Albanian migrant women

Relation between migration and empowerment of women.

The case-study of Albania

A Bachelor Thesis

Abstract

This is an explorative research of the determinants of migration for women who come from male dominant societies and migrate to more equal societies. The main theory used is the theory of the push and pull factor. The oppression of women in dominantly male societies is defined as a push factor. And opportunities for self-empowerment in more equal societies are defined as a pull factor.

In Albania men are the ones who become the head of the household and only men are allowed to own any property. According to the *Kanun* any women that act in any way as a dishonourable person should be punished or even should pay with her blood. In male dominated societies, such as Albania, there a only few opportunities for women to climb the ladder in the labour market. It makes it very hard for women to provide for themselves and their families financially. Escape high levels of gender inequality is defined as an important reason for Albanian women to migrate. After the fall of the communist regime in the 90's, the national borders opened up and migration from Albania has increased tremendously. Some women escape male dominant society by migrating to regions with relatively more equality in gender relations. These women seek more independence and empowerment. For Albanian women Greece and Italy are popular host countries. However, migration is not without any risks, there are women who become victims of human traffickers and find themselves in a greater problem than ever before.

Preface

This Bachelor thesis is written as a final assignment for the degree of International development Studies (BIN), at the University of Wageningen. The topic for this Thesis is the relation between migration and the empowerment of women. As a case-study I have looked at Albania.

My interest in this subject of migration and gender was raised during a lecture of RDS (social theories of rural transformation). One of the subjects dealt with was migration and double engagement. It was after reading an article of Erman (1997) on Turkey's rural-urban migration, the squatter housings in the urban areas, and the role of male and female migrants in the new environment, that made my interest in this subject grow even more. Reading this article among others on this type of subjects made me motivated to dig deeper in the theories of migration and gender roles. Especially formation of new identities, copings with new cultures and the relation between migration processes and female empowerment has offered me a broader and richer perspective on present day debates about multicultural societies and the participation and integration of immigrant groups.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Bettina Bock of the University of Wageningen, for her feedback, guidance and support throughout the process of this thesis.

Summery

The Albanian society is a dominantly male society where women experience high levels of social control by man of which male family members in particular. This low social position of women is in part related to the lack of job opportunities for women after the fall of the communism in the 90's and in part to the still existing and practiced customary law of the Kanun. The Kanun revolves around the value of honour. Women have very little to say and have to accept a low status as opposed to men. In dominantly male societies such as Albania, men are more often abusive towards women whenever they feel threatened by them. When women are socially or economically stronger, they are more likely to be abused by men. On one side, women are expected to be financially and socially dependent of men in these societies. On the another side, this type of gender inequality and the high level of male dependency make it relatively easy for men to abuse women without this having direct negative consequences on their social-economic position. Men are not much stable then women, they suffer also but for other reasons. Men are depressed and coop with post war traumas. As a consequence they are addicted to drugs and alcohol, which makes the abuse of women even worse. However, during the communist regime the public freedom of women increased, but their position within the private spheres remained according to the old traditional ways. After the fall of the communism many regulations on human rights were introduced, nevertheless those regulations have very little impact on the social position of women in Albania. The gender inequalities that still exist push women away from their home country. Although not every woman is in the position to migrate, some women are able to empower themselves by migrating to the regions where women are less dependent on men. There they hope to get the opportunity to empower themselves by earning their own money. However, not every woman is lucky enough to migrate without any risks; women who decide to migrate alone are often mislead and trapped in the web of human traffickers or other illegal activities. By generating some kind of income women are able to get relatively more power and independence. With the help of some local NGO's and other organisations some of these women are able to free themselves and turn their traffickers in. However, once in the web of criminal activities, these women can never escape the social stigma that hunts them and forces them to accept low skilled/paid jobs. In the meantime in Albania, the older generation of women are still very marginalized. Women can never achieve equality in communities where the Kanun law is practiced. In Kanun law, sex differences in capacities and behaviour are absolute. Biological determinism is very strongly present in Albania; the way we are born is immutable. Women have a subordinate role in the Albanian society, fortunately the younger generation is more open minded due to traveling and education. They are able to freely move between countries, because of the opening of the borders. Introduction of the internet and international television has also a huge impact on the perspectives of young Albanian people about gender relations. However, the gender roles inside their houses in the private spheres often remain questionable.

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Chapter 1.Introduction

1.1)   Problem definition

Migration can have a strong impact on gender-roles and the empowerment of women. This relation is researched by focusing on the push and pull factors related to the migration of women from a traditionally masculine society into a society where women and man are relatively equal.

1.2)   Case-study

For this research, I have selected Albania as a case-study because it is a relatively small country which is traditionally characterised as a masculine society. Albania counts a large number of people who migrated to countries in which the equality of men and women and the empowerment of women has long been ingrained into the fabric of society.

Albania is a country which knows a traditionally patriarchal culture. The customary laws of Kanun are widespread, and there are clear differences between the rights and duties of men and women. For example, the woman is excluded from family legacies (Post, as cited in Caro et al., 2011). And in daily life, women are seen as being inferior, their main role in society is to bear children and engage in traditional household tasks. Migration often leads to a multiplicity of linkages between cultures, which can contribute to changing gender roles (Grillo & Mazzucato, 2008).

1.3)   History of migration from Albania

After the fall of the communist regime in the 90's, restrictions to cross the Albania borders fell and a huge migration wave took place. In table 1 below an illustration of male/female migrant flows from Albania, from the year 2000 till 2011, to other countries is given. What we see is that Albanian migrants increasingly move to English speaking countries and France.

-Refugee Population -> Refugees Total -> Originating from -> World -> Refugees Originating from -> Albania
(Periodicity: Year, Applied Time Period: from 2000 to 2011)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Australia	63	67	62	40	22	13	16	64	49	49	46	51
Canada	625	998	1,186	1,226	1,273	1,403	1,327	2,509	2,496	2,340	2,166	1,900
France	744	799	869	835	958	1,123	1,239	1,298	1,374	1,498	1,556	1,666
Greece		61	14	14	5	7	7	4	4	2	2	6
Italy	958	344	273	273	282	282	276	234	202	205	177	127
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	120	305	780	1,130	1,275	1,327	1,378	1,445	1,484	1,492	1,479	1,388
United States of America	3,549	4,174	4,534	3,952	4,004	4,399	7,792	7,749	7,232	6,721	6,005	5,202

Table 1: Adapted from: http://apps.who.int/globalatlas/dataQuery/reportData.asp?rptType=1

Migration is a relational rather than a rational process which knows many different determinants and motives, amongst which to improve social-political conditions in cases such as national disrupt ethnic problems, class divisions and individual issues. There are differences in the determinants of migration for women and men. Most women migrate in order to create a basic livelihood and some degree of self-empowerment in another country. Men often focus on profit maximization (Vaiou, 2011). While international migration is most often planned by the man, internal migration is often decided on by the woman and is seen as a decision taken as a family (Grillo & Mazzucato, 2008).

In order to understand why Albanian men, at first chose to migrate into societies with high levels of equality between men and women, we take a look at the impact of the globalisation on migration processes. Castells calls this: *Space-time compression (Castells, 2000). After the fall of communism, unobstructed flows of information, capital and culture crossed the Albanian borders. Where poor people have a greater choice in terms of migration destinations, they are likely to choose based on economic determinants (Grillo & Mazzucato, 2008). It happened to be that societies with relative equality between men and women also provided attractive economic opportunities for Albanian people to migrate there.

About a quarter of Albanian people live abroad. Because of the opening of the borders after the communist fall, it is easier to move elsewhere. Most of the Albanian migrants live in countries like Greece and Italy, UK is becoming more and more attractive since 1990's (King & Vullnetari, 2009). But migration has been in the history of Albania long before the communist fall of the 1990's. During the 15th century a couple of thousand Albanian people escaped from the Ottoman Empire and went to Italy (Tirta, as quoted in King, & Vullnetari, 2009). During the late 19th and early 20th century Albanians migrated in huge amounts to the United States, only in the communist time there was no movement. Migration was an act of betrayal and people who tried to leave would be punished or even sentenced to death (King & Vullnetari, 2009). However, the opening of the border didn't just give people the opportunity to go elsewhere, but also to move somewhere else and return back to their country of origin. People have used this opportunity to escape economic hardship and support their families with remittances. Furthermore, research has shown that the Albanian migrants send more remittances to Albania than any other migrant group (Carletto, et al, 2006). Which makes people left behind think that there is a huge benefit in migrating too. The decision to migrate was prepared and articulated because of the indicators that economy would collapsed (Vaiou, 2011).

1.4) Research objective

This study analyses the relation between migration -from a strongly masculine society to a society in which men and women are considered equal- and the empowerment of women. The case-study of Albania is used.

This aim leads to the following main question and sub-questions:

Main-question:

1. To what extent does cultural gender inequality motivate women to migrate?

Sub-questions:

1.a. Do Albanian women specify gender inequality as a reason to migrate?

1.b. Does the opportunity for women empowerment in the place of destination affect the choice of Albanian woman where to migrate?

Main-question:

2. Does migration from a strongly masculine society to a society in which men and women are considered equal, have a positive effect on the empowerment of women?

Sub-questions:

2.a. Are Albanian women who have migrated to a society where women and men are more equal, more empowered than women who have stayed in Albania?

1.5) Definition of important concepts

In this thesis the concepts of migration, empowerment and gender are of a great importance, I will be using this concepts throughout my thesis. Below a brief introduction and most common definition will be described.

Migration: The traditional definition of migration is: a change of usual residence of sufficient distance and duration to disrupt every day social relationships (Brouwn, 2009). Migration is not just another word for mobility. Migration is to change the main place of residence, while mobility refers to movement of people from one place to another in general. Migration is a continuous concept; it is changeable all the time by exogenous or endogenous influences (Held, 1999). In this thesis the changing residence and disrupt social relations are understood under migration of Albanian women.

Empowerment: Being able to actively develop and use ones abilities to help shape ones live economically, socially and politically. It is thus a form of freedom expansion that one has to be able to make your own choices and take actions according to your own decision (Deepa, et al., 2002). And that is what empowerment of Albanian women entails in this thesis.

Gender: The position of men and women in the society is given by the construction of a culture. They are given certain codes which should be taken into consideration, these codes of gender imply for codes like e.g.: blue for boys and pink for girls and so on (Kilbourne, 2013). Gender cannot be examined in isolation from other processes, in other words, gender is linked to *intersectionality:* an integrative perspective that emphasizes the intersection of several processes, like gender, race, class, sexuality, and nation, in historically, culturally specific contexts (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Therefore we have to be aware of the historical differences in Albania (Calloni, 2002).

1.6)   Methodology

This thesis is based on a literature study. The existing literature and theories are analysed, reviewed and linked where possible with my own insights on gender issues. In this thesis I try to combine the theoretical side to a case (Albania) to improve my understandings of gender and migratory matters. I will do that by reviewing literature about Albania and gender inequalities within this country. I also review literature about effects of migration in the destination place on the family structure and changing patterns of inequality after migration. There are some limitations, such as the lack of data of female migrants from Albania. The cause of these limitations is undocumented migratory processes in the years before of the communist collapse. Furthermore, the lack of observational research brings some limitations. However, within the limits of this research I present important findings that might function as foundation to further research. These findings provide a source of knowledge about female empowerment due to migration processes.

1.7)   Relevance

     Scientific relevance: A lot of research has been done about the role of gender related to migration, also with regard to Albania. However, only few studies have been conducted with the aim of revealing the effect which migrating from a patriarchal society has on the empowerment of women. More research may give us insight in whether and if so how, migration can influence the empowerment of women. The case-study of Albania may help to understand also other cases involving gender roles and migration patterns from patriarchal societies. Also it might be a starting point for additional research about gender specific aspects of migration.

     Social relevance: Albanian women were always treated following old traditional ways, in which women are subordinated to men. After World War II, during the communist regime, gender equality was institutionalized, women were allowed to vote, to work and even to educate themselves. However, in many households the patriarchal traditions remained and existed alongside the official equality. Some women tried to empower themselves by migrating away from their hometowns. In some cases these women were able to build up an independent life somewhere else. Without the protection of their family and kin however, also many of these women ended up in prostitution and some type of criminal activities (Campani &Chiappelli, 2013). Still today many women are being suppressed on the base of their gender. Some of these women may even be looking for ways to take their lives into their own hands

by migrating away from their societies of origin. By researching this topic, we gather more information about the backgrounds and characteristics of these women, and also about the determinants of the migration and what social organisation might be able to do to support them to build up a new life and empower themselves.

1.8)   Structure

In the first chapter (the introduction) the general scope and aims of the research are described, the second chapter gives the theoretical framework. The case-study of Albania is set out in chapter three. This chapter explains the position of women in the Albanian society. Chapter four focuses on the push and pull factors that explain migration flows of Albanian women. Chapter five explains in more detail the determinants of migration in relation to female empowerment. In chapter six the effect migration has on the empowerment of women is being discussed. Finally in chapter seven (the conclusion) the research question is answered whether migration from a strongly masculine society to a society with more equality between men and women has a positive effect on the empowerment of the women involved.

Chapter 2.Theoretical Framework

Theories of migration

Migration is a sum of different motivations and reasons, differing in duration and destinations (Ravenstein, 1977). Migration is not a modern phenomenon. It is a regional mobility that is a centuries old interactive process. In this chapter I discuss the complex and dynamic nature of migration and the many theories that help us to understand the complex nature of migration. I start in paragraph 2.1 with the classical migration theories, and in 2.2 I discuss more recent theories on transnational migration. In paragraph 2.3 I explain why I apply the push and pull theory for the research of this phenomenon.

2.1)   Migration theories
The Neoclassical Equilibrium Framework (Lee, 1966)

This approach dominated migration research until 1960s; it is a variant of modernization theory. This model can be divided in to two theories, the macro and the micro neoclassical economics. According to *the macro* neoclassical economics migration was an economic decision. Migration flows reflect sum of individuals who are rational and want to maximize their income by migrating. However, before migrating they compare labor supply and demand in competing labor markets at home and host country. Migration is caused by *'geographic differences in the supply of and demand for labor'* (Massey et al., 1993:433). Over time, migration will reduce inequality between areas. In *the micro level* the individual is unit of analysis, migrants are income maximizers who move to increase returns on human capital and distance and intervening obstacles are measures of risk. People move when the expected future benefits are higher than costs and risks of moving (ibid: 434). So in this theory people are income maximizers, who look at the differences in income in both countries and then make a rational choice whether to migrate to the *better income* country or not.

The new economics of migration

In contrast to the neoclassical theory, the new economics of migration theory says that the decision to migrate is not an individual one. People decide to migrate collectively, the whole family unit decides whether to migrate or not. Family units act collectively, not only in economic maximizing sense but also in ensuring some degree of certainty. The families create 'fall backs' to capture failure and risks by each individual family member, in this way each family member can be as productive as possible (Massey et al., 1993). In most developed countries there are insurances or some kind of institutional market to minimize household income risks, but in developing countries people divide risks of income by migration and thus remittances.

New economics of migration also argues that remittances is not the only reason for people to send family members abroad. Having someone from the family living abroad makes their social status relatively better than other groups in their community (Massey et al., 1993: 438).

Dual labour market theory

The theories mentioned above are concentrating on the micro-level, whereas Dual labor market theory is more macro-level oriented. According to this theory people migrate because of the growing labour demand of the industrialized countries. Piore (1979) is one of the supporters of this theory. He argues that the migration flows are the results of the better economic condition of the industrial countries. These much better economic conditions pull migrants to those countries, while the push factors of their home country like the relatively lesser economic welfare does not play any role in the migration decision. (Massey et al., 1993:440).

World system Theory

The need to grow and make profits caused Western countries to penetrate into poor countries making people migrate because of the disruption and exploitation. As more and more peripheral parts of the world are controlled by multinationals or the capitalist world, people are forced to migrate. Global cities: there are a few cities in which there is a concentrated amount of economic activities like New York or Tokyo. Along with that there is a huge amount of demand for low paid workers at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy, which is filled by migrant workers (Massey et al., 1993)

So according to this theory, the expanding economic and political activities of the globalization are the main cause of migration.

Push and pull Theory

As discussed until now, there are many theories that give us different causalities to migration. It is possible that some of these theories coexist at different levels or operate at the same level at the same time. So we shouldn't exclude the one or the other, while analysing these theories. Also the neoclassical theory assumes that people migrate only because of their rational economic benefits decisions. However, what about other aspects that force people to migrate that has nothing to do with economic conditions, like war migrants and social exclusion (Giddens, 2001). Moreover these theories are more concentrated on the pull factors of migration in contrast to push factors that also play a huge role in migration decision making. However, whenever we analyse reasons and motivations behind (international) migration we see that there is a clear division between the push- and the pull-factors. Push factors are present in the home country, which forces people to migrate due to some sort of disruption (Giddens, 2001). The disruption might be political, economic or of some other nature. The pull factors are present in the host country, pull factors are generally comparative advantages and there must be facilitating forces to enforce migration in the host country (Kline, 2003).

*'Migration occurs as a result of interplay of certain forces at the beginning and end of the migratory axis. It can be political, social, economic, historical or some force of other nature. These forces are labelled as **push** and **pull** forces'* (Kline, 2003).

So the push and pull theory is simply put the pushing and negative aspects in the home country and the attractive aspects of the host country, people move away from one country to another country because of some motivational reasons (Parnwell, 2005).

2.2) *Transnational movement and the reasons (theories)*

Then we have transnational migration flows, it involves people moving from one country to another not always coming back but still remaining in touch with the country of origin. Transnational migration encounters Trans - local movements, the movements might be rural-urban, rural-rural, urban- rural and so on. Trans-national is as if there is an imaginary continuous space, with no structural boundaries, because people remain in touch with their families back home. People create by this mobility thus multiple linkages at old and new places, remaining connected to both at the same time. This concept is also known as the double engagement (Grillo &Mazzucato, 2008). So migration is in a sense changing residence, however not always permanently. And we can look at migration as a relational phenomenon rather than rational one, because there are more aspects that define migration than residence only (Grillo &Mazzucato, 2008).

Some examples of the transnational migration are:

Network theory

People are embedded in social relationships and institutional structures. Social networks and ties develop, operate and become self-sustaining between home and destination countries. These networks make migration more likely by reducing costs and risks and making the future expectations of migration profits enhanced. Decisions that are based upon support of these networks are collective decisions, because people are embedded in families which in their turn are embedded in communities. Especially migrant women are depended on their network with their decision whether to migrate or not. And above all migration is seen as a family livelihood strategy, which diversifies risks and vulnerabilities of the family unit. Migration based on the network is increasing due to information flows through the network linking origin and destination in trans-local communities (Massey et al., 1993).

Institutional theory

As more and more people migrated to the capitalist countries, the limited permission to stay there can exceed, this created a large number of migrants who are exploited or mistreated as illegal migrants. New institutions arise to protect the human rights of these migrants. Moreover, there are other profit seekers who arise and are involved in human trafficking,

providing fake visa's, arranging fake marriages and so on, to try and provide migrant's access to Capitalist labor markets (Messay et al., 1993:450).

Cumulative causation
Although the theories above give us some degree of understanding of how and why migration might occur, the process of migration creates new incentives that triggers further migration. So these processes make additional migration very attractive, this phenomenon is called '*cumulative causation'* (Messay et al., 1993: 448).

This theory assumes that migration sustains itself '*making additional movement more likely'* (Messay et al., 1993: 451).

2.3)   Conceptual framework (push-pull factors):
The migration phenomenon is nothing new; people have always been on the move whether it's permanently or temporary geographical relocation (Held, 1999). Migration is a complex phenomenon and is characterized by different motivations, durations, destination and reasons for every society and groups of people. Moreover as mentioned above, there are different kinds of migration patterns and these are related to socio-economic and political situations as well as individual characteristics.

Migration has different kinds of theories as we saw above. This thesis is based on reasons and motivations of women to migrate. To be able to explain why women in Albania migrate to escape the unequal gender roles and find empowerment somewhere else, I focus on the push and pull factors of it. I hope to create an interesting thesis about gender and migration, as oppressed women and unequal gender roles are a global problem. I will use this framework to combine reasons, motivations and risks and get a clearer idea about this topic using the case in Albania.

The push and pull theory is selected as the most relevant theory. Push factors are negative aspects in people's lives that derive them from place of origin; these are unfavourable situations that are related to the place of origin. At the other side we have the pull factors, related to the place of destination (Parnwell, 1993). We might call it the comparative advantages that are favourable and attractive situations that benefit the individuals.

The push and pull theory is criticized because it would simplify the migration processes and overlook the complexity of it (Parnwell, 1993). According to the critics migration occur in interaction with macro and micro level of factors. Such as: policies or individual decisions. So many theories have been based on this theory, but expanded by many more aspects and circumstances that play a role in migration decision making. Like situation at the home country, individual circumstances and positions and the structural aspects (Parnwell, 2005). Even though the push and the pull theory have some shortages, it is the base theory of my thesis. When looking at the reasons and motivations of people to migrate there is a division in push and pull factors. And many literatures that I found are unconsciously based on these push and pull theory. Migrant women of Albania are clearly pushed away due to social gender inequality and pulled by promising opportunity of self-empowerment and social equality.

Migration is a very complex, dynamic and multisided phenomenon. To understand what drives women to migrate, we need to understand where they come from. We need to understand their social position. Once we know that, we will be able to use the push and pull theory to explain what the pushing factor is and what the pulling factor is of Albanian migrant women. Also in upcoming chapters, I will look at the situation in the host country, whether the expectations of migrants are met once reaching the host country. And are those women able to use the pulling factors to empower themselves.

Chapter 3. Customary law and the position of women in Albania

This chapter examines the literature written about gender inequality in Albania and in particular the literature about the processes that might or might not have influenced the position of women in Albania throughout the years. Gender inequality comes forward and is central to this thesis. At the end of this chapter we will be able to analyse the reasons behind the submissive position of women in Albania and to understand how this originated.

First this chapter provides a sketch of the definition of the Kanun, as this term is used frequently throughout this chapter (paragraph 3.1). This traditional Albanian customary law is an important key word in this subject. Then, to understand the position of women in Albania, we have to dig deeper into the history of Albania to understand this phenomenon. There might be some reasons for Albanian men to hold on their submissive behaviour. Thus paragraph 3.2 is about the History of Albania. Then in paragraph 3.3 I will describe the position of women today and finally the conclusion on these issues of inequality paragraph 3.4.

3.1)   History of Albania

Before the communist regime Albania was a very patriarchal and patrilineal society, with old traditions and male dominance. Men had the advantages in almost all the aspects of live, while the women lacked *'all basic human rights'* (Flakingham and Gjonca, 2001). The superiority of men is also visible in the fact that women have to bear male children, otherwise the husband has the right to divorce his wife if she is not able to bear male children, while the women have no right to divorce at all (Flakingham and Gjonca, 2001). So having sons was a very important issue, because of this patrilineal family relations and the fact that the sons remained in the parenting house after their own marriages and were descendants of the family name.

With the start of the communist regime the country slowly started to change. The regime wanted females to get education, participate in the public sphere and take the opportunities to change their role in the society. The position of women began to change, in 1944 this regime issued a declaration granting *' equal rights with men and the right to participate in the political and the social life of the country'* (Falkingham and Gjonca, 2001: 316). For this emancipation of women was the achievement of a universal education system and women participation in the agricultural and industrial sector.

3.2)   Rules of Kanun

The reason for oppression of Albanian women lies in the very distant past, to be precisely in the 15th century. When the tribal people's law, or in other words the unwritten social and legal code or as Van de Veen (2008) describes it: 'code of honour' a social traditional Albanian customary law, made its way to people in Northern Albania, the *Kanun*. That developed itself throughout the years (Nixon, 2011), introducing rights and rules on marriage, guests, social life of the community, the position of women, punishment and blood feud. This laws or rules included every aspect of everyday life, from how women should behave at home

and outside the home to dispute settlement to property rights, marriages, honour killings and so on (Waal, 2005).

There are several versions of the *Kanun*, like the 'Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini' and the 'Kanun of Skanderbeg' (Young, 2000). The names refer to the person who wrote down the laws and rules that were already in use. Lekë Dukagjini was the first to do so in the 1400s, his version of the *Kanun* is the most used. The *Kanun* has always been passed on by mouth, but in 1989 Gjeçov published a huge collection on paper (Young, 2000).

Young (2000) says that it is important for people to value and practise the Kanun. He also includes the term 'honour hospitality'; it implies that anyone who acts in a dishonourable way should be punished. The bloodline of men is referred to as 'the tree of blood', whereas the women's bloodline is referred to as 'the tree of milk'. Women are seen as objects; they have no value and are there to take care of their families and guests (Young, 2000). Tarifa (2007:81, 82) describes the position of women according to the Kanun as following:

> *The Kanun defined the duties of a wife as follows: "to preserve the honour of her husband, to serve her husband in an unblemished manner, to submit to his domination, to fulfil her conjugal duties, to raise and nurture her children with honour, to keep clothes and shoes in good order, and not to interfere in the betrothals of her sons and daughters." As for her rights, the Kanun summarized them all in one sentence: "The wife has the right to ask her husband for sustenance, clothes and shoes." In other words, the Kanun defined a woman as "a sack, made to endure as long as she lives in her husband's house." Although the husband did not have the right over the life of his wife, he had the right "to beat and bind her if she scorned his words and orders."*

The term separate 'spheres' for men and women is also in the work of Backer (1983), he describes that even older women have to be submissive in the public sphere or in some areas of the house. There are only few rooms in which females had their freedom to speak out loud. One of the most common spheres were they are free is in the sphere of the kitchen (Backer, 1983; Young, 2000). Women are not allowed to leave their work aside to go somewhere if they need to; they have to finish work first. Young (2000) describes how women do many activities at ones. However, the roles of women throughout the years have been loosening up a bit (Backer, 1983). Moreover, there is uncertainty about the relation between the Kanun and the patriarchal society, did the Kanun shape the patriarchy or was it the society that created the Kanun to keep their patriarchal manners? Anywise, one thing that is clear is that the positions of men and women in the Kanun reflect the fact that in Albanian society men are of a much greater value then women.

The honour of Albanian men is very important. This is something that is held high and protected at any cost (Young, 200). It is even considered more valuable than life itself. The *Kanun* knows several kinds of honours, on personal level and family and society level. Every woman should never offence these honours. In majority of regions in Albania, particularly in the Northern Albania, women are seen as 'shame' and men as 'honour'.

In some traditional families where all male family members are killed by e.g. blood – feud, the women are expected to swear they remain virgins and take the role of male upon them, while transforming herself into a male, wearing male cloth and cutting their hairs short. However, there is another reason that forces women to swear keeping their chastity that is when she refuses to marry someone who her parents have selected for her to marry. Women are not allowed to refuse this kind of matters, they have very little choice and parents or husbands make choices for them instead. By refusing to marry someone who came to your house asking your parents to marry you, you are being disrespectful to him and his entire family. This might lead to a blood fuel in some cases (Whitaker, online 2013)

Backer (1983) and Young (2000) describe the term 'patrilocality', which means that after marriage the wife have to live in the house of her husband's family. This is related to male inheritance. Only men can inherit anything, any ownership is destined to men; it is reserved for men (Young, 2000). Only men can pass this blood on to the next generation (Young, 2000).Their lives has actually no value, females are not part of their families after marriages, but even in her husband's family she does not belong.

3.3)   Albanian women today
The end of the communist regime had macro and micro consequences; there was no control of the government over economic or social activities. The society itself became in control over the market, one of the consequences being the disparity between the societies (Calloni, 2002). Gender roles became more diversified, making women inferior to men in the domestic as well as in the public spheres. While, in times of communism women were encouraged to work outside the home and take part of the politics. It was even expected to work and contribute to the nation's welfare, women that did not worked were seen as bad examples for other members of the society (ibid.).

However, after the fall of communism people fell back to their patriarchal mentality, excluding women from the social and market spheres. Also lack of employment forced many women to stay at home, this situation made it worse for women (ibid.). Despite the patriarchal mentality and the increasing control of men over the social and economic spheres, there is a crisis in Albania. Men have to deal with mental problems caused by the war of the late 90's, their frustrations and anger are translated into domestic violence and the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol and illegal businesses like human trafficking (ibid.).

As this problems increase and women are more and more marginalized, the need for women's resistance increases. There are women who experienced violence and exclusions themselves who collaborate with other women in other post-communist countries to resist the male domination. These globalised collaborations make gender issues visible and gives it a chance to restore (ibid.). Because even though the communist regime gave women more economical and political involvement, there was no such a thing that changed the gender relations in domestic spheres. That is why women are still marginalized and have no respect as fellow humans (ibid.), despite many so called regulations that are 'pro-women'. Until this day the gender relations are not equal, women have very few employment opportunities and have

hardly any access to social services, credit and business institutions or any other market. As a consequence you see less and less divorces because women cannot sustain themselves or their children without their husband.

However, the mentality of Albanian youth about gender relations has changed this due to educational opportunities. They are able to move around and travel and educate themselves abroad and outside the country, which contributes to a change of mentality towards gender relations (Calloni, 2002).

3.4) Conclusion

To understand the position of Albanian women today, we need to look at the history of Albania. We saw that women had struggled throughout the history with gender relations and were marginalized for many years now. Even though they had some economic and political influences in the communist time, women were still submissive in the domestic spheres, where the patriarchal mentally still existed and the laws of the Kanun were still practised behind closed doors. On the one hand, women do not want to go back to that dominated state that controlled every aspect of the society's lives and the socio-political limitations, but at the other hand they feel more and more controlled by their husbands and have hardly any job opportunity. Women are still discriminated and men are feeling that 'macho' power and are dominating the women. The fall of communist regime had also impact on men, they are also struggling finding a job and maintaining their position as head of the family. Due to fall of communist regime the entire economy collapsed. So men took out their anger and frustrations on their wife and domestic violence became another problem that women have to deal with.

Despite all of this, research has shown that the individual mentality of Albanian youth is changing gradually. The fall of the communist regime opened the borders and Albanians are free to travel across the border, this had a huge impact on the mentality of Albanian youth. This is due to the moving around and seeing the world for educational purposes. Also mass communication and technological opportunities to access information across the globe and be connected is benefiting the young minds (Calloni, 2002). This opportunity opened the individual's eyes and changed their mentality on gender relations.

This chapter demonstrated the context in which the phenomenon of 'gender inequality' exists. Knowledge of the tribal structure, the patriarchal society, the position of men and women, the *Kanun* and the value of honour will help understand the phenomenon of 'inequality' and 'empowerment', which plays an important role in migrations flows from Albania to other countries, as portrayed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4. Gender inequality and the migrant women

The case of Albania

In this chapter I examine the push factors of migration of Albanian women. Both gender inequality and economic reasons are examined as possible push factors in paragraph 4.1. In paragraph 4.2) more general reasons to migrate are discussed, based on the knowledge gained in literature study to conclude the reasons for migration of Albanian women.

4.1)   Push factors

Albania is characterised as a patriarchal society. Patriarchy is a system organized around male authority. In this type of society men are seen as being superior to women based on a strong gender hierarchy. The association that male and female characteristics are subject to certain notions such as: weak vs. strong or high pay vs. low pay etc. Mainly in Northern Albania people live in patriarchal communities and live according to a set of behavioural rules known as the Kanun. Both men and women participate in the patriarch system. And also patriarchy is not always perceived as being negative by women. Yet, we have to keep in mind that women also enact several feminist beliefs in "natural" western culture, exposing dependency.

Since the liberalisation of the market sector in Albania, women became more dependent on men. From a society with full employment during the socialist regime, unemployment became a social problem and especially for women job opportunities decreased (Mendola & Carletto, 2009). This created new forms of disparity among men and women. Within the socialist regime women participated professionally outside of the household and both men and women were seen as being responsible for the welfare and well-being of the nation (Calloni, 2002). In present day Albania, women are excluded from public sectors. This means that women who had been used to a certain degree of social and economic independence during the socialist era, had to again get used to a patriarchal system as dependency on men in social and economic spheres. However, according to Calloni (2002), not just women suffer from these economic and political changes in Albania, but also men suffer. After the transition to the market-economy, man struggled to cope with societal changes, unemployment and also with post-war trauma. Men increasingly searched for comfort in alcohol and drugs and tried to make a living out of illegal business.

Women's rights are recognized by the Albanian constitution on 'integrity of human dignity, human rights and freedom'. Yet in practice women are not equal to men. Even though Albania officially prohibits gender discrimination and despite high educational levels among women, there is still a problem with equality of women and men in the labor market and other economic and social services and spheres (Calloni, 2002). It has been stated that democratization does not automatically mean more freedom, equality or economic benefits of people. Instead, the free borders of Albania have had some influences on increased illegal activities such as human trafficking of prostitutes. As Calloni (2002) states free borders among other circumstances, are not only beneficiary for women who can freely escape

oppression in Albania, but it is also cruel, to women who are brought abroad obligatory to work as prostitutes.

Spousal violence is common in Albania. Violence is used to maintain gender hierarchy and to prevent women to seek for self-empowerment, so men can be at the top of the pyramid (ibid.). When women are higher educated than men, levels of spousal violence are higher (ibid.). Violence against women is more often perceived as 'normal' in societies in which men and women have witnessed their parents in spousal violence (Burazerie et al., 2005). Abused women from these communities often do not even report violence. These women have indicated feeling ashamed to report being the victim of domestic violence as this is seen by them as being a normal element in their lives. Also, women who would have wanted to report domestic violence often chose not to do this because in practice the police do not do anything to stop the abuse from happening again in the future (ibid.). Research has shown that domestic violence pushes women away from their home countries (Burazerie et al., 2005).

4.2)   Conclusion
When it comes to migration what you see is the role of the man depicted very strongly and women are seen as passive followers of their husbands. That is because migration is referred to as an economic behaviour (Bock, 2008). But migration is a multifaceted phenomenon that involves more than only male domination. Since the fall of the communist regime it is easier to move across the borders, and women can escape male oppression or domestic violence, as it is a problem that occurs more often than usually in Albania. The disparate need for a professional occupation and the use of drugs and alcohol contributes to the fact that men get involved in illegal activities; one of those activities is human trafficking, which is a serious problem.

Chapter 5.Empowerment of women in the place of destination

Pull factors

In this chapter I discuss the pull factors which can explain the choice of women from traditionally patriarchal societies to migrate to societies in which men and women are relatively equal.

5.1)   *Pull factors in host countries*

Studies have shown that women are followers of men when it comes down to migration, they go to destinations that their husbands decide to go to and it is male's decision whether to take the whole family along or just the wife. When women move to the urban areas or other countries, there is an increased potential for empowerment, as they are often separated from the extended family and can engage in paid employment outside the home and expand their social networks. These networks may decrease the costs and times spend on gaining information, thus trigger more migration. Previous migrations of neighbours, family members etc. may influence other women in migration decisions. By migrating women experience an increase in autonomy, self-confidence and agency (Caro et al., 2011).

The benefits of migration can vary for migrant women depending on their motivations, expectations, educational level, background characteristics, social status and the presence of their husband in the household (Caro et al., 2011). These aspects determine their occupations, and their ability to engage in the new society to integrate successfully. Men and women differ in terms of motives, risks and norms related to migration. This creates a new kind of family hierarchy, where the women start to get more and more the role of the breadwinner and men start to feel losing control (ibid.). According to these researchers, moving across the borders is in a sense not only geographically moving across the border, but it is moving across the boundary of oppression, of gender inequality and boundary of male imposition.

Success stories from Albanians who have already migrated and have accumulated quite some status and wealth abroad is very tempting for others to also migrate. Since the opening of the borders it is much easier to cross the border. Many Albanians migrate especially to Italy which geographically is not so far to reach and very familiar because of the Italian TV, which is popular in Albania. People from Albania saw how wealthy people in Italy were. Especially the liberal lifestyles of Italian women were attractive to women in Albania, who did not have the same freedoms (Carletto, et al., 2006).

The main reason for women to migrate is economical security and an opportunity to free them from gender inequality and to develop themselves (Caro et al., 2011). Most women might follow their husbands and will not be able to have a voice in the decision of where to migrate, but they have the hope that in the host country there will be opportunities to escape male domination and seek for empowerment (ibid.).

5.2)   Conclusion

Migration from Albania takes place mainly for political and economic reasons and most women follow their men and are not actively involved in taking the decision to migrate. As women migrate together with their husbands and leave the extended family behind. In most cases migration is initiated by the men for economic reasons but has a positive effect on the empowerment of women, as they join to societies that know a higher level of equality between men and women than was the case in their country of origin. It does also happen that women actively take the decision to move away from the traditionally masculine societies in which they grew up, based on a wish to empower themselves. Especially for women who lack support from a trustworthy social network, the risk of becoming the victim of human trafficking or ending up in prostitution is relatively high.

Chapter 6.The empowerment of women after migration

Does is matter where women migrate to?

In this final chapter I discuss about how women manage in their new environment. Does migration contribute to empowerment? Women sometimes migrate because they want to escape the patriarchy and the domination by their husbands or fathers. Will these women be able to provide for themselves and be independent of men? First in paragraph 6.1 I will examine the migrant women's integration in the host countries, what kind institutions or situations are enabling/disabling migrant women? I want to focus on the matter of human trafficking, because many Albanian women are forced, by promises of a better life, into prostitution. The social processes and the abuse and exploitation of women, that makes them captured in the web of prostitution will be analysed. And finally there will be a conclusion in paragraph 6.2 of whether migration contributes to personal development or lead women to a more frightening situation.

6.1)   Reaching empowerment

Albania has struggled with the transition to the market economy. People have a hard time finding a job and deal with many economic difficulties (Davis, 2009). Hence migration is becoming more and more a livelihood* strategy for many Albanian refugees who try to escape those economic disadvantages. The migration patterns may be rural-urban or international, either way the aim is to gain more economic stability and empowerment (ibid.).

However, to be able to have a 'normal job' in occupational market in host countries and gain more stability, you have to have high educational levels and skills. Most women with low qualifications who migrate have on the one hand more mobility, they escape oppression and accumulate new languages and cultures, but on the other hand they are forced into stigmatized jobs (Krzystek, online 2013). The host countries deny recognizing the abilities of migrant women in high occupational positions and are not taking into account their cultural and historical background and diplomas. This segregation approach and the strict policies on entrance the country, create a lot of illegal immigrants. Many Albanian women migrants turn to illegal entrance and turn to illegal activities or very low skill jobs (ibid.).

One of those 'low skilled' jobs is human trafficking. As mentioned before, the main reason for a lot of women in Albania to migrate is gender inequality and exclusion from private and public spheres. Women are seen as not capable and have no power at all in the representation of their own needs and interests to achieve economic alternatives. Their everyday lives are controlled and they are being excluded and isolated (Davis, 2009).

Mainly young women have a risk to be trapped by promises of a job opportunity abroad, once they agree, they will be trapped in the web of the sex and entertainment industry. Other common ways to trap women is to deceive them into a marriage to men who will abuse and

exploit them. Many of these husbands are involved in human trafficking or sell their wife's to one of those traffickers. Lately these non-altruistic household decisions by men are known and women refuse to marry someone they feel would be like that (ibid.). However, there are also women who willingly agree to work as a prostitute, these are women who lack social networks and relations to support their migration mobility and see trafficking as the only way to escape their current situation, trafficking becomes a way of departure strategy. Some women have already been working in the prostitution in their home country, for others this is the only gate opener to developed countries (Catarino, et. al., online 2013).

There are variations in degree of deception and the destination choices. Women on the streets are mostly illegal in the host country, while women in entertainment industry are entered by visa. In both cases women saw this as an opportunity to escape economic difficulties and considered sex industry as a quick and easy earning or an opportunity to go to Europe and realize their dreams (ibid.). However, leaving this industry is not that easy, many women come to the realization that there are no alternatives when they are illegally entered the host country or just because they are controlled by the traffickers. For these women, who accepted prostitution in search for a better and normal life, are no other alternatives and they are trapped in the web of this demeaning and subordinated job. People see these women as 'easy' and 'disgusting', these women are stigmatised life long and this stigmatization is beyond their activities or were they are coming from (Albania, Nigeria, and East Europe etc.). As a defence mechanism prostitutes are distancing themselves from these stereotypes and refer to street prostitution as something bad, while praising the entertainment occupation (ibid.).

In Europe human trafficking victims are seen as criminals and not wanted people, they are often deported without considering whether they might be in danger in their home country or not. This is of course against any human rights and the TIP Reports have many harsh critics against these policies (Campani & Chiappelli, online 2013). Many women have been 'rescued' by the NGO's and given legal status, and were supported in their decision to turn in their pimps, but according to some critics this makes prostitution not vanish but instead it makes it grow harder. That is because it creates opportunities for women who first came as prostitutes to become legal residents of a host country, which triggers other women to migrate as prostitutes too (Catarino, et al., online 2013). Also the Guide on the 'Gender-Sensitive Labour Migration Policies' published in 2009 says that because of the lack of policies based on gender inequalities or perspectives makes women vulnerable. They are victims of human trafficking because of the lack of protection of women migrants. It also says:

'Female *migrant workers often experience different disadvantages*
In comparison to men at all stages of the migration process, due to their
Status, to the nature of the employment sector and type of educational requirements
As well as stereotyped roles of men and women. […] To remedy the situation, attention
Has been drawn to the need for special measures to enforce current legislation and
To develop and adopt policies and programmes for female migrant workers both in
Countries of origin and destination' (OSCE 2009: II).

Hence it is necessary that the EU member states come up with policies that prevent illegal migration flows, which enables human trafficking or other illegal activities linked to migration. It is very important to have protection policies for women that are the foundation of respect and empowerment of gender (ibid.).

6.2)   Conclusion

Migration is seen by Albanian women -as is also the case for Albanian men- as a livelihood strategy, related to high unemployment levels and low participation opportunities in their country of origin. Most often, women migrate with their husbands. They have not really a choice in the decision of destination. After accumulation of some income they often decide to separate themselves from their husbands. Also women migrate by themselves, most of the time to the neighbour countries, as a way to escape the patriarchal society, hoping they will be able to empower themselves in the host country. However, the diplomas of women who have migrated are often not recognized by the host countries, language is a barrier and there are other risks. It happens, for example, that women end up in illegal activities or prostitution in the host country. Often they are trapped by men –who sometimes even marry these women to get them into trusting them- who sell them to human traffickers. Most women start out as economic migrants, but end up as victims of human traffickers that become the target group for rescue programs by different NGO's (Davis, 2009).

Chapter 7.Conclusion

This thesis is concentrated on the case of Albanian migrant women and the determinants that play a role in the decision making. The main objective was to find out to what extend Albanian women migrate because of the cultural gender inequality. Many authors have used different concepts and theories to analyse migration, which can be quit confusing. In order to analyse whether gender inequality has an impact on the migration decision of Albanian women, I adopted the framework of the push and pull theory. Although there are many migration theories as I described before, push and pull theory is the best tool to explain migration decision in a simplistic way, and to explain the genderedness of women migrants. First, I have explained the various theories on migration matters. Then I explained the position of women in the society in my case-study Albania. By doing so I could then explain my choice for the push and pull factors that influence the migration flows from Albania. This seemed to be interpreted differently by every sociologist. It is important to know what women face in the host countries and whether they reach empowerment as they wished. I finished with the discussion on what effects migration has on women who have migrated in search for empowerment. In this chapter the main research questions are answered.

In strongly patriarchal societies, in this case Albania, it can be very hard for women to empower themselves socially as well as economically. Wherever women are highly dependent on men for their livelihood and that of their direct dependents like children or elderly, they are more inclined to accept suppression of their free will and more inclined to accept different forms of abuse. Especially in Albania it is hard for women to empower themselves within their communities of origin. The authorities such as the police often do not do anything against domestic violence. This is related to a cultural tradition which is still very strong in the north of Albania known by the name of the *Kanun* and is characterised by the subordination of women to men at all levels of society. The opening of the Albanian borders was a great relief for these women and an important push factor, there was a chance to escape. However, without any trustworthy network they often end up in the hands of human traffickers.
Migration can be a way for individual women to escape from male oppression and to reach empowerment. However, most Albanian women join their husbands when they migrate. So the opportunity for women empowerment in the place of destination is not even considered initially. Most often men are the ones who take the decision to migrate and they also decide the destination based on the expectations of economic opportunities. Once the women are away from the suppression of the extended family and once they live in communities in which men and women are more equal, the levels of empowerment of women generally increases. Migration from a strongly masculine society to a society in which men and women are considered equal has a positive effect on the empowerment of women. Some women even leave their husbands and are sometimes also supported in this process of self-empowerment by local NGO's or a local social network. The level of empowerment that is reached by women, who have migrated away from strongly masculine societies, does depend on the country of destination. Traditional views about male and female role patterns, in countries like

Italy and Greece, make it that also there it can still be relatively hard for women to reach an absolute empowerment. However, it seems like the new generation of Albanian women have taken over the mentality of their neighbouring countries. According to Calloni (2002), the Albanian youth is more open to gender equality because of the digital access (internet etc.) to the world. Their mentality changes because of traveling for educational purposes due to open borders from the 90's onwards. Unfortunately the older generation has hardly any access to economic, social or political spheres. Despite the many regulations on human right, the rights of Albanian women are still not recognized and they are still much marginalized. We could conclude that Albanian women, who have migrated to a society where women and men are more equal, are more empowered than women who have stayed in Albania.

Reflection

During this study several issues came up which made it hard for me to write this thesis. First of all, the literature that could be found on the socio-cultural condition of the Albanian people living in the Northern seems to be outdated, also it was hard to find data about the relation of the *Kanun* to the entire country of Albania. Although I referred to Young (2000) and the literature that he used, it was sometimes not very clear whether these *Kanun* had his impact also in the South Albania and whether the situation has changed nowadays. It was very hard for me to find literature about the gender relations in Albania in recent years. The only resource I found that was useable was that of Calloni (2002). So some questions still remain unanswered: Is there still unequal gender relations in Albania? What is the influence of Kanun in this matter? And has the position of women remained unchanged?

The same problems came up in search of some literature about push and pull theory. There was hardly any literature that discussed this theory in depth. I used information that I found in the article of Parnwell (2003). One might consider it as one-sided information, but still quite usable in my eyes.

Also the position of women in host countries was hard to examine, the most literature that could be found was about human trafficking. Although many literatures that were used for this thesis were about human trafficking, I am critical about the amount of women that really have to deal with these issues. Not all women end up in low paid/skilled jobs or in prostitution, and I had a hard time proving it.

Recommendations

By migrating, some women have escaped gender inequalities. These women now have the opportunity to see the world and get over social constructions in their society about gender relations. This can be done by putting these women in some kind of support groups with women who work and are independent. Another possibility is to let these migrant women watch soaps and integrate into the host countries culture and teach them the norms and values. Also teaching them about equal gender relations and ways to escape abusive relationships might help migrant women to be able to empower themselves and pass this knowledge on to other generations or relatives. If these women would now return to these societies from which they migrated they might be able to empower local women.

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