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# Female School Dropout: Gender Differences in Students' School Retention

Edona Begu

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Submitted to AUK as part of requirement for graduation

Female School Dropout: Gender Differences in Students'  
School Retention

A Honors Society Project

Presented to

The Academic Faculty

By

Edona Begu

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for Membership in the  
Honors Society of the American University in Kosovo

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## **Abbreviations**

**EMIS** - Education Management Information System

**KAS** - Kosovo Agency of Statistics

**MEST** - Ministry of Science and Technology

**MED** - Municipality Education Director

**USAID** – United States Agency for International Development

**GIZ**-German Society for International Cooperation

**WB** - World Bank.

**OSCE** - Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

**UNICEF**- United Nations Children's Fund

The aim of this project is to find out whether there is a gender difference in students school retention or in the dropout rates in Kosovo, because there is a prevailing perception that the female students dropout more, or that the female school retention is lower compared to male. Moreover, many international organizations and nongovernmental institutions such as GIZ, WB, UNICEF and UNDP have been and are currently involved in treating the problem of female school dropout and gender disparities in education,<sup>1</sup> Therefore, strengthening even more the widespread belief that there are gender differences in education in Kosovo, more exactly that the female school dropout is higher than the male school dropout. Moreover, the gender education issues, such as female school dropout, are recognized, incorporated and addressed by governmental institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in their education strategies,<sup>2</sup> which again reinforces the belief that there are gender differences in school retention or that the female school dropout is greater among female students than male students.

This project is of high importance because according to the last censuses, female make up almost 50% of Kosovo's population, which means they represent half of the population.<sup>3</sup> Hence, by failing to educate half of the population, Kosovo is failing to use efficiently half of its human capacity. Moreover, many studies show that female's education is related closely with economic and social development,<sup>4</sup> which Kosovo in reality needs. According to these studies, it is crucial, especially for developing countries such as Kosovo, to educate females because it will increase female participation and productivity in the labour market. Consequently, the increase on productivity will be accompanied with an increase in

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Review in Education Unicef, [http://www.unicef.org/kosovo/kosovo\\_media\\_pub\\_educ\\_005.04.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/kosovo/kosovo_media_pub_educ_005.04.pdf)  
Tracking School Dropouts and Non-attendance in Kosovo, <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/95112>

<sup>2</sup> Parandalimi dhe reagimi ndaj braktisjes së shkollimit, Ministry of Education-Human Rights Division  
A Strategy for Education for Rural People in Kosovo (2004 – 2009), <http://www.fao.org/sd/erp/ERPkosovoenglish.PDF>

<sup>3</sup> Kosovo Population and Housing Census 2011, <http://esk.rks-gov.net/rekos2011/?cid=2.72.320>

<sup>4</sup> Tembon & Fort 2008

economic growth and hence a decrease in poverty.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the right to education is a universal right, for all the people regardless the gender difference, which is foreseen by many international laws. Furthermore, the global community has set as Millennium Development Goal the achievement of “universal primary education”- for boys and girls alike.<sup>6</sup> Hence, since Kosovo is determined to be part of the international institutions, it should be proving its commitment by guaranteeing and protecting the rights that are guaranteed and respected by the international community. Therefore, since the female school dropout is still a prevalent issue than it is societies and governments responsibility to direct the policies and create the appropriate mechanisms that will ensure a reduction of female school dropout and, in general, reduction of disparities in gender differences in education. Given the above mentioned reasons regarding the importance of female education, more specifically, the female school retention, in this project will be elaborated: the literature review, the research question, the hypothesis, the data - analytical approach, the results, the conclusions and the recommendations.

## **Literature Review**

Initially, there should be a clarification to the term “school dropout” which in the education terminology represents the students who leave the school prior to completion of a certain education level, or when they leave and do not return for a given academic year<sup>7</sup>. This clarification should be emphasized, because within the Kosovo institutions there is no wide acceptance or a consistent usage of the term dropout. In some of the official MEST documents the term dropout is defined as “the students who leaves the school prior to completion of a certain education level, or who leave school on an interim or inconclusive

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<sup>5</sup> Tembon & Fort 2008

<sup>6</sup> Millennium Development Goals 2015, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/education.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> Krasniqi 2011

cycle”<sup>8</sup> While, on the law about the Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo the term school dropout is defined as only “premature withdrawal from compulsory education.”<sup>9</sup> However, in this project the term dropout will refer to the aforementioned academic definition. To have a better understanding of the current situation, regarding the female school retention, in the paragraphs below will be reviewed the literature, articles and researches that explain the Kosovo’s present state, and also will be thoroughly discussed the legal basis-international and domestic.

According to Corrin, Kosovo’s female dropout rates are very high and present an issue for Kosovo education system. In addition to that the report are identified the main factors that explain the female school dropout in Kosovo which according to this report were:

- 1) Security: fear of being physically attacked or raped;
- 2) Poverty: boys are chosen above girls who are useful to work at home or on land;
- 3) Unwillingness: often girls did not want to go because of a lack of encouragement at home and school;
- 4) Age: reflecting the fear that girls in their latter teens will be too old to find marriage partners.”<sup>10</sup>

Despite the fact that this report was written in 2000, the reasons which have been stipulated to explain the female school dropout can be seen as quite relevant for today, as well, because the reasons given, mainly involve cultural aspects; regardless the fact that the culture is known to be dynamic, it is recognized that a great cultural shift cannot happen within thirteen years. Another report which has identified that there are retention school differences among the genders in Kosovo is the Human Development Report Kosovo. In this report, are identified two main factors to explain the female retention rate: 1) ethnicity and 2) geographical location. According to this report “[N]on-Albanian and non-Serb girls are far more likely to drop out of school than girls

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<sup>8</sup> Parandalimi dhe reagimi ndaj braktisjes ne shkolle (obtained upon request from Merita Jonuzi, Human Rights Coordinator MEST)

<sup>9</sup> LAW No.04/L –032 ON PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO [http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03\\_Ligji\\_per\\_arsimin\\_Parauniversitar\\_anglisht.pdf](http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03_Ligji_per_arsimin_Parauniversitar_anglisht.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Chris Corrin 2000, [http://womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/doc\\_download/139-gender-audit-of-reconstruction-programs-in-south-eastern-europe](http://womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/doc_download/139-gender-audit-of-reconstruction-programs-in-south-eastern-europe)

belonging to other ethnic communities,” while compared to the urban girls, the rural Albanian girls are more likely to interrupt their school.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the studies and researches that have been conducted to assess the gender disparities in education in Kosovo there are many studies conducted to see the gender disparities in education in developing countries. One of which is the, *Women’s education in developing countries*, which in details explores and reveals the gender differences in education in developing countries. It is important to see the analysis that has been conducted for dropout rates in developing countries, it is firstly recognized that the dropout rates vary from country to country but in average 9.6 percent of the female students dropout of school and do not finish the primary education, while 8.2 percent of the male students dropout of school.<sup>12</sup> Thus, given that Kosovo, also falls in the category of the developing country there is no reason to believe that there is school dropout in Kosovo and that there are gender differences in education.

## **International Law**

The right to education is one of the crucial rights, which is guaranteed by several international conventions. In addition to the right to education for all the children there are international convents that recognize the disparities among male and female and as a result have incorporated such issues in the international law. Some of the conventions that treat the right to education and which hold a special meaning for Republic of Kosovo, given that they are recognized as conventions that are “directly applicable in the Republic of Kosovo and which in case of conflict have priority over provisions of laws and other acts of public

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<sup>11</sup> HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT KOSOVO 2004, [http://home.deds.nl/~stichtingeic/undpreport\\_kosovo2004.pdf](http://home.deds.nl/~stichtingeic/undpreport_kosovo2004.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Women’s Education in Developing Countries, <http://books.google.com/books?id=DL8uSGzj8YIC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

institutions,<sup>13</sup> are: *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* and *Convention on the Right of the Child*.

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which is one of the most significant international laws of the modern world, guarantees the right to education stating:

*Article 26*

“(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”<sup>14</sup>

Despite the fact that Kosovo is not part of the United Nations Organization from which the above right has been guaranteed, Kosovo has declared the document as directly applicable, hence committing to respect and reaffirm the articles of this convention.

Another international convention that falls in the category of International Agreements and Instruments that are directly applicable to the Republic of Kosovo is *the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, which in the article 10 specifically covers the discriminations in education claiming that states shall take appropriate measurements to ensure equal rights for both genders in the education field.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, it specifically treats the issue of school dropout stating in article 10 of this convention that the state shall take appropriate measurements for:

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<sup>13</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo , [http://www.confueconstco.org/en/congress/congress-XVI/Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Kosovo\\_-\\_E.pdf](http://www.confueconstco.org/en/congress/congress-XVI/Constitution_of_the_Republic_of_Kosovo_-_E.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>

<sup>15</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm#article10>

“(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely”

The above article is important because it requires or makes the state responsible to take the appropriate measurements and to create the necessary mechanisms, not only to reduce the female school dropout at the present or future moment but also to take the appropriate measurements for female students that have already dropped out.

An additional convention, which is directly applicable according to the Kosovo’s Constitution and which shows Kosovo’s government responsibility regarding the school dropout issue is the *Convention on the Right of the Child* in which stipulates that states shall in particular:

“(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.”<sup>16</sup>

So, the above article, as well, deals with the school dropout issue and attendance which once more reinforces that it is the states responsibility to take care of the school dropout. Hence, Kosovo’s government, due to the fact that it recognizes this convention directly binding, it is responsible for the application of the articles of this convention.

Given the fact that Kosovo as per the highest law of the country – Constitution– recognizes the aforementioned conventions as applicable and superior to any domestic law, this reinforce the idea that despite fact that the Republic of Kosovo has taken responsibility and obligation to provide and ensure school attendance, at least at the primary level, by making the primary education compulsory and by any means to try and remove gender disparities.

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<sup>16</sup> Convention on the Right of the Child, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

## Domestic Law

The Republic of Kosovo has its judicial system and the laws according to which that system functions and runs. Kosovo has foreseen and guaranteed the right to education by many 'higher' laws such as Constitution and 'lower' laws such as administrative regulations and education strategies.

The republic of Kosovo recognizes the right to education in its highest law, the Constitution, where is stated:

### Article 47

“1. Every person enjoys the right to free basic education. Mandatory education is regulated by law and funded by public funds.

2. Public institutions shall ensure equal opportunities to education for everyone in accordance with their specific abilities and needs.”<sup>17</sup>

From the first article of the Constitution it can be noticed that the Kosovo institutions are held responsible for providing education but it is stated that the institutions or that the citizens have the right just to free basic education meaning just the primary and lower secondary education from 1<sup>st</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> grade. Moreover, it is said that the compulsory education is regulated by law and in fact the law on pre-university education regulates this issue by making the basic education compulsory or mandatory education.<sup>18</sup> The second article of the constitution states clearly that everyone should be given equal opportunities to education which means there should be no difference in education when we take into account the two genders.

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<sup>17</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo , [http://www.confueconstco.org/en/congress/congress-XVI/Constitution\\_of\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Kosovo\\_-\\_E.pdf](http://www.confueconstco.org/en/congress/congress-XVI/Constitution_of_the_Republic_of_Kosovo_-_E.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> LAW No.04/L –032 ON PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO [http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03\\_Ligji\\_per\\_arsimin\\_Parauniversitar\\_anglisht.pdf](http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03_Ligji_per_arsimin_Parauniversitar_anglisht.pdf)

In addition to the constitution, there is a law in pre-university education, LAW No.04/L –032, education that besides the recognition of the right to education it specifies the authorities that are responsible for the reinforcement of this right because in the article 5 of the law in pre-university education it is stated:

“1. The Ministry shall have the primary responsibility for planning of, setting standards in, and quality assurance of the pre-university education system, and shall have the following general duties:

1.3. to promote a non-discriminatory education system in which each person’s right to education and/or training is respected and equal quality learning opportunities are available for all;

1.4. to promote the protection of vulnerable groups within the education and training system, the health and welfare of pupils and employees of educational and/or training institutions, and measures to prevent drop-out;<sup>19</sup>”

Other than just specifying the responsible authorities that should ensure the right to education, the law in pre-university education, holds significant meaning because in the article 15 the law treats in detail the issue of school attendance and dropout. What is crucial, the law, recognizes and holds accountable the parents for children’s attendance. The article 15 stipulates the following:

“1. Ensuring attendance of pupils throughout compulsory education is the responsibility of parents.

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<sup>19</sup> LAW No.04/L –032 ON PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO [http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03\\_Ligji\\_per\\_arsimin\\_Parauniversitar\\_anglisht.pdf](http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03_Ligji_per_arsimin_Parauniversitar_anglisht.pdf)

4. If a pupil with no reason fails to enroll, fails to attend or interrupts compulsory education, his or her parents shall be punished for violation if the absence is a result of deliberate action or negligence by the parents. In such cases, the municipality shall inform the Ministry in writing.”<sup>20</sup>

The article above is of high importance, given that there is a mechanism to reinforce the law. However, it should be noticed that the awareness for this law, which holds accountable the parents and states that parents can be punished for not sending their children in compulsory education, is very low. A study that has been conducted in 2012 shows that from their interview with the parents they found out that most of them around 70% answered negatively the question “are you aware that you can have penalties for child non – attendance in compulsory education.”<sup>21</sup>

## Methodology

This honors project will be answering the following research question: “*Is it accurate the perception that there is gender difference in student school retention in Kosovo?*” As was elaborated in the literature review, according to many studies and researches which have been conducted for gender differences in school retention in developing countries and also gender education in Kosovo, it can be claimed that the school retention is or school dropout represent an issue for Kosovo. In addition, to the reports and researches, in the literature review were presented facts on how Kosovo’s government and institutions are responsible and obliged to take measures for resolving the issue of school retention , since they should act in accordance

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<sup>20</sup> LAW No.04/L –032 ON PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO [http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03\\_Ligji\\_per\\_arsimin\\_Parauniversitar\\_anglisht.pdf](http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/03_Ligji_per_arsimin_Parauniversitar_anglisht.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Valbona Dermaku 2012, [https://ritdml.rit.edu/bitstream/handle/1850/15071/Dermaku\\_Valbona\\_CapstoneProject\\_Presentation\\_5-2012.pdf?sequence=1](https://ritdml.rit.edu/bitstream/handle/1850/15071/Dermaku_Valbona_CapstoneProject_Presentation_5-2012.pdf?sequence=1)

with the international and domestic laws. Hence, given the aforementioned reasons it can be concluded that gender differences in school retention are prevalent and as such they present a very important education issue in Kosovo. Therefore, my *hypothesis* is that there are gender differences in school retention in Kosovo.

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is gender difference in school retention in Kosovo*

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is no gender difference in school retention in Kosovo*

## **Data**

The data that will be used to test the null hypothesis is the data gathered from the Education Management Information System (EMIS), more specifically data gathered from EMIS's official Enver Mekolli. The data gathered from EMIS show just the student enrollment for every grade level 1-12, but further calculations to find the school dropout and the retention rate will be explained in the methodology section. The same data might be found online but there are not summarized for all the years. Education Management Information System is an institution which was established by the World Bank with the aim to create an institution that would be responsible for collecting, processing, monitoring and evaluating the data in the education field.<sup>22</sup> There is another data set for education from Kosovo Agency of Statistics which will not be looked at this project given that it was harder to collect the information for all the years in one place. Kosovo Agency of Statistics (KAS) that is an independent institution, which deals with "collection, processing and publication of official statistical data," and works under the Ministry of Public Administration.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Treguesit dhe të dhënat statistikore në arsim 2004/05, 05/06, 06/07, [http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/Raporti%20statistikor\\_shqip.pdf](http://www.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/Raporti%20statistikor_shqip.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Kosovo Agency of Statistics, <http://esk.rks-gov.net/eng/kas-mission>

## Analytical Method

The methodology that will be used to test the hypothesis is to do: 1) the meta-analysis of the data on education from different years and 2) the percentage analysis of students' school retention rates.

The first analysis to be conducted during this honors project is the meta-analysis of the data on education from the Education Management Information System (EMIS) for different academic years. To conduct the analysis I will be using the data which I have gathered from the studies published by EMIS on the internet and the data obtained by EMIS official, Enver Mekolli.<sup>24</sup> I will be looking at the data in education for the academic years: 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and the dropout number in each grade level. The calculation for this analysis has been done by taking the number of students at a certain grade level at a certain year and subtracting it from the number of students from the previous year at the previous grade level i.e. taking the number of students at grade 2 from the academic year 2009-2010 and subtracting them from the number of students at grade 1 at the academic year 2008-2009. By doing so, is found the number of students that have dropped out at the end of each grade. It should be emphasized that these data have a limitation given that these data do not count the movement of people, people coming and going, during these academic years. Despite the fact that we cannot control the movement we can make the assumption that the movement has been the same when looking from the gender perspective – equal male and female come and go, in and out of Kosovo and in addition to that, data are compared in proportion terms and in such case the absolute numbers do not matter.

The second analysis that I will be using is to do the percentage analysis, of the same data set, for the dropouts at each grade level for the years 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-

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<sup>24</sup> Raw data Education Management Information System

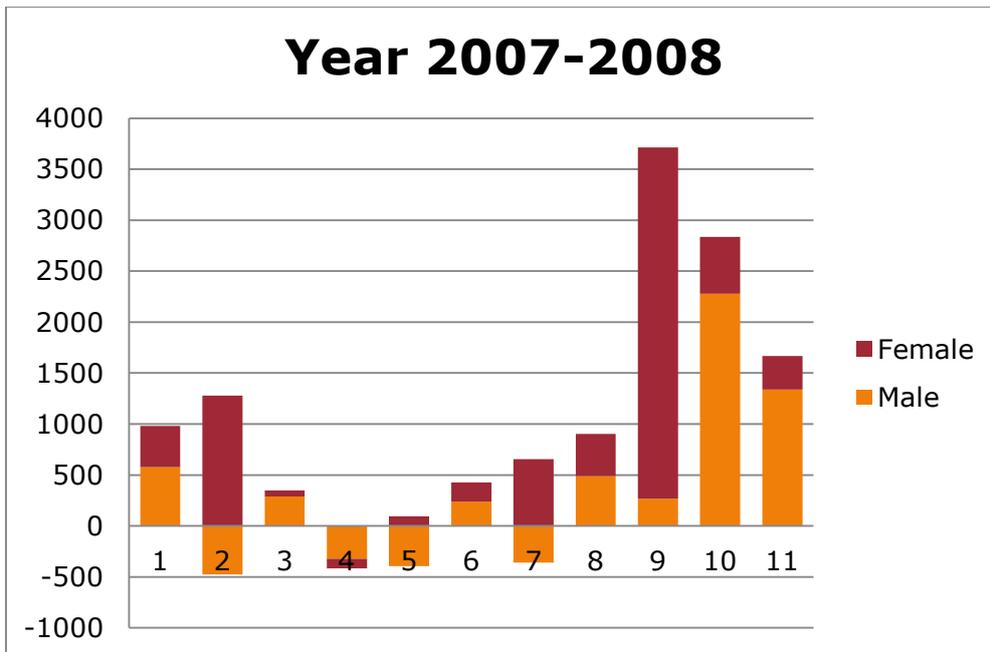
2010, 2010-2011 to see if there is any pattern or implication. The calculations will be done by taking the number of students in the current year and dividing it with the number of students in the previous year, at the previous grade level i.e. number of students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade at 2008-2009 divided by the number of students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in year 2007-2008. By doing so it is found the student school retention rate. It should be emphasized that the analysis will be done separately for each gender to see the gender implication. Furthermore, the aim of this analysis will be to see the percentage of students who continue enrollment at the upcoming grade or to see the student school retention rate.

## **Result**

As mentioned previously, in this part will be conducted the meta-analysis of the data obtained from the EMIS for the academic years 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

In the table (1.1) below are represented the dropouts during the academic year 2007-2008. As mentioned in the methodology part the dropout rate has been found for each grade level.

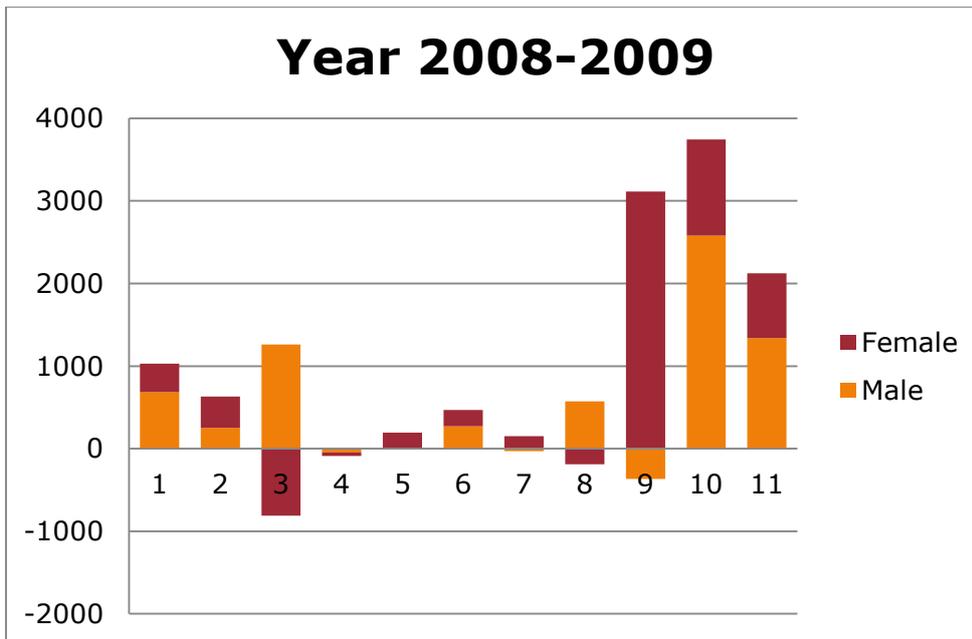
### **Table 1.1**



At the graph above in the horizontal line or at the x-line are represented the grade levels, while in the vertical line or y-line are represented the number of students that dropout. While the red bar represents the female and the orange bar represents the male. From the graph can be noticed that the number of female students that dropped out during this year was especially higher after the finish of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade but the greatest difference in dropout between the genders can be noticed after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade while the male students seem to have an increase in dropout after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade during the high school years. However during the other classes appears nearly equal dropout of male and female.

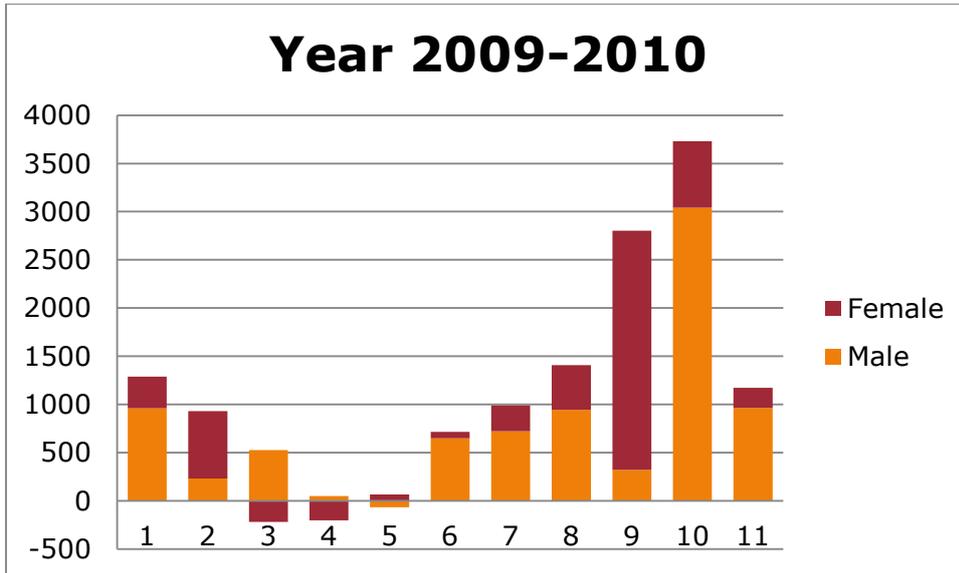
Similarly, in the table below (1.2) are represented the data related with school dropout for the academic year 2008-2009.

**Table 1.2**



From the table above it is interesting there is the same pattern as in the previous year the number of the female that leave the school during the 9<sup>th</sup> grade is quite high and represents a great gap between the male and female that dropout of school during that particular grade. However differently, from the previous year in this year the number of female students that leave second grade is not greater than male and in fact there is a greater dropout of male during after the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at this year. Similarly, pattern as in the previous year is shown during the high school- a higher male dropout during 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

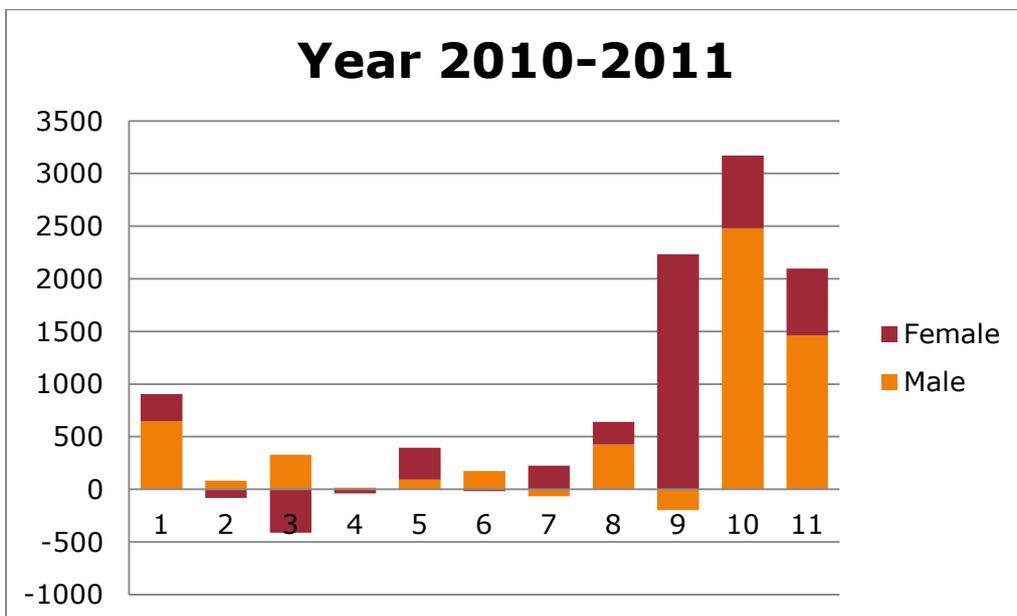
In the table below (1.3) are shown the dropout data for academic year 2009-2010.



From the table can be noticed the same patterns of the dropout as in the two previous years: the female school dropout is higher after the 9<sup>th</sup> and the male dropout is significantly higher than female during the high school or upper secondary school.

In the table below (1.4) are shown the data for school dropout for the academic year 2010-2011.

**Table 1.4**



Alike the previous years, in this graph as well can be seen the same patterns of dropout the female school dropout is higher after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade which also represent the end of the compulsory education in Kosovo. While, the male school dropout levels are higher at the upper secondary school. The tables of all dropout data for each academic year at each grade might be found in Appendix 1.

As aforementioned in the methodology section one of the analysis that will be conducted at the EMIS data is to do the percentage analysis of the student school retention rate at each grade level 1-12 for the academic years: 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011. The aim of such analysis is to better understand the dropout differences between male and female in simpler terms. To do so I have conducted the percentage differences for each grade at each academic year. From the percentage analysis it were reconfirmed the meta-data results regarding the female and male school dropout in Kosovo.

Below is a summary table (1.5) that represents the percentage of the students that continued the class in the following year; here are represented just the percentage of students that have continued school after the finish of grade 9 or the retention after grade 9. Moreover, given the fact that it is after the finish of this grade is recognized a significant gender difference, then to illustrate clearer is shown the table. However, the whole table were is included the analysis for each grade level for the years: 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 might be found in the Appendix 2.

**Table 1.5**

| Percentage Analysis of School Retention |            |      |        |
|---|------------|------|--------|
| Year                                    | Grade      | Male | Female |
| 2007-2008                               | Grade 9-10 | 99%  | 80%    |
| 2008-2009                               |            | 102% | 84%    |
| 2009-2010                               |            | 98%  | 85%    |
| 2010-2011                               |            | 101% | 86%    |

From the table it can be seen that on average 84% of the female students that finish the primary education continue to the higher education, or that just 16% of the female students after finishing the basic education do not continue the upper secondary school. **Note:** that on the data is represented 101% or 102% which might represent a movement in that year or students who joined the education in that period, which reflects at the percentage.

Similarly with the pattern that was noticed in the meat-data analysis, from the percentage analysis resulted, as well, that the male dropout, during the upper secondary school, more specifically at the end of grade 10, is higher compared to female dropout. The table below (1.6) represents the dropout during this grade during the years.

**Table 1.6**

| Percentage Analysis of School Retention |             |      |        |
|---|-------------|------|--------|
| Year                                    | Grade       | Male | Female |
| 2007-2008                               | Grade 10-11 | 86%  | 96%    |
| 2008-2009                               |             | 86%  | 92%    |
| 2009-2010                               |             | 86%  | 96%    |
| 2010-2011                               |             | 86%  | 95%    |

From the table can be noticed that the boy school retention rate has been worrying because it is showing that every academic year 14% of the students are dropping out or are not staying in school.

From the meta-data analysis and the school retention percentage analysis for the academic years, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, it can be concluded that the main findings are the following:

1. First, there is gender difference in student school retention in Kosovo because after the grade 9, the end of compulsory education, the female dropout rates are significantly greater than the male dropout rates.
2. Second, the female school retention rate are showing a slight positive improvement given that from the academic year 2008-2009 they have been increasing by one percent.
3. Third, the boy retention rate during the upper secondary school show a concern, because the results show that at after the grade 10 there is a boy retention rate of 86%

which during the four academic years has stayed consistent which means that it has not become worse but that there has not been done any effort to improve it.

## Conclusion

After the meta-data analysis and the school percentage retention analysis which was performed for four academic years for all primary, lower secondary and upper secondary grades 1-11, it resulted that the male dropout more than girls after the finish of the grade 10. However, there is a great percentage of girls who leave school after grade 9 so their school retention rate after grade 9 is worrisome because that year also presents the end of the compulsory education years. Despite that, both cases present sufficient evidence to prove that, the widespread perception about gender differences in school retention in Kosovo are true. Hence it can be concluded that my hypothesis that “*There is gender difference in school retention in Kosovo*” consist to be true.

We recognize the fact that there are reports produced by Kosovo Agency of Statistic which provide the school dropout numbers for an academic year, however those reports do not specify the dropout number for each grade in primary and lower secondary school but rather they give a cumulative number at the end of grade 9 making it impossible to see the occur of a pattern or a great shift. Despite that, requiring the data from the agency might provide the needed grade separation; hence future work to see the correlation of the two data sets might be carried out. Moreover, this project gives evidence of differences in dropout rates among female in grade 9 and male in grade 10 but does not look in details the reasons that caused such difference, thus future studies and research can designed to explore the causes of these gender disparities in education.

## Recommendations

Given the worrisome facts presented above for the gender difference in student school retention in Kosovo this project gives the following recommendations:

### 1. Extend the Years of Compulsory Education

From the analysis above it resulted that the biggest female school dropout happens after the finish of the grade 9 which is also present the end of the compulsory education in Kosovo. Hence, I propose that there should be an amendment to the law in Pre-university education extending the years of compulsory education until the end of the upper secondary education.

*Disadvantage:* Many claim that by doing so will increase the burden of the tax-payers since it is through the tax-payers money that the free education is provided. *Advantage:* However, I do believe that the burden to society it is increased more when we consider the fact that the dropout students are more likely to depend in public.<sup>25</sup> Hence, I believe that there should be an extension to the years of compulsory education in Kosovo.

### 2. Incentives to Poor Families

From the literature review it was collected that the school dropouts, usually are a result of economic hardship in rural areas and as a result they either continue to work or they dropout of school because the family cannot handle that cost. Hence, I propose that there should be created a mechanism of identifying the families with financial difficulties in the local level; and then create an educational found where business community and different stakeholders would donate to provide sponsorship for students education.

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<sup>25</sup> Raise the Age, Lower the Dropout Rate? 2009, [http://www.avpf.org/documents/renniecenter\\_25.pdf](http://www.avpf.org/documents/renniecenter_25.pdf)

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1

| Dropout     | 2007-2008 |        | 2008-2009 |        | 2009-2010 |        | 2010-2011 |        |
|-------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
|             | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female |
| Grade 1-2   | 578       | 404    | 684       | 346    | 960       | 329    | 646       | 258    |
| Grade 2-3   | -475      | 1279   | 251       | 378    | 231       | 698    | 82        | -81    |
| Grade 3-4   | 290       | 57     | 1261      | -813   | 526       | -221   | 327       | -413   |
| Grade 4-5   | -321      | -95    | -45       | -44    | 48        | -204   | 14        | -39    |
| Grade 5-6   | -395      | 94     | -11       | 195    | -67       | 67     | 92        | 304    |
| Grade 6-7   | 237       | 190    | 272       | 197    | 649       | 67     | 174       | -17    |
| Grade 7-8   | -359      | 655    | -32       | 150    | 723       | 267    | -65       | 226    |
| Grade 8-9   | 489       | 414    | 571       | -188   | 943       | 464    | 424       | 216    |
| Grade 9-10  | 267       | 3446   | -365      | 3115   | 322       | 2482   | -197      | 2233   |
| Grade 10-11 | 2279      | 556    | 2580      | 1164   | 3042      | 689    | 2479      | 693    |
| Grade 11-12 | 1337      | 330    | 1338      | 786    | 964       | 209    | 1460      | 636    |

## Appendix 2

| Retention   | 2007-2008 |        | 2008-2009 |        | 2009-2010 |        | 2010-2011 |        |
|-------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| Grade       | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female |
| Grade 1-2   | 97%       | 98%    | 96%       | 98%    | 94%       | 98%    | 96%       | 98%    |
| Grade 2-3   | 102%      | 93%    | 99%       | 98%    | 99%       | 96%    | 99%       | 101%   |
| Grade 3-4   | 98%       | 100%   | 94%       | 105%   | 97%       | 101%   | 98%       | 103%   |
| Grade 4-5   | 102%      | 101%   | 100%      | 100%   | 100%      | 101%   | 100%      | 100%   |
| Grade 5-6   | 102%      | 99%    | 100%      | 99%    | 100%      | 100%   | 100%      | 98%    |
| Grade 6-7   | 99%       | 99%    | 99%       | 99%    | 96%       | 100%   | 99%       | 100%   |
| Grade 7-8   | 102%      | 96%    | 100%      | 99%    | 96%       | 98%    | 100%      | 99%    |
| Grade 8-9   | 98%       | 98%    | 97%       | 101%   | 95%       | 97%    | 98%       | 99%    |
| Grade 9-10  | 99%       | 80%    | 102%      | 84%    | 98%       | 85%    | 101%      | 86%    |
| Grade 10-11 | 86%       | 96%    | 86%       | 92%    | 86%       | 96%    | 86%       | 95%    |