosovo and Metohija; ✓ social prejudices; ✓ low level of support aimed at increasing the competitiveness of female entrepreneurship; ✓ insufficient promotion of women entrepreneurs in Kosovo and Metohija.
MALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP	
<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ high percentage of male entrepreneurs; ✓ multifunctionality and willingness to do various jobs; ✓ using one's own funds to start a business; ✓ continuous support coming from non-governmental and international organizations; ✓ need for expansion of production capacity. 	<p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ insufficient cooperation among male entrepreneurs; ✓ underdevelopment of local markets in terms of product marketing; ✓ political hardships faced by the population living in places inhabited by non-Albanian-majority population; ✓ product export problems.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ strengthening the sector of male entrepreneurship in Kosovo and Metohija; ✓ strengthening of local markets; ✓ cooperative with female entrepreneurs; ✓ higher incomes for household members; ✓ production of authentic products. 	<p>RISKS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ inability to market a product; ✓ high prices of material procurement; ✓ fees and taxes; ✓ lack of understanding of local and state authorities; ✓ inadequate financial assistance.

Source: Authors' research

CONCLUSION

The need for financial and other forms of independence, as well as the desire to prove and demonstrate personal values in society, represent the underlying motives behind women's decision to start a business, which was confirmed by this research. Due to a significant number of obstacles and barriers, and in order to improve the position of women in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija, it is necessary to launch a large number of unique projects that would enable the networking of women having different interests, but also women who, through synergistic cooperation, would find a way to make sure their common ideas, products and services are placed on the market. Namely, improving the position of women living in the Kosovska Mitrovica, Kosovo, Kosovo Pomoravlje and Prizren districts represents not only their financial empowerment, but also raising their awareness about the role and rights they have in households. Based on the conducted research, the authors of the paper put forward the following list of recommendations:

- ✓ organizing a variety of educational seminars that would provide women with adequate information and knowledge necessary to start their own business;
- ✓ organizing mentoring workshops in which lectures would be given by successful women entrepreneurs from different walks of life;
- ✓ establishing an association of women entrepreneurs from Kosovo and Metohija;
- ✓ establishing a women's association that would deal with the promotion and improvement of organic production;
- ✓ inclusion of men entrepreneurs in established women's associations, who would perform the role of supporting the strengthening of the entrepreneurship sector in Kosovo and Metohija;
- ✓ forming business incubators for women, so that they are included in various guarantee funds.

Given the fact that the largest percentage of respondents are engaged in agriculture, it is clear that these activities contribute substantially to the revitalization of the rural areas of Kosovo and Metohija. The journey from „farm to table” is relatively long and tedious, the challenges facing women in agriculture are unpredictable. However, adequate financial assistance and education can help them attain their major goals, namely, regular income, economic independence and food production for their own family. In Ray Goforth's words: „*There are two types of people who will tell you that you cannot make a difference in this world: those who are afraid to try and those who are afraid you will succeed.*”

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ИМАЈУ ЛИ ЖЕНЕ КОСОВА И МЕТОХИЈЕ СВОЈЕ МЕСТО И МОГУЋНОСТ НЕЗАВИСНОСТИ У ПОСЛОВНОЈ БУДУЋНОСТИ?

РЕЗИМЕ

Од времена када су жене обрађивале земљиште, како би добијене плодове користиле за прехрану своје породице, до данас, када им бројне могућности које нуди савремени живот могу помоћи да се изборе за своју финансијску независност, није се много тога променило. 107 испитаница овог истраживања је навело да им је и даље примарна делатност којом се баве пољопривреда. Страх од неуспеха, као и друштвене предрасуде које се све више истичу као главне баријере које, и поред наглашавања значаја појма родне равноправности, директно утичу на одлуке жена о покретању сопственог посла, нису их поколебале да истакну велику одлучност и спремност да се у будућности укључе у процес преласка на органску производњу и тако покрену сопствени бизнис. Имајући у виду наведено, јасно је да је, у свакако отежаним условима пословања, за одржање и потпору предузетничког духа жена на територији Косова и Метохије, неопходна адекватна, како финансијска, тако и морална подршка од стране свих могућих релевантних извора.

Кључне речи: жене на Косову и Метохији, женско предузетништво, пољопривреда, органска производња, мушко предузетништво.