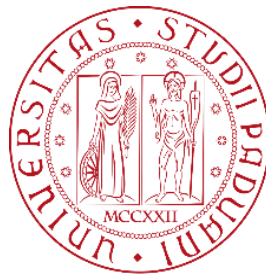


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AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

**Master's degree in
Human Rights and Multi-level Governance**



AFGHAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS UNDER THE
TALIBAN RULE

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List of Acronyms

AAN:	Afghanistan Analysts Network
UNICEF:	The United Nations Children's Fund
WPS:	Women, Peace, and Security
AESTF:	Afghanistan Education Sector Transitional Framework
APJO:	Afghanistan Peace and Justice Organization
AIHRC:	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
ISID:	Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate
EASO:	European Asylum Support Office
COI:	Country of Origin Information
GCPEA:	Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack
GI-TOC:	Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime
UDHR:	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
MPVPV:	Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice
ICESCR:	International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

Glossary of Islamic Terms

Madrasa: Religious Institutions

Chadari: A garment consisting of a small cap, a large body-covering cape, and a face veil in Afghanistan.

Hadiths: Oral traditions recording the sayings, habits, and actions of the Prophet

Sharia: Islamic law

Mahram: A male chaperone to a woman, usually a family member

Pashtunwali: Pashtun culture governed by a common law system, set of principles, code of conduct, and way of life known as Pashtunwali (Churchill, 2009)

Tafsir: Exegesis of the Quran

Abstract

This study focuses on the future of Afghan women's human rights under the current Taliban administration, aiming to prevent a repeat of the repressive conditions experienced in 1996. It identifies the Taliban's patriarchal worldview and use of Islam as factors contributing to the potential denial of essential rights such as work, education, and fundamental human rights. The research examines the impact of Taliban rule on women's empowerment, education, employment, and well-being, while also exploring proactive measures including international interventions, local projects, and organizational strategies to protect and promote women's rights. It emphasizes the importance of global collaboration, diplomatic efforts, and communication within Islamic law to defend women's rights, challenge gender inequality, and combat ingrained patriarchal traditions. The study aims to provide evidence-based guidance to policymakers, civil society groups, and foreign actors to support and defend Afghani women's rights, ultimately contributing to the establishment of effective measures for an inclusive and equitable future in Afghanistan.

1. Introduction

According to the (International Federation for Human Rights, 2021) After seizing control of Afghanistan on 15 August 2021, the Taliban declared that it would guarantee the upholding of women's rights "within the confines of Islam" and that it would provide them with more privileges than in the previous years. The future of Afghan women's rights under the second Taliban administration will be investigated in this study which seeks to find if the attitude toward such rights has improved or deteriorated compared to the previous reign. The Taliban asserts that it supports all fundamental human rights, including women's access to education and employment, but the analysis conducted in this work will see if this talk is just a ploy for positive media attention and international recognition. From this, the international community and the Afghan nation can have better capability to decide if they can trust the promises of the Taliban or if they need to find a way to safeguard women's rights in the future. In addition, it investigates how to stop violence against women and girls by addressing the actions of the first regime. The research question guiding this work is: how will the future of Afghan women be under the current Taliban regime and what can be done to prevent the same sorts of injustices that are faced in the past?

This research started off with the hypothesis that women in Afghanistan will lose their fundamental rights, just as they did lose under the first Taliban regime. They won't be allowed to exercise their right to an education, freedom of movement, right to employment, and all other fundamentals that people enjoy in other countries. The main reason for this assertion is patriarchal religious interpretation and culture - Afghanistan is a patriarchal society in which men use Islam and other cultural markers to justify and maintain their control over women. Therefore, constant action is required inside and outside of the country. Unless there is organized underground action taken by Afghan citizens as well as ongoing international outcry, the situation will only get worse.

Several factors have created challenges for this paper. One constraint is safety considerations. Both the researcher and the participants may face serious threats while undertaking primary research or interviews with people who have been directly impacted by the

Taliban government. Its tight grip over society and history of persecuting anyone who disagrees with the ideology may make it difficult to collect firsthand reports. Additionally, ethical issues are important when examining touchy subjects like violations of human rights. Prioritizing the protection of the names and personal information of the study participants is crucial as is putting their protection and security first. Furthermore, Afghanistan's political climate is always changing, and the Taliban's stances and methods might also alter over time. Being current and making sure that the study represents the most recent advances are crucial but may be hard to do in such a volatile situation. Accurate data collection may be hampered by the Taliban's hold across the nation and limitations on press freedom and the movement of information.

Yet in spite of these complications, it is extremely important to address the subject. Doing so can provide key insight that allows for better aid and support for Afghan women. Studying their prospects for the future under the Taliban could add to the body of knowledge already in the fields of women's rights, gender studies, international relations, human rights, or other related fields which is one of the research's main significances. Scholars, decision-makers, and activists researching or working in this field may find it useful for providing, analyzing, and supporting data. The study also advances women's rights and gender equality by adding to the worldwide discourse on these issues. It may be used as an example to better comprehend the difficulties that women experience in patriarchal countries and the significance of advancing gender equity, empowerment, and inclusiveness in many cultural and political situations. Because the research is a worldwide issue, it can help disseminate knowledge of the difficulties and rights abuses that women may encounter and possible impacts of such ongoing problems. It may therefore be used as a tool for advocacy, bringing awareness to the predicament of Afghan women, and enticing people, groups, and states to act to defend their rights and advance equality.

Additionally, this study's participation in humanitarian problems may highlight the necessity of providing humanitarian relief to vulnerable people such as women and girls. It can highlight how crucial it is to take care of their present needs in addition to their potential future health. The study can help us comprehend complicated sociopolitical dynamics by investigating aspects like historical backdrops, cultural norms, religious interpretations, political events, and regional dynamics that give a broader view of the problem. By navigating the complexity and creating better responses, lawmakers and other interested parties may benefit from this knowledge. Finally, the study can offer investigate relevant policy suggestions to be carried out

through regional, nationwide, and global organizations to improve the situation. It can offer advice on how to address the problem including gender equity initiatives, changes to legislation, and foreign partnerships that can assist make life better for Afghan women under the Taliban government.

Methodology

Qualitative research involving the analysis of collected materials was used in this research to better understand the problem that Afghan women face today. Secondary sources used include books, institutions, news articles, journals, reports by the United Nations and international groups like the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). Many of these sources were produced after the withdrawal of the U.S. and the Taliban's retaking of Afghanistan when the violation of women's human rights began to attract the attention of organizations and activists around the world. Moreover, to understand the current situation of women's rights under Taliban rule, direct responses have been gathered from Afghan women still inside the country. The forms sent out to them consisted of 12 descriptive interview questions and a survey that had 15 questions in which the participants could choose how strongly they agreed or disagreed. One of the challenges in collecting this data was that it was difficult to reach women in Afghanistan. For this reason, people who had connections and could help with collecting data were sought. One of the most important of these contacts was the Afghanistan Peace and Justice Organization (APJO) which assisted me in distributing my survey and questionnaire forms online in Afghanistan for women to fill them out.

(Board of Directors) APJO was founded to advance human rights and justice in Afghanistan. It is dedicated to fostering a society of unity and mutual support and maintaining the respect and worth of all Afghan citizens for a respectful, equitable, and long-lasting peace that has been created without conflict and bloodshed. This is to be done by creating reasonable and lasting solutions to problems in the country that respect human rights, uphold constitutionally-protected accomplishments and values, and honor international agreements (Board of Directors s.d.). According to APJO, peace can only be achieved with the utmost respect for the law, openness, integrity, and collaboration in making decisions and considering the interests of all Afghans.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The First Taliban Regime:

(Rashid, 2000) provides a detailed history and evolution of the Taliban in Afghanistan from the middle of the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000s. By studying the organization's beginnings, rise to power, and part in the Afghan War, it gives an in-depth and nuanced look at it. Analyses of the Taliban's methods, ideologies, and strategies are also provided. The book offers a full summary of the organization's history and growth, and the philosophy and tactics of the Taliban are also clearly and understandably analyzed.

Moreover, (Giustozi, 2002) analyzes the Taliban's rise to power, their war strategies and tactics, and their impact on Afghanistan's society and politics. The book examines the Taliban's military tactics and how they enabled the group to take control of large parts of Afghanistan. Their harsh form of Islamic rule imposed on the country is key to understanding the current situation for women.

An article (Schulz & Schulz, 1999) article explains the major factors in how women were subject to human rights violations under the first Taliban rule in Afghanistan as well as how they were able to benefit from their rights to freedom beforehand. Asides from this, the research explains that the Taliban had the most systemic suppression of women in history since coming to power in Afghanistan in September 1996. Young thugs with guns and whips frequently conducted motiveless and immediate whippings, ritual punishments, and other atrocities under the guise of Islam. Special rules against women left them helpless, terrified, and emotionally and physically exhausted as they lacked access to decent medical care or educational possibilities. Only labor and prayer was permissible for them. A growing body of data accounts from Afghanistan and Pakistan showing how the Taliban misrepresented the actual teachings of Islam, partly out of ignorance and partly due to their misguided perception of women, but also to support a government where terrorism is a priority.

A report (Fielden & Sippi, 2000) related to female employment in Afghanistan is based on secondary and primary sources between 18 August and 18 October 2000. The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children gathered much of the primary information that is used in this report. There are many documents that have been found related to efforts to limit women's work with humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan, at least 43 Taliban documents

relating to the employment of women have been discovered since February 1997, with the number peaking in July and August of 2000. The main theme of the report is the impact of the decree in which the Taliban banned women's employment. The finding of the research indicates that the reason is Islamic and social beliefs, rather than having a solely female-oriented focus. The contribution of this article is in terms of understanding what could be the main reason that the Taliban ban women's right to employment.

Additionally, (Middleton, 200) describes the life of Afghan women under the first Taliban regime. It defines the restrictions on women's social lives, clothing, education, work, and access to healthcare. Women who broke these regulations were subjected to cruel abuse and torture. The writer explains the historical background of Afghan women and how their lives were different from those under the Taliban regime. It also includes a discussion of Afghanistan's constitutional history; the 1990s Constitution, which defended equality between men and women, is no longer in effect. Similarly, it explains that none of the international countries has recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's legitimate government due to their violation of women's rights. Also, the article explains how the Taliban use the principles of Islam to support its stringent regulations and how the fundamental tenets of Islam are also being broken by it.

(Ghasemi,1999) discusses how women and girls in Afghanistan are subject to systematic human rights violations by the Taliban which is not recognized as the country's legitimate government by the international community due to these violations. However, the Taliban claims that its policies are based on Islamic law and therefore they are not bound by international law. The article argues that their policies are not justified by Islamic law and that international recognition should be withheld until they alter their policies accordingly. It provides an overview of the historical status of women in Afghanistan, the rise of the Taliban, and the physical, societal, and educational harm they have caused. It then analyzes the Taliban's policies in the context of Islamic law, demonstrating that they are not in accordance with it and international human rights laws, and discusses the international community's failure to recognize the Taliban and their desire for recognition.

A study by (Maley,1999) seeks to analyze the difficulties that the Taliban faced when attempting to interact with the international community, particularly after it took control of Kabul in 1996. This work is split into seven parts. The first section considers general issues in foreign

policy analysis. The second explores the historical backdrop of Afghan foreign policy. The third looks at the unique qualities of the Taliban movement. The fourth looks at the Taliban's international objectives and how they are related to the need for regime stabilization. The fifth examines the tensions between international norms of behavior and the Taliban's domestic policies which hindered their attempts to gain acceptance. The sixth discusses the Taliban policies towards certain countries. The seventh addresses the radicalization of the Taliban and the events that led up to the 2001 crisis in their relations with the world and provides advice for the US policy towards Afghanistan.

(Gadoury,2000) provides an analysis of whether the US should formally recognize the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan and also provides an overview of the Taliban and its status, exploring a brief recent history of Afghanistan and life under it, as well as its international relations. Moreover, it examines the international and US legal standards and policies concerning the recognition of governments. It evaluates the US reasons against recognizing the Taliban, including the issues of Osama bin Laden, human rights violations, and the Afghan drug trade. The conclusion is an analysis of whether the US should formally recognize the Taliban or not.

Finally, (Hartley-Blecic, 2001) aims to inform readers about the mistreatment of women by the initial Taliban regime. It also investigates the turbulent political history of Afghanistan, how the Taliban came to power, and the laws set in place by the Taliban and the punishments for those who go against them. Focus is given to the Islamic stance on the rights of women and their proper treatment compared to what the Taliban does. Similarly, an overview of the American reaction to the Taliban's abuse of women and girls in Afghanistan helps to provide how the international community views their actions. On top of this, it contemplates the future of women and girls in Afghanistan. All of this information provides an analytical exploration of the first Taliban regime and its implications for the treatment of women.

2.2. The Post-Taliban Regime

The years in which the US and other foreign countries got involved with Afghanistan's affairs are also important to research because even though the Taliban had officially been ousted from power, the influence of its members was a troublesome force that interfered with the lives of many people, especially women. In the (Deo,2004) article, the struggle to educate and empower

Afghan women over the past ten years is examined while also examining the ways in which poor educational standards and ongoing security issues imperil these advancements. Despite such limitations, the research contends that cautious optimism is warranted given the possibility that the occupation of Afghanistan may have had a good impact by setting up the groundwork for women's education. To make sense of these movements, the article investigates Afghan education politics, focusing on female education. Afghanistan has a variety of formal educational options including government contemporary schools, schools operated by nonreligious NGOs, for-profit private schools, and underground schools for girls. Most schools are state-run. The article explores the politics surrounding these institutions.

Moreover, (Alvi-Aziz, A progress report on Women's Education in post-Taliban Afghanistan, 2008) examines the relative advancements and significant losses in Afghan women's education from the fall of the Taliban rule to the present with an emphasis on government and NGO rehabilitation initiatives. It is suggested that these initiatives prioritize the needs of women and girls over the ambitions of the government and non-governmental organizations. The challenges brought on by recent spikes in violence disproportionately affect women. The present security realities offer significant barriers to post-conflict rehabilitation and rebuilding just as the education sector was making unstable progress with some girls' schools being built and operational. In this setting, Afghan women fight against the misogynistic and ferociously militant forces that have jeopardized any areas of advancement in the nation's reconstruction. As a result, ensuring security and changing governmental and NGO policies are necessary prerequisites for women to pursue higher education.

The objective of (Country of Origin Information, 2016) is to provide information pertinent to international protection status determination (PSD; refugee status and subsidiary protection) concerning Afghanistan's security situation. This report reviews the situation of women's human rights during the time of foreign intervention, how the Taliban planned to target and murder women and girls who were enrolled in school and employed in Afghanistan, and how the insecurity brought on by the Taliban affected female employment and education.

Furthermore, (Stabile & Kumar, 2005) states that in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, US media outlets began to pay attention to what left-wing media, women's rights groups, and sections of European newspapers had been talking about for five years: the Taliban regime in

Afghanistan was brutally mistreating women. As a result, President Bush's so-called "women of the cover" were featured prominently in corporate media, with images of fully veiled women on the covers of the New York Times, Time Magazine, Business Week, Newsweek, and other mainstream publications. This shift in focus was a positive development as the issue of women's oppression had been largely ignored by the mainstream media and policymakers up until that point. Yet it is contended that this attention was nothing more than a ploy used to garner support for the war. The article examines recent conflicts in Afghanistan, focusing on the US's economic and strategic interests in the region and its support of Islamic fundamentalism. Through exploring news media frameworks, the article uncovered the ways in which Afghan women are used to justify the US war and how the West was seen as the beacon of civilization with an obligation to tame the Islamic world and liberate its women. This narrative obscured the political struggles of women in Afghanistan against both the Northern Alliance and the Taliban as well as those of women in the West who have had to fight for their rights. It also considers the outcome of the war and the current situation of Afghan women and suggest that the issue of women's liberation was used as a cover for US imperialism.

(Norwegian Refugee Council, 2018) states that schools in Afghanistan are no longer providing safe learning environments and instead have become places of military, political, and ideological strife. This is important considering that this statement was made when the Taliban was not officially in power and such dangers were in direct violation of international commitments to protect students, teachers, and educational institutions during armed conflict. Therefore, the international community and parties to the conflict in Afghanistan had failed to uphold these commitments. The article also explains the Taliban's attacks on female schools and the ensuing insecurity and conflicts in the education sector.

(Powell, 2014) states that after the US invasion of Afghanistan, one of its policies was to protect women's rights. Over the years, despite women having the right to basic freedoms like education, employment, and movement rights, they were still not safe at all. Female schools and workplaces were constantly targeted and attacked by insurgents. The article argues that to encourage gender equality in Afghanistan, the US must better organize and institutionalize its policies surrounding diplomacy, defense, and development aid to benefit Afghan women in order to enhance their safety and opportunities for leadership. This is key to making sure gender equality is a central part of US policy in Afghanistan.

According to (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2021), despite a seeming decrease in physical attacks against educational institutions, students, and educators in Afghanistan, reports of threats targeting education, particularly girls' education, drastically increased. Additionally, military forces and non-state armed groups utilized schools and universities for a variety of military purposes, such as using them as barracks and sites to recruit and train children.

Moreover, a study by (Arroje & Burrige,2020) provides an overview of the Afghan educational system and its tumultuous history as well as its current state. It covers the formal levels of education from pre-primary to senior secondary and the criteria for entering higher education as well as informal and community-based schooling. Additionally, it examines the ongoing struggle between the government, religious bodies, and community-based organizations concerning curriculum and schooling. Access to education remains a major problem and is compounded by poverty, insecurity, corruption, attacks on schools, and cultural norms that impede female education. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the number of students attending school rose greatly, but Afghanistan was still an unstable nation with many areas held by the Taliban, making it difficult for citizens to access basic education rights.

Additionally, research conducted by (Smit,2021) examines how much Afghan women's rights changed since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 by breaking it down into three steps. First, it provides a historical overview of the Taliban's war on women throughout the 20th century. Secondly, it evaluates the efficacy of recent declarations on women's rights in Afghanistan. Finally, it considers the international organizations and the Afghan government's current approach to implementing these rights.

(Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2021) identified over 200 reported attacks on schools, school personnel, and higher education institutions in Afghanistan involving the use of explosive weapons. These attacks led to hundreds of injuries and fatalities among students and educators and have caused significant damage to or destruction of numerous schools and universities. The number of reported attacks using explosives in the first half of 2021 exceeded the number of reported attacks in the first half of any of the previous three years. Additionally, the use of explosives became increasingly prevalent in all reported attacks on education since 2018 with improvised explosive devices being the most used. In addition to

causing injuries and fatalities, such attacks also led to school closures, including in instances when non-state armed groups targeted girls' education using explosives. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) was established in 2010 as an inter-agency coalition to confront the issue of the deliberate targeting of educational institutions during armed conflicts. This research will utilize the GCPEA website which provides a helpful evaluation of data concerning occurrences of attacks on female schools and female educational centers in Afghanistan.

(Rahimi,2022) investigates the challenges that Afghan women have faced in their political participation over the past two decades, and what strategies can be used to overcome these challenges in the future. Qualitative methods of data analysis are used to examine the barriers to women's participation in presidential elections, parliamentary elections, provincial elections, council elections, and the peace process. Results show that cultural, historical, and ideological issues are the main roadblocks to women's political involvement in Afghanistan. Patriarchal tribal culture and clan-centric life patterns, economic dependence, gender gaps, and security issues are also contributing factors. For these barriers to be removed, women need to change their attitudes, and the international community, Afghan government, and society must also take action to ensure women's political rights.

(Ahsan-Tirmizi,2021) examines how the Taliban government in Afghanistan affected women and the place of religion in their life. It makes the case that, despite the Taliban's rigorous interpretation of Islam, women were able to utilize Islamic discourse to oppose harmful gender stereotypes and carve out a place for themselves. The study is significant, because it investigates the social, political, and economic circumstances of women in Afghanistan after the Taliban regime was overthrown. Attention is paid to the varied modes of resistance they utilize to flee harsh circumstances in their homes and communities and the argues that although these women's experiences are particular to them, they are also representative of the nation's broader pattern of patriarchal domination. The study demonstrates how the Taliban cultivated a climate of fear, tyranny, and insecurity that finally compelled several women to leave their families in search of safety. Also examined is the influence that religious doctrines and customs have on Afghan women's life. But the book's primary shortcoming is that it doesn't discuss the wider ramifications of the Taliban's legacy for women's rights in the nation.

(Kachiar, 2019) has been divided into five parts. The initial section explains the state of women's rights in Afghanistan, their attempts to preserve the progress achieved in the past 18 years, and the potential losses if the Taliban resumes control of Kabul. The second provides a short overview of the cultural and historical context in which Afghan women have been fighting for their rights. Section three details the lifestyle of women under Taliban rule. The fourth explores the movement for gender equality in the post-Taliban era and the accomplishments made in the 18 years prior. This part is further divided into coverage of political rights, social rights, economic rights, and political representation. The last section examines the worries expressed by Afghan women concerning the peace agreement and their part in the current discussions. It states that since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2002, Afghan women have seen improvement in areas such as education and health, but other areas like economic and political participation and security have not been addressed as well. Traditional customs and norms still impede gender reforms, so there need to be more resources devoted to women's advancement than challenging these norms. The international community, particularly the US, has provided a lot of support to improve the condition of Afghan women and it is essential for them to continue to do so to combat extremism and violence in the region. Any peace deal with the Taliban needs to ensure that women's rights to work, education, and political life are protected, and women must be included in the negotiation and reconciliation process. The international community must keep providing resources and use its influence to promote gender equality and women's security in public life.

2.3. The Current Taliban Regime

Predicting the future of women in Afghanistan is a complicated task particularly because the restoration of the Taliban is a relatively recent occurrence. There is a variety of literature available that discuss the development of the Taliban and women under its control, but some research has also been done on current activities and, furthermore, others have reached out to Afghan women to get first-hand insight into what is happening in the country. All of this can help to understand how the situation may possibly fare.

(Hadi, 2022) explains Afghan women's rights to education under the previous and the current Taliban regime which can be helpful in thinking of what could happen. The research overlaps with this study in some ways. The study is based on the literature study and conducting email interviews at Kabul University and other provinces, the researcher was able to examine the

rights of women to education. Professors and researchers from different institutions were interviewed to better understand the problem.

Furthermore, (Hannah, 2022) is relevant in many points related to our research, manages to outline, how the Taliban dissembles the International Bill of Human Rights. Besides that, the article tends to study and analyze if the Taliban considered Human Rights in their current regime for the second time or not. The article also analyses the various forms of movements that foreign countries take to save Afghan human rights. The author manages to find out that the Taliban's verbal policies, as well as their attitude, are violent toward the International Bill of Human Rights. Additionally, it states that once the attention and focus of the foreign countries shift, with passing of the time the Taliban's attitude toward human rights will get aggravated.

(Inayatullah, 2022) studies the obstacles to female education under the Taliban regime (such as war, cultural norms, isolation, and poverty) as well as how promoting women's education could raise their ability to develop. The research's main goal is to find research gaps within gender discrimination and to explore similarities and differences with former findings. The theory which has been used in this research is called the Nussbaum Capabilities Approach. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues that if a human wants to become successful and useful in life and reach the highest ability, it is essential to be bestowed with certain essentials, human dignity being the one that applies strongly to this case. According to the theory, each skill must meet a certain minimum standard before a person can be considered deserving of the title "really human." Freedom is changed from a purely conceptual idea into a true entity when these abilities are present above their basic level. Humans may only genuinely experience and enjoy freedom, a right of birth recognized and privileged in the United Nations Charter, by realizing and using these gifts. (Inayatullah 2022). Such an idea is backed up the participants of Inayatullah's study who agreed that education plays an essential role in helping Afghani women improve their skills and strengthens their human rights and women's awareness. While he describes a lack of knowledge existing about Afghan women living under Taliban rule, this study intends to fill in some of this gap by examining the lives of current women and what the future may hold for them.

(Country of Origin Information, 2022) reports are especially useful in this study. One offers data necessary for determining an individual's status under international protection. It includes details on the targeting of people in Afghanistan, the reference period being from 1

December 2021 to 30 June 2022. Information from earlier than the reference era is also included in the background chapters in order to address the overall security situation including violence associated with resistance, insurgent organizations, and terrorism. The report is useful to this research because it reviews the situation of Afghani women who live in a male-dominant country as well as how Afghan women are suffering under a totalitarian theocracy. It explains the position of women and girls in society as well as how gender-based targeting is taking place through and more stringent social expectations, detrimental societal customs, sexual assault, adultery, loss of access to jobs and education, restriction of movement, dress regulations, and limitations to free speech and assembly.

(COI sector of EUAA 2022) Another report published by COI offers data necessary for determining Afghan citizens' status under international protection. It includes details on what happened in Afghanistan after the Taliban took control on 15 August 2021 and continues until December 8, 2021. Since the conflict between the Taliban and the previous Afghan government cannot be characterized as ongoing and the level of conflict-related violence has inevitably changed, the current issues of interest for determining an international protection status are now more closely related to the Taliban's establishment of government and formulation and implementation of policy. In terms of the situation for women, on December 26, 2021, the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice reportedly issued a directive stating that women should not be offered transportation for distances greater than 45 miles (72 kilometers) if they are not accompanied by a close male relative and requested that drivers not offer rides to women who are not covering their heads with a hijab. A third report by COI provides an updated overview of the situation in Afghanistan, as it pertains to the assessment of asylum applications by Afghan nationals and decisions relating to the return of rejected Afghan asylum-seekers. From this comes an overview of the situation in Afghanistan before and after the Taliban took power. This research paper will benefit from such data in comprehending the position of Afghan females within Taliban rule.

2.4. Has the Taliban Changed Since its First Regime?

(Yousaf & Jabarkhail, 2022) aims to provide an overview of the Taliban's public relations efforts, propaganda messages, and plans for the Afghan administration in the future utilizing sources from the mainstream and social media in Pashto, English, and Urdu. The study makes the case that - at least in terms of media messaging, propaganda, and political scheming - the Taliban

of 2021 varies from that of 1996. Even with this growth, however, the future for women and media rights remains terrible (Yousaf e Jabarkhail 2022). The article's examination of the changing situation in Afghanistan and the Taliban's occupation of the nation sought to provide readers a first glimpse of what the nation may look like under a hard-line or radical rule. Its authors explain how media and gender rights are being violated under the current Taliban.

(Saragih, Women Journalist in the Middle of Taliban Power 2021) examines the situation of female journalists in Afghanistan under the rule of the Taliban. The aim is to describe and analyze the conditions currently being experienced in an objective, factual, and accurate manner and then draw conclusions from the findings. Evidence suggests that while the Taliban has declared that it will honor women's rights within the scope of Islamic Sharia law, including allowing them to study and work and join the government, female journalists are still facing threats. Media reports have highlighted the limitations placed on women's rights in the country as well as the danger they face as journalists.

A report published by (Khullar, 2022) states that amidst the disarray of US-led troops leaving Afghanistan, the Taliban has been trying to demonstrate a milder form of governance, but has yet to clarify its stances on women's and girls' access to education, employment, and political participation. Early signs point to the Taliban not giving up on its fundamentalist outlook of an Islamic society and has adopted a form of governance, politics, and ideology that could be a risk to earlier achievements. This report intends to evaluate the Taliban's actions and proclamations up to this point and how it has impacted women and girls in Afghanistan.

Additionally, (Amnesty International , 2022) states that, since the Taliban's re-entry into Kabul in August 2021, its maltreatment of women and girls' rights including torture, enforced disappearances, and other forms of violence, has instilled a sense of fear in the public and threatens to remove women and girls from Afghan culture. Despite the Taliban's pledge to protect women's rights under Islamic law, it has continuously infringed upon these rights in several ways while women and girls have been disproportionately impacted by the economic crisis. The suppression of women's and girls' rights to education, work, movement, and peaceful assembly and the torture and other ill-treatment of women protestors and other human rights violations have significantly hindered their capacity to make decisions in the political, social, and economic

realms. Besides from this, Amnesty proposed some recommendations to both the international community and the Taliban to avert violations of women's human rights.

(UN Women,2022) provides an overview of the changes in Afghanistan's dynamics in the aftermath of the Taliban's takeover and the effects on the rights and status of women and gender equality one year later. This alert builds upon the initial Gender Alert released by UN Women in December 2021, offering an updated account of the situation. The type of methodology employed in this document is a comprehensive evaluation of existing literature conducted to develop the Gender Alert, examining changes since 15 August 2021. Secondary data was used to analyze the situation pertaining to gender equality and women's rights. This gender alert provides an indicative overview of the trends, rather than a complete overview. The identities of Afghan women who gave quotes were kept private to ensure their safety. Through examining gender trends in areas such as work, education, healthcare, protection, freedom of movement, and participation in public and political life, this alert has sought to understand how the changing political environment is influencing gender equality. As a result, it has become apparent that there is a rapid normalization of discriminatory gender norms and a restriction of Afghan women and girls' basic rights and freedoms. The evidence presented in the alert is indicative of a sharp decrease in women's rights, despite the Taliban's assurance that they will be respected according to Islamic law.

Furthermore, (Kleiner, 2000) looks at the goals and techniques utilized by the Taliban. In accordance with its strict principles, the Taliban has established an Islamic system that focuses on the application of Sharia. It is argued that the Taliban adhere to divine laws without human intervention or approval. The government has only achieved a minimal degree of institutionalization.

(Amiri & Jackson, 2021) examines the Taliban's education strategy, how it applies the policy in action, and the potential for making an impact. The goal is to aid humanitarian organizations, diplomats, and others in advocating for fundamental human rights and access to education. The Taliban's approach and practices are far from straightforward, and there are significant distinctions among different regions. To effectively engage with the Taliban on education, it is essential to understand the factors that have driven their various positions, considering the Doha negotiations and any future political resolution.

Moreover, (Amnesty International, 2022) states that in the space of a year, the Taliban's oppressive policies have denied Afghan women and girls the right to education, work, free movement, and protection from domestic violence. The main idea of the research is related to women who peacefully protested and have been harassed and arrested by the Taliban and those who have disappeared. Also, the Taliban's rule has also led to a surge in child and forced marriages. The international community must take action to pressure the Taliban to lift the death sentence it has imposed on Afghan women and girls. Amnesty conducted research from September 2021 to June 2022, interviewing 91 women and girls, six ex-staff members of Taliban detention centers, 22 staff members of NGOs and UN agencies, and 10 experts and journalists. They also investigated media stories and reports from NGOs and UN agencies. Amnesty briefed interviewees on the research and how the data would be used, obtained consent from each person, and allowed them to end the interview or not answer questions at any time. There were no incentives for speaking. To avoid re-traumatizing the women/girls, interviews were held in safe and familiar settings, often with a family member present.

According to (Oliveira, 2022) kidnappings and armed robberies were among the violent crimes that markedly increased in Afghanistan in 2012. Concerns were initially expressed before the Taliban takeover about the apparent rise in targeted assaults on civilians, particularly targeting female human rights activists and media personnel. The briefing examines these problems through the prism of Afghan black market violence. It investigates its potential application as a crucial proxy to forecast present and upcoming developments in other illegal and criminal markets across the nation. It makes use of a review of the literature on illegal market violence, a more in-depth analysis of the literature on targeted violence in Afghanistan, with a focus on the years 2020 to 2021 and the research methodology for assassinations created by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC). To map current patterns in targeted killings and other types of violence, the study is used in conjunction with the variables extracted from the GI-TOC technique. It argues that a better understanding of the circumstances and actors involved in these crimes, particularly assassinations, may offer greater insights into the shifting dynamics within the nation. It presents a preliminary analysis of how targeted violence could be used to inform the analysis of illicit economies and their shifts in Afghanistan. The contribution of this paper would be to fill the gap to investigate more about the target group with a different timeline, this research will overall investigate how the Taliban killed many Afghans,

especially women such as women rights activists and women who were working in the media (Oliveira, 2022).

2.5. How to Eradicate Violence Against Women's Rights in the Taliban Regime?

(Rezai, 2017) seeks to challenge the common assumption that Afghan women are passive players in their history. To present a different version of events, the research investigates their role as agents of social change. It is argued that Afghan women were not victims waiting to be saved, but rather the driving force in their society, engaging in various forms of resistance, ranging from open opposition to secret acts of rebellion. To support this claim, the research draws on ethnographic interviews and three memoirs written by women who lived in Afghanistan during the Soviet and Taliban eras.

(Rezai,2017) Through these accounts, the study pays homage to Afghan women's heroic and powerful nature as they fought against tyranny. The methodology used in this research also includes a survey and interviews with five women ranging from 50 to 65 years old. Each of the women had experienced the Soviet invasion, while four of them had also lived through the Taliban rule. Their identities are kept hidden with the use of pseudonyms. Through the interviews and memoirs, Afghani women had varied opinions on the Soviet Union's secular policies, both positive and negative. As for the Taliban regime, the women unanimously expressed their disapproval, citing that its policies were un-Islamic and discriminatory against women.

(Marchi,2022) investigates whether the European Union (EU) will enforce its ideals - human and individual rights - or choose workable resolutions while attempting to persuade the Afghan government to embrace diplomacy. The policy guidance documents from the EU demonstrate a commitment to developing support in line with western standards. By using the practice approach to the EU's involvement in Afghanistan after August 2021, this article examines the central question "regarding whether opportunities exist "in" and "through" practice when EU officials' practical sense makes diplomacy the self-evident way to interact with Afghanistan."

In (Report, 2013), the situation of women in modern Afghanistan (post-Taliban regime) is evaluated, including the advancements made with outside assistance following the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. It analyzes the obstacles that women's legal, political, and economic

empowerment face. Additionally, it identifies risks and opportunities in the context of the security transition, discusses elections and negotiations with the Taliban, and it makes recommendations for preserving and advancing the rights won over the previous twelve years. In Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kabul, and Jalalabad, fieldwork was carried out. Because of security, several names and locations have been changed.

(Ahmed-Ghosh, 2003) looks at the importance of rural Afghanistan in the nation-building process and the power of tribal leaders in determining the status of women. It traces the history of women in the country to show that their issues were an integral part of national agendas in the 1920s and that their oppression under the mujahideen and the Taliban is not the only story. It argues that current economic marginalization and political dislocations can be used to renegotiate gender roles and to improve women's lives, as well as the nation. It suggests that economic reconstruction, social change, and full women's participation in public life are necessary for the future of Afghanistan.

Furthermore, (Carron Mann, 2022) explains the global reaction to the Taliban's ascension has not been successful in defending the educational privileges of Afghanistan's adolescent female population who were obstructed from attending classes after August 15th, 2021. In the upcoming months, world leaders are obligated to implement the Taliban's agreement to reopen all female secondary schools in late March 2022 and must take steps to facilitate the re-enrollment of girls into school by addressing existing and emergent obstructions which prevent them from attending.

(Smit, 2021) investigates how local and international actors can either hinder or advance the implementation of women's rights in Afghanistan. By examining both the positive and negative influences on Afghan women's rights, the goal is to demonstrate the need for solutions that account for the cultural and historical context of Afghanistan, rather than relying solely on Western-centric approaches. Ultimately, for international organizations to gain the most effective results, they must take an approach specific to the local population's cultural and religious values. To do this, it is necessary to comprehend the history of Afghanistan and to empower influential Afghan women to address the primary issues relating to their mistreatment.

(Smit, 2021) The subaltern theory is used in this research, Sarah Bertrand defines subaltern as a term used to refer to and describe marginalized communities from developing

countries who are unable to make their voices heard due to the presence of other voices (the West/ developed countries/ media) speaking for them. This concept relates to Afghan women, who are often ignored or not heard by the rest of the world, thus silencing them. This raises the question of whether it is beneficial for western states and the media to portray them as helpless victims of a war-torn country, or if they would be able to tell their stories if they were given a platform to do so.

(Berry,2003) examines the inaccuracies and eliminations that were included in the Bush administration's assertion that the war on terror in Afghanistan was a struggle for women's rights and dignity. It draws upon the observations of Afghan and American analysts, activists, journalists, scholars of Islamic feminism, and theorists of political representation to demonstrate the dangers of using Afghan women as symbols and tools in a geopolitical conflict. Without this critical analysis, their needs and goals are ignored and the potential of helping them achieve their ambitions is lost.

Moreover, (O'Sullivan, 2022) explains the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan following the withdrawal of foreign forces after a two-decade-long conflict has produced a dire humanitarian crisis. Women and girls are among the tens of thousands of people fleeing the country weekly, and former female leaders, judges, lawyers, and human rights advocates have faced death threats and violence. Women and girls are losing their freedoms and rights as the Taliban reversed gains made since 2001. Human rights defenders, particularly women activists, have been abducted for protesting their rights in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif. Poverty, famine, and exploitation are increasing due to ongoing violence, economic collapse, and the spread of COVID-19. Over half a million people have been displaced by the conflict since 2021 began. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called on countries to work together to bring stability to Afghanistan.

(Gregory, 2011) explores the interplay between gender, power, and culture in the politics of the Afghani state the study examines the ways in which local and international discourses, particularly those related to America's involvement in Afghanistan, shape the experiences of women. Gregory discovers that there is a discrepancy between the agency of Afghani women and their perceived "victimhood" in Western political and media discourse through interviews and discourse analysis of both. It looks at how American policymakers have created conceptions of

gender and agency in Afghanistan and how these conceptions have affected the region's politics of understanding. According to Gregory, there are still difficulties in establishing gender justice and equality, despite the US playing a significant part in the rescue of Afghan women. The author argues that Afghani women's subjectivities and agency are not understood within these discourses which has an impact on how their experiences are portrayed and comprehended. The study's conclusion urges deeper consideration of Afghani women's viewpoints and the need for a more sophisticated understanding of their identities.

(Sopko,2021) evaluates the accomplishments and shortcomings of international development initiatives in Afghanistan over the past 20 years and to draw lessons from those experiences that would guide future initiatives in the area. The paper argues that rather than adopting a comprehensive strategy for the growth and rebuilding of Afghanistan, the international community has chosen piecemeal fixes that have not dealt with the root causes of the problems in the nation. The paucity of resources allotted to the nation, together with the short-term orientation of international aid programs, have hampered long-term development efforts, the author adds. The lack of a coherent strategy for the growth and rehabilitation of Afghanistan is the biggest gap noted by the author. He contends that the international community has prioritized solitary programs and efforts rather than considering the historical, cultural, and political context of the nation. He also emphasizes that the country's lack of resources has hampered the creation of efficient infrastructure and governance structures. Finally, he makes the claim that efforts to promote long-term development have been hampered by foreign assistance programs' short-term orientation. In conclusion, the paper presents a thorough review of the achievements and shortcomings of foreign development efforts in Afghanistan over the previous twenty years. In the present strategy for the country's development, he points out several holes and makes recommendations for how these gaps can be filled in the future. In particular, he underlines the necessity of a thorough strategy for the growth and rehabilitation of Afghanistan, one that takes into consideration the nation's political, cultural, and historical background.

(Rieger, 2013) seeks to evaluate the advancement of women's rights in Afghanistan from the standpoint of international law. According to Rieger's study, Afghanistan's laws are not in compliance with international law which has prevented the advancement of women's rights there. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and the Afghan Constitution are just a few

examples of how international law has helped promote women's rights in Afghanistan, according to Rieger. Additionally, she looks at how the absence of implementation of these laws has slowed the advancement of women's rights in the country. The conclusion is that Afghanistan's progress in advancing women's rights has been hampered by the gap between international law and the laws that are applied. Rieger contends that to guarantee the growth of women's rights in Afghanistan, international law enforcement is essential. Thus, the paper emphasizes the necessity of stricter adherence to international human rights norms to raise the position of women in Afghanistan.

(Efsas, 2022) aims to investigate the gendered effects of the public and private educational trajectories in Afghanistan. The article begins by outlining the development of education in Afghanistan over time including how war, occupation, and conflict affected the educational system. The country's public and private educational systems are next examined, along with the difficulties they are now experiencing. The paper concludes by examining how the securitization of education in Afghanistan has impacted the educational system in the nation and its gendered effects. The essay emphasizes the accessibility, quality, and funding gaps between public and private education in Afghanistan. Due to significant underfunding, the public education system has been unable to meet the demand for high-quality education. Contrarily, the expense of private education makes it mainly unavailable to the bulk of the people, and the quality of the education might vary greatly. The securitization of education, which has resulted in a rise in military involvement in schools and the use of schools for military reasons, has made this divide between public and private education even wider. The article states that the securitization of education in Afghanistan has significantly impacted the country's educational system, particularly in terms of access, quality, and resources. It also highlights the need for increased investment in public education, to ensure that all Afghan children have access to quality education. Finally, it calls for greater attention to be paid to the gendered impacts of the securitization of education in Afghanistan, to ensure that the needs of both male and female students are met. In general, the paper offers a significant perspective on Afghan education's difficulties today. The essay calls attention to the need for more funding for public education as well as the gendered effects of the securitization of education. These results are crucial for policymakers because they offer evidence-based recommendations for enhancing Afghanistan's educational system.

3. Chapter I: Women's Rights under the First Taliban Regime

3.1. An Overview of Women's Rights in Afghanistan:

According to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1993, Paragraph 18, "The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social, and cultural life, at the national, regional, and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community." (The World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, p.4). According to Article One of the Declaration, the definition of discrimination against women is "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." (General Assembly Resolution, 1981, p. 3).

Additionally, (The World Conference on Human Rights, 1993) it is stated in Part Two that state parties agree to defend women's rights in public and political life as per Articles Seven to Nine. Article Seven mandates that state parties are obligated to eradicate gender-based discrimination in the public and political spheres. This entails ensuring that women have the right to vote, stand for election on equal ground as men, actively participate in shaping government policies, and hold public positions. Women should also have equal opportunities as men to engage in non-governmental organizations, trade unions, professional associations, and other public and political associations.

(Alexander, 2022) These rights, however, have not been granted to Afghan women, especially after the Taliban took over the government in the 1990s. The research described here provides a brief overview of the state of such rights so that readers may grasp the situation of women in the country. From 1996 to 2001 the Taliban frequently promised peace and modernity in Afghanistan, but the truth was evident more so in its actions. Women were required to completely conceal themselves in burqas (a one-piece garment that covers the head and body) and were forbidden to work, communicate in public, go to hotel social activities, and exit their houses without male supervision. Furthermore, it was against the law for cab drivers to transport unaccompanied women or allow them to sit in the front seat. Public floggings and death by

stoning were two possible punishments for violating these laws either for the women themselves or men who had helped them in any way. Due to their imprisonment at home and the demeaning abuse they endured every day, a significant number of women were diagnosed with depression. But because they did not receive proper medical attention, several committed suicide. In the city of Herat, for example, a young girl lit herself on fire with gasoline because she felt powerless.

(Alexander, 2022) It is important to note that women were not given the opportunity to address their issues with a judicial authority that might have protected and advocated for them. Since the Taliban did not regard them as equals, there was no legislation to guarantee their political and social rights. Even women who had been involved in politics were affected as they were forbidden from participating in political campaigns and being employed as government employees, lawyers, judges, or journalists. From this, there was no way for them to interact on behalf of other Afghan women with the powerful men who were now in charge. Also essential to point out is that these restrictions were carried out supposedly according to the will of God. The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice developed the “religious police” to enforce adherence to the regulations and to keep the peace. This police force conducted street sweeps and publicly punished any women who disobeyed the government's laws. In its broadcasts throughout Afghanistan, the Taliban’s Radio Shariat publicized approximately 225 episodes of women being physically assaulted for breaking the clothing code of the time.

(Kallini,2021) Following the September 11 attacks and the foreign presence in Afghanistan, it was anticipated that women's living conditions would improve and that no one would be able to place limitations on them going forward.

(John F. Sopko Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction 2023), Women started to laugh without restriction, visit beauty parlors, walk through the streets without wearing the burqa, and go to social gatherings. Various US programs helped Afghanistan's societal and political institutions throughout the course of the next 20 years and produced new chances for all Afghans, especially females, to progress. Beginning in 2002, the US government invested a minimum of \$787.4 million in initiatives to help Afghan women and girls. At least \$1 billion was invested in 66 projects to help Afghanistan establish a rule of law including initiatives to educate women about their rights as well as create new laws and safeguards to enhance women's rights

and encourage political engagement. Therefore, they gained more legal protection and increased political engagement.

Yet in spite of the constant push by foreign powers to make Afghanistan more progressive, underground members of the Taliban still sought to exercise control in several regions, mostly in the South. This had a significant influence on women's lives. Many were threatened and harassed by the Taliban, especially instructors who were given orders to stop indoctrinating young girls into a false ideology. The well-being of these students was indeed at risk as there were several reports of acid attacks on them and also the burning of female schools.

To undermine the efficiency of the new administration, the Taliban resorted to terrorism with multiple bombs, arsons, and suicide assaults taking place. Also significant was the amount of women who were subjected to domestic violence at the hands of conservative husbands. The Afghan government estimated in 2014 that women accounted for 80% of suicides in the country because of the everyday violence they experienced. To those outside of the country, it may have seemed that the lives of women were vastly improving, but the reality is that it was still a struggle. Even the laws of certain areas could be reverted as demonstrated with a 2010 decision made by a Herat committee that women must be accompanied by a male family member whenever they emerged in public. Furthermore, while many girls could go to school during this time, 60% of female students (out of Afghanistan's population of 3.7 million children) were denied access to basic education by the Taliban according to UNICEF. Such facts are indicative that even with the official overthrow of the Taliban and help from the international community, nothing changed for many Afghan women.

(Gabiya & Shreeves,2023) Afghanistan has a demonstrably poor record when it comes to women's rights since the Taliban administration assumed control of the nation in August 2021. Despite claims that it would "uphold women's rights in accordance with Sharia law," the Taliban began repressing citizens' rights within the first few weeks of taking power, with women being the major focus of these limitations.

(John F. Sopko Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2023) There has been a quick move to reinstate gender-based discrimination acts that largely restrict the basic rights and freedoms of Afghan females, based on the December 2021 report by UN Women Gender Alert. Once again, women and girls have been barred from traveling without a male

relative, going to school, and being in various public areas. In December 2022, women were also forbidden to be employed in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Taliban later expanded the prohibition to include women who were employed by the country's UN Mission in early April 2023. According to a former official under former President Ashraf Ghani, the Taliban does not have a convincing plan for the progress or security of women and girls in the fields of governance, society, and the economy. This is backed up by the Congressional Research Service which noted in September 2021 that, 19 months after signing the deal with the US, "the Taliban have not described in detail how they now view women's rights or what role women would play in a future Taliban-governed society." (John F. Sopko Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction 2023, p.5).

(John F. Sopko Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction 2023) The Taliban quickly made it clear that defending women's rights was not a priority by refusing to explicitly implement initiatives showing that it had changed its restrictive stances from the late 1990s. On the contrary, the Ministry for Women's Affairs was abolished and replaced with the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice. Additionally, the Congressional Research Service states that since the Taliban's takeover in August 2021, Afghan women have expressed greater fear of sexual abuse, reprisals, and relocation, raising long-term worries about the future of their rights under Taliban rule.

(John F. Sopko Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 2023) There had been a further decline in regard for Afghan females' rights by July 2022 as a result of the Taliban's regulations further restricting their ability to be seen in public, take trips, wear certain types of clothing, and participate in politics. They are currently facing serious issues such as restricted availability to healthcare and education, diminished empowerment, financial insecurity, social relegation, and increased personal threats to their safety and security.

3.2. Historical Background of Afghan Women's Rights in (Modern Monarchies)

In this section, we will briefly discuss the period in which Afghan women greatly benefited from their human rights. The goal is to examine the various stages of progress and setbacks they have experienced regarding their rights over time. It is not because Afghanistan is an Islamic nation that Afghan women's rights have been violated. Rather, it is caused by the Taliban misinterpreting Islamic texts and using it as an excuse for its violent behavior toward

women. Women's rights in Afghanistan have advanced during some noteworthy times. These times saw tremendous gains, albeit they were accompanied by problems.

According to (Nemat, 2011) Afghanistan is frequently portrayed to the outside world as a place where women and girls have suffered in medieval subservience for generations, only gaining their rights - including the right to an education - following the fall of the Taliban in 2001. But this idea is false.

(Burki,n.d)'s study Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, who reigned from 1880 to 1901, is credited with establishing modern Afghanistan which included improvements to women's position. Also, attempts were undertaken to enact significant social changes to elevate the position of women during Muhammad Amanullah Khan's rule (1919–1929).

(Nemat, 2011) When Amir Abdur Rahman Khan ruled Afghanistan (1880-1901), the first changes in favor of women were implemented. He questioned the accepted norms and practices of the country and made significant strides in the direction of what the West refers to as modernization. Besides that, he issued a decree abolishing the tribal custom requiring widows to wed their late husband's brother, raised the marriageable age, granted women the right to a limited divorce, and allowed women to obtain property.

Based on (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2003), even though he believed that women were inferior to males, he nevertheless believed that they deserved to be treated fairly. Furthermore (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, n.d.), he was represented in reconciliation conflicts by his wife, Bobo Jan, who did not wear a veil. Bobo Jan was said to ride horses and teach her maidservants in military drills. She was very interested in politics and went on several difficult missions to negotiate politics between opposing parties.

(Chua, 2014) Amanullah's father and predecessor, Habibullah Khan, reigned from 1901 to 1919 and although modernization didn't gain prominence until after his accession, its roots had been sowed decades before. A progressive age in Afghanistan was brought in by Habibullah with the adoption of reforms, though on a limited basis, breaking from the oppressive reign of his own father, Abdur Rahman, the "Iron Amir," who ruled from 1800 until 1901. Afghanistan's first hospital, factory, and hydroelectric facility all went up as did new roads and factories. Along with reforms to the economy, Habibullah founded Habibia School, the first school in Afghanistan with

an academic program modeled after that of Europe in 1904. And he let political exiles come home. Mahmoud Tarzi, the most well-known of the exiles who had returned, had been affected by the reformist principles of the Young Turk movement while he had been away. When he came back, Tarzi started the weekly *Siraj al-Akhbar* to spread his ideas of “Muslim modernization” or a return to the era of the Abbasid Caliphate when Islam could live with a modern, developed civilization.

(Chua, 2014) Habiba’s school students who later became the new Afghan intelligentsia were influenced by Tarzi's views on Afghan nationalism and modernity by 1909, a reformist assembly recognized as the Youthful Afghans, also known as *mashruta khwahan* (constitutionalists), had arisen. As soon as the Young Afghans were formed, Prince Amanullah became involved. His relationship with Tarzi deepened and the future Queen Soraya, who was one of Tarzi's daughters, married him after they exchanged ideas about Afghanistan's future.

Moreover, according to (Ahmad-Ghosh, 2003) in response to Tarzi's liberal influence, Habibullah established a school for females with an English-based education system, which tribal chiefs and clerics viewed as going against custom. Sadly, the modernization of every member of the elite and the democratization of the country via education gave rise to an opposition movement. The state's interference in marital institutions and the advancement of women's education weakened the authority of tribal chiefs and their family-based and regional kinship systems, which led to Habibullah's murder in 1919. Habibullah is frequently referred to as the forgotten king which aptly describes his rule. However, Habibullah was particularly concerned with keeping Afghanistan's standing on the Muslim and international scenes, albeit he was unable to exert the same level of influence over either.

(Chua, 2014) adds that since he was a little boy, Amanullah had been upset by the situation of his nation and felt "deeply ashamed" of how behind the times Afghanistan was. When Habibullah passed away in 1919, Amanullah had the potential to change this. With Tarzi serving as his advisor and foreign minister, he made a public declaration that Afghanistan will reclaim its rightful place among the world's modern countries.

Based on (Nemat,2011), after Afghanistan's independence was assured by the Anglo-Russian agreement in the 1920s, the governing Amir Amanullah committed and wanted to modernize his nation. Amanullah saw a world in which Islam could live with both the tangible

and immaterial features of Western culture and government. This was a Western-centric view of modernity. All Afghans now enjoyed personal freedom and equal rights because of the political and social improvements he implemented. His social changes included a new dress code that allowed Kabul's women to go without Islamic coverings and provided authorities the freedom to wear Western clothing. Wearing a veil or burqa was discouraged, as was purdah, the screening or isolation of women to avoid interaction with strangers.

Amanullah Khan stated (Nemat, 2011) that religion does not command women to wear a certain kind of veil or to cover their hands, feet, or faces. Tribal tradition must not interfere with an individual's right to free will. This statement came from King Amanullah, who led Afghanistan to independence in 1919. He also affirmed that his fight was entirely against bad customs rather than religious rituals.

Also (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, n.d.), Queen Soraya encouraged women to remove their veils and she herself did so in front of the public, telling people to not believe that the country just needed males to serve it. As in the early days of Islam, women should participate as well. History is replete with accounts of the invaluable contributions performed by women who serve as an example of how valuable they can be to any society.

According to (Nemat,2011) Sura Al-Nessa, Al Qur'an (4:124) states that - in terms of those who believe and live a moral life – both men and women reach Paradise. Religion rejects any kind of unfairness or inequity between them. Furthermore (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, n.d.), Afghan women participated in the global movement for women's independence in the 1920s. In 1921, Masturat, ("covered ones") the first school for girls, was inaugurated. Future ministers of state, members of the governing council, and professors at universities were among the distinguished graduates. Women were given the right to choose their spouses officially in 1923. Prior to this, women were expected to get married before their first menstrual cycle; the Taliban reinstated this hardline practice when in power. Seraj al Banet, a sister of Amanullah, played a significant role in the early Afghan women's rights movement. In 1923, she said that nobody has exclusive control over knowledge. Women too need to be educated and to realize that they can achieve the same things as males.

(Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, n.d.) cites that in 1928, the first group of Afghan women departed the nation for attending education in Turkey. They started working as

teachers, physicians, and nurses in the 1940s and 1950s. Women enrolled in universities, joined the economy, and entered public service in record numbers between 1959 and 1965. By 1963, Kabul University's medical school and law school had their first female graduates and more women were participating in sports. By the 1960s, women with and without the veil were openly mixing in metropolitan streets and continuing to ascend to important government posts. Every year, more women enrolled at Kabul University and more of them also went overseas to study. 1965 saw the appointment of the first two female senators.

According to (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, n.d.), an important milestone was the appointment of 14 women as judges in Islamic law courts between 1966 and 1971. In the 1960s, around 8% of urban women worked for pay, mostly as professionals, technicians, or government officials in the military, law enforcement, health, or education. Fundamentalists, however, resisted Mohammed Daoud Khan's policies for women's freedom when he abolished the monarchy in 1973. Despite suppressing dissenters, the communist government established after the Soviet invasion in 1979 encouraged women's rights throughout the 1980s. After the communist government was overthrown in 1992 a civil conflict started which had a severe effect on women's rights. Women's movement was constrained by Mujahideen groups which resulted in relocation, a reduction in education, and unstable economic conditions.

3.3. Background on the Taliban and its Rule in Afghanistan

The Taliban (Giustozzi, 2010) is described as a fundamentalist Islamist group that came to power in the 1990s in several Sunni-affiliated Islamic boarding schools in Afghanistan. It is usually viewed as part of the Pashtun group. (Bubalo, Philips & Yasmeen, 2011) The word is the plural form of "Talib," which means "student" in Arabic, Pashto, and Farsi languages. According to (Minority rights group International, n.d) most of Afghanistan's Pashtun population lives in the south and east of the nation, making them the biggest ethnic group there. They speak both Pashto, an Iranian dialect that is a member of the Indo-European language family, as well as their own language, Pashto, which was made an official language in 1936. While there are theories that the Pashtuns are derived from Eastern Iranians who immigrated from Iran, there is a narrative that suggests they may have sprung from one of Israel's tribes. Furthermore, (Minority rights group International, n.d) cites that, the Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims who are also present in Pakistan's Northwest Province. They have a large amount of administrative influence and are regarded as

the Afghan Kingdom's historical founders. Their social system is founded on the Pashtunwali code, a synthesis of tribal honor and regional interpretations of Islamic Law that prioritizes the usage of the Pashtu language and observance of rituals. The Pashtuns place a high value on hospitality, protecting guests, defending property, upholding family honor, and protecting female relations.

The Pashtuns (Eslami, & Safari, 2022) have a historical way of life called Pashtunwali which serves as a sort of moral code among them, particularly in rural regions. Pashtunwali is a set of values that are incredibly significant to Pashtuns since they depend on it for their survival and sense of self. Tribes engage with one another according to Pashtunwali ideals. The dominant ideals in Pashtunwali speech are comparable to the rules of conduct expected of every Pashtun. To put it another way, the Pashtunwali is regarded as the Pashtuns' unwritten law.

(Burki,n.d) To preserve izzat (respect) Pashtunwali emphasized the value of safeguarding one's zan (women), zar (gold/wealth), and zamin (land) women were seen as possessions whose protection was necessary to maintain the clan's honor. Women's "rights" were perceived as a danger to Pashtunwali as a language and to maintaining the status order.

The Taliban (Kuehn,2018) controlled Afghanistan formally from 1996 to 2001. It got powerful when it took control of Kabul and its surrounding areas in only four months. This quick seizure had to do with the Taliban's capacity to negotiate, raise finances, and engage in combat. It also created several groups and offices that were intended (even though they did not actually do much) to fulfill the primary objectives of the movement - providing security and justice as well as administering government duties related to foreign diplomacy, healthcare, and economic growth.

The term "Taliban Syndrome" (Ahrari 2000) refers to its primary effort to establish an Islamic authority in Afghanistan. This combines extreme adherence to Islam centered on the salafiyya (moralistic) heritage of Saudi Arabia. "Taliban Syndrome" is utilized as well to describe the steadily growing influence of Islamist extremists in Pakistan and the influence of salafiyya on internal and external policies in other nearby countries (Ahrari, 2000).

When Zahir Shah (Alexander,2022), the last king of Afghanistan, was ousted in 1979, the Soviet Union imposed a Marxist puppet rule. A civil war emerged shortly after between communist forces and their foes which included Islamist insurgents known as the mujahedeen.

During this time, the situation of women started to deteriorate. (Johnson & Mason 2007) After the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, the country descended into another civil war between competing mujahideen organizations, many of which had already expended a significant amount of their energy fighting one another even at the height of the anti-Soviet jihad. This war destroyed the nation's infrastructure in addition to the massive death count. Following the mujahideen takeover of Kabul in April 1992, the conflict grew more violent. Two different Islamist political parties - Pashtun Hizb-i-Islami and the Tajik Jamaat-i-Islam - were particularly involved in street fighting during this time. The secret anti-Soviet military aid program's massive stocks of excess Soviet weaponry that they had available ultimately caused the same amount of harm and devastation to the nation as the Soviets themselves, if not more. Due to the dissolution of the old tribal authority structure, warlords, drug lords, and bandits went on the offensive across the rural districts.

Saudi Arabia (Johnson & Mason, 2007) made significant investments in the region during the conflict between the mujahideen groups and warlords, most notably through supporting madrassas (religious boarding schools) in Pakistan that aimed to disseminate the strict Wahhabi interpretation of Islam that the Saudi Arabian government followed. To increase the impact of the local Deobandi School of Islamic thinking, Pakistan's Jamiat-i-Ulema Islami (JUI) party established its own network. These madrassas would eventually become a significant educational alternative for refugees forced to evacuate by the anti-Soviet jihad and Afghan civil war and also for poor families across the border who were unable to pay for private schools. The Taliban arose from the madrassas of Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the federally administered tribal area (FATA). Also relevant in this formation were the kinship networks inside the remaining Afghan refugee camps under the direction of the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID) who were devoted to the Afghan mujahideen leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Madrassas close to Ghazni and Kandahar were the primary locations of the Taliban in Afghanistan, but by 1994, its numbers had risen to the point of being an influential force which promised the country to impose a strict Islamic rule and put an end to warfare among the mujahideen. It captured Kabul in September 1996 after overthrowing the mostly Tajik (and northern) mujahideen government there with the help of Pakistan's Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID), Army, and Air Force. The Taliban held this government accountable for the country's ongoing civil conflict, declining security, and prejudice against Pashtuns.

(Kuehn,2018) Islamist activists and other extremists from the Middle East and other parts of Asia quickly began playing a part in Afghanistan's development. Many Afghans, especially fellow Pashtuns, first embraced the Taliban, which advertised itself as an emerging force for truth and harmony; it was considered as the urgently required salve of stability and peace in Afghanistan. The Taliban at once began attacking warlords since they were thought to be largely to blame for the devastation, unrest, and disorder that had engulfed the nation ever since the civil war began. In addition, it established a religious police squad called the Amr Bil Marof Wa Nai Az Munkir (Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice) to forcefully defend its radical interpretations of Islam.

Furthermore, (Johnson & Mason, 2007) As soon as the Taliban implemented a strict interpretation of Sharia Law, a strict interpretation of Islam, the people's excitement quickly changed to terror. The Taliban started reorganizing in 2001, going from a loosely-coupled group to a distributed network of warriors. Their superiors, who had bases in Pakistan's Quetta and Peshawar, gave them orders. Then after the September 11 attacks, NATO troops retaliated to combat terrorism which also resulted in a new era of hostilities between the US and the Taliban. Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is said to have backed the Taliban who were essential in giving Al-Qaeda (a Sunni militant organization)

(Sakhi,2022) Al-Qaeda was a haven that allowed them to continue their activities. Pakistan adamantly denies this assertion. The Taliban dictatorship that had ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 was overthrown by the US-led military forces in September 2001. To oppose the recently constituted Afghan government, which it thought to be a US-installed administration, the Taliban began organizing its supporters and built a stronghold in the country's southern and eastern areas.

(Sakhi,2022) It began to target people in the eastern parts of Afghanistan in 2003 as its power in the north of the country grew. To undercut the Kabul government, it recruited local resources, created unofficial administrative structures, and took advantage of political as well as social concerns. A new administration was taking shape in Kabul, with a focus on creating both central and regional government organizations. Five important provinces saw the bulk of the rebuilding work. Up until 2009, when the Taliban unleashed a wave of violence that spread unrest through violent and suicide strikes in areas open to the public, the general security

situation had considerably improved. This occurred at the same time as the country's centralized government structure failed to deliver resources and safeguard people. There is a large divide and mistrust between residents and the authorities because numerous individuals in rural areas are being cut off from the political process.

(Sakhi,2022) The Taliban launched several operations to undermine the legitimacy of the Afghan government between 2002 and 2021. They engaged in combat with NATO, Afghan security forces, and the US while concurrently gaining more authority over the countryside. The Taliban focused on enlisting and forging connections with rural communities and got constant backing and weaponry from its financiers. Because the Afghan government did not defend the populace or solve their issues, the Taliban was able to garner popularity. The Taliban took advantage of unrest in isolated areas to work with local leaders to overthrow the government and exploited religious organizations to denounce foreign troops. It grew in power, offered services in different areas, and enlisted combatants from non-Pashtun ethnic groups. It remained fiercely united despite internal disagreements. In general, its effective approach entailed using religion, encouraging anti-foreigner and anti-government emotions, and capitalizing on governance deficiencies to extend its activities and boost its supporters across the nation.

(Sakhi,2022) There were substantial political developments brought about by talks between the US and the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2018. A political accord between the Taliban and the Afghan Republic was to be established with the withdrawal of US forces as the secondary objective. These discussions, often referred to as the Doha process, intended to end problems between the warring parties. The Doha Agreement was signed in February 2020 with its implementation beginning in October 2018 and ending in August 2021. The Taliban agreed to stop terrorist organizations from utilizing Afghanistan as a haven to attack the US and its allies and it specified the departure of US forces. A political solution was also sought through consultations between Afghan groups. The procedure had problems, however, one of which was giving the Taliban more authority which boosted its legitimacy and attracted the interest of Russia, China, and Iran. The Taliban conducted successful offensives, quickly conquering important regions, by capitalizing on its increased power. It invaded Kabul by the middle of August 2021, forcing President Ashraf Ghani to flee and proclaimed Afghanistan an Islamic Emirate. This signified the end of the previously elected government and the installation of a totalitarian administration, bringing the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's 20-year existence to an

end. The current de facto government of Afghanistan, which consists of a supreme commander and a council, is extremely similar to the one that the Taliban used to control the country from 1996 to 2001 when they ruled for 5 years.

(Sakhi,2022) The Afghan republic fell because of four fundamental problems. First off, the Taliban's organization and continued danger to stability were overestimated by the newly-elected Afghan government. It disregarded how the Taliban successfully mobilized and exploited social and political difficulties. Second, because of fraud and conflicts over ethnicity, the government was unable to safeguard all its citizens, particularly in rural regions, which resulted in additional splits inside the nation. Third, the Afghan government erroneously believed that because of its regional strategic interests, the US could remain in Afghanistan indefinitely. Finally, the government was largely dependent on international support and lacked long-term domestic revenue streams and security measures in the event of a US exit or decreased foreign assistance.

3.4. First Taliban Regime

According to (Drevitch, (2010) during the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, there was no Constitution, rule of law, or independent judiciary. The country was renamed the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, with Mullah Omar as the Supreme Head of State and all official decrees were issued by him and the Supreme Council in Kandahar. The Taliban implemented a government system that it described as Islamic rather than parliamentary or presidential. Instead of independent courts, local leaders relied on the Taliban's interpretation of Sharia law and traditional tribal customs. Afghan women had no legal recourse for crimes committed against them, as their testimony was considered half that of a man's and they were unable to directly appeal to the court. In contrast to the Pre-Taliban era, where women had some rights and societal recognition, during the Taliban era, they were completely devoid of rights and legal standing.

Women (Hartley-Blecic, 2000) had no rights during the Taliban's first rule. They lacked access, for instance, to adequate medical care, or in most cases, any medical treatment at all as well as the right to education and the right to employment. In response to it violations of women's human rights, the Taliban asserted that the objective was to safeguard the honor of women and argued that the restrictions imposed on them are intended for their own safety. Considering the negative portrayal of the Taliban's treatment of Afghan women in the media, Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Taliban leader, expressed his perspective on how the Western world treats women. According to him, the Western understanding of women's rights is limited to degrading and disrespectful practices found in repulsive and indecent Western cultures where women are demeaned and treated as objects.

Continuously, (Hartley-Blecic,2000) cites that the Taliban and its supporters have provided various justifications for the strict limitations imposed on women. These include the argument that such restrictions are necessary to bring stability to the country and the belief that Western women are not genuinely respected within their own culture. They claim that Muslim women hold a revered position as the queens of their households and it is the responsibility of their husbands to provide for them. As a result, they argue that Muslim women do not require the same rights as women in Western societies.

Furthermore, (Reid, Kashyap, & Richardson, 2010) say that the Taliban implemented strict regulations for women, including the requirement of a male mahram for public appearances

and the obligation to cover their bodies and faces with a chadari. Women were generally prohibited from working outside the home, except in limited healthcare roles with strict gender segregation. Men also had to adhere to certain dress codes, but they were allowed to continue working and had greater freedom of movement. The impact of these restrictions was particularly in cities where women formerly had more freedom. Women made up a large number of teachers and government employees before the Taliban took power. The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice is also called the religious police. Women who violated even minor rules were subjected to public beatings, threats, and imprisonment. The religious police targeted women for various reasons, including not wearing opaque socks, exposing their body parts such as hands or wrists, or not being accompanied by a male relative. Additionally, educating girls in home-based schools, working, and begging were also considered infractions that led to punishment.

In 2000 (Jami, 2022), the Taliban restricted women's career opportunities by prohibiting them from working with foreign agencies such as the United Nations and NGOs. This limitation not only affected employment but also limited women's access to medical care as female doctors were dismissed from their positions and women were not allowed to be examined by male doctors. The Taliban's restrictions on women had severe consequences for their health and well-being. Many pregnant women had to give birth at home with the help of untrained midwives. The Taliban violated Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees the right to a standard of living that includes access to healthcare. They deprived women of their careers as doctors and only allowed them to use hospitals if accompanied by a male chaperone, leading to limited healthcare for mothers and newborns. Maternal mortality rates were high due to the lack of female doctors. Following international criticism, the Taliban reluctantly permitted a small number of female doctors and nurses to work, but gender-segregated wards were still enforced in hospitals.

Additionally (Jami, 2022), the Taliban claimed that developed countries were dishonoring women by offering them job opportunities in mixed-gender environments. It also argued that removing the niqab (face veil) and exposing women to the public, under the guise of human rights, was a disgrace. Wearing face veils became burdensome for women, hindering their vision and breathing. The Taliban's dress code violated women's rights to appropriate clothing. Additionally, women's mobility in the city was severely restricted. Approximately 400 girls in a

Kabul orphanage were locked inside for a year, violating their freedom of movement. This confinement could be considered a form of arbitrary detention, contradicting Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Taliban's actions not only violated basic human rights but also imposed punishments without any legal basis.

The beatings (Reid, R., Kashyap, A., & Richardson, S. (2010) carried out by the religious police were severe, unpredictable, and without any form of defense or opportunity for appeal. In an interview with Human Rights Watch in 2001, Shokeria Ahmed, a widow, recounted a typical incident while shopping for fabric where she was beaten along with the shopkeeper for briefly lifting her chadari to compare colors in the dark shop with the Taliban using a wire implement to inflict the beating and chastising her to cover her face.

Furthermore, (Kallini, 2021) after seizing control of Kabul, the Taliban immediately implemented a ban on girls attending school and denied women the right to study at universities, believing that education would lead girls towards prostitution and claiming it was not supported by Islamic law. Under their regime, women were only permitted to appear in public if accompanied by a male relative and wearing a head-to-toe chadari. This policy, presented as protection for women's privacy, intensified gender discrimination and contradicted the Taliban's claim of being Islamic modernizers and defenders of women's rights. According to (Jami, 2022), requiring women to wear burqas violated the principles outlined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees the right to "adequate clothing." The term "adequate" in a legal context refers to clothing that is appropriate for a specific situation or occasion. This includes considering an individual's personal beliefs, physical condition, and the freedom to choose their own attire.

According to (Drevitch, 2010), the Taliban's initial decree, which included the prohibition of women's education, resulted in the closure of numerous schools and prevented thousands of girls and boys from attending. Private home-based schools were established with outside aid, focusing on teaching skills like sewing and literacy. However, the Taliban eventually closed these schools, often punishing women who defied the ban with beatings, torture, imprisonment, and even death. The Taliban justified the ban with reasons such as temporary measures due to security concerns and lack of funds for segregated schools. This education ban faced criticism from Islamic countries and hindered Afghanistan's overall economic and social development,

leading to a collapse of the educational system with low enrollment rates and a decline in literacy rates for women.

The Taliban (Kallini, 2021) enforced restrictions on taxi drivers, who were forbidden from transporting unaccompanied women or allowing them to sit in the front seat. Additionally, women were prohibited from attending social events held in hotels. Instances of women being beaten for breaking these rules, as well as reports of taxi drivers agreeing to transport unaccompanied women, were common. It is important to mention that married women faced even greater limitations and had extremely limited social lives, as mandated by religious decree.

Furthermore, (Schulz & Schulz, 1999) women under Taliban rule faced numerous restrictions, including limitations on seeking medical treatment from male doctors, wearing makeup, showing any body parts, and wearing noisy shoes. The Taliban's views reflect a deep-rooted fear of women, akin to the concept of the "Madonna-whore" dichotomy in which women are simultaneously put on pedestals at home but seen as potential temptresses. Additional restrictions include painting windows black, preventing access to sunlight, prohibiting girls from leaving state orphanages, forbidding girls from learning to read, imposing early curfews, and leaving widows without burqas, jobs, or income. This oppressive situation has led to a city of beggars, with women selling their possessions and resorting to begging to feed their children.

The Taliban (Telesetsky, 1998), interpreting the Quran in their own way, implemented strict measures aimed at restoring their version of Islamic balance in response to Western influences. These measures include excluding women from public life and segregating the country into public and private spheres governed by Islamic law. Women were confined to the private sphere, separated from the predominantly male economic and political community. As a result, they became marginalized, and their basic needs were neglected. Additionally, the Taliban's dress code for women and their ban on women entering public bathing facilities contradicted the Islamic ideals of cleanliness and personal hygiene. This prohibition not only prevented women from following religious obligations but also puts their health at risk, potentially leading to various gynecological and skin infections.

Finally, (Jami, 2022) cites that during the period from 1996 to 2001, women in Afghanistan did not actively protest or object to the Taliban's restrictive measures. This lack of resistance can be attributed to the limited awareness and understanding of their rights during that

time. Women had limited access to information about human rights, education, and involvement in socio-political activities. Additionally, the absence of external factors such as international intervention further hindered their realization of the importance and necessity of these issues. Media coverage was scarce, and most of the population, including women, did not have access to radios, televisions, or newspapers. As a result, women remained isolated from opportunities for change and development in their daily lives.

4. Chapter II: Case Study:

How Women's Education Centers Were Targeted in the Post-Taliban Regime?

(Bachelet, 2019) The right to education is a concept that is recognized around the world, but this right is frequently violated especially during times of unrest. Instances include attacks and threats against schools, instructors, and students as well as schools being used for military purposes. (Yousufi) After the US overthrew the Taliban in October 2001, it started launching insurgency operations against outside troops and the government in 2003 and immediately began to oppose women's education even more vehemently. In Pakistan, they created rules of conduct (Layha) that were authorized by their top councils (Shura) which govern Taliban policy. In accordance with the first Layha which was published in 2005, it was prohibited to work for any government-run educational institutions while promoting unofficial schooling utilizing Islamic Emirate texts in mosques. (Jackson, 2021) Schools were first regarded as targets for attack because they were perceived as a representation of foreign occupation. (Alvi-Aziz, A progress report on women's education in post-Taliban Afghanistan 2008) Suicide attacks and school firebombings, particularly at girls' schools, were an obstacle to female education.

(Yousufi, 2021) Taliban assaults on female schools increased from 2005 until the middle of 2006 because of this judgment. 300 schools for boys and girls were shut down during this time due to a total of 204 physical assaults. In 2005, a mother of two girls described the way the Taliban were a threat to her village, "There was a letter posted on the community's mosque saying 'Girls going to school need to be careful about their safety. If we put acid on their faces or they are murdered, then the blame will be on the parents.'" (Yousufi, 2021). The town had to cease sending its daughters to school after receiving a second letter less than a month after they had disregarded the first one. Two of five girls who were attacked in the Kandahar region in November 2005 by having acid poured at their faces suffered significant damage. In addition,

two schoolgirls died and six more were injured in Logar province in 2007, because of unknown attackers who were thought to be Taliban supporters. (Jackson 2021) The 24th article of the 2006 Layha states that it is against the law to serve as an instructor as doing so promotes the rule of the unbelievers. The application process for studying at a mosque or other comparable institution with a teacher who has received religious training is for real Muslims. The Emirate's Mujahedin era must be represented in Curriculum.

(Jackson, 2021) To get teachers to quit working, threats to them were promoted during the 2006 Layha. According to the regulation, instructors would not cease teaching had to be "provided a warning" and then beaten or murdered if they persisted. A 2007 statistic reports of about one death per day among students and teachers and in 2008, terrorism forced the closure of approximately 50% of all southern schools. Numerous other actors threatened or assaulted schools (especially girls' schools), and not all assaults have been reported by or could be attributed to the Taliban. However, it is reasonable to presume that its members were in fact the ones behind them. (Yousufi 2021) Up until the end of 2009, the Taliban actively opposed girls' education by leaving nighttime "night letters," or warnings, on people's doors of their homes or mosques, urging them to cease offering their daughters to school. Those who disobeyed these messages were burned with acid, killed, or gravely wounded.

Furthermore (Jackson, 2021), in the early 2010s, the Taliban revised the 2006 Layha, prohibiting girls from attending school, but at the same time, it publicly instructed fighters to cease their violent attacks. This marked a significant shift in the Taliban's public relations and communication strategies. It began promoting a more tolerant stance on women's rights through policy changes and media interviews. However, despite these apparent changes, the level of violence against girls' education remained high in 2011 with 440 schools being attacked compared to 500 in 2010. It is important to note that not all these attacks were solely attributed to the Taliban. In 2012, the Ministry of Education reported that over 500 schools, primarily girls' schools, were closed, largely due to the Taliban's actions. However, a Taliban representative in Wardak province denied their involvement in physical attacks on educational facilities but warned of potential attacks on girls and teachers who did not comply with the conditions for women's education. These statements, along with other interviews, appeared to be part of a propaganda campaign aimed at presenting a more lenient Taliban policy.

(Yousufi, 2021) The following are the main clauses of the Layha that continue to direct the Taliban's position on women's rights to education: 1) Women should only be instructed by female instructors and are required to wear Islamic head coverings in educational institutions. 2) The Taliban has stipulated that any topics that are opposed to jihad and "women's role in society" shall be restricted. 3) Islamic topics including the Arabic language, Fiqh, Aqaid, Hadiths, and the Holy Quran must be the main emphasis of lessons. 4) Following two alerts, girls who enter co-educational schools shall be slaughtered and following two alerts, instructors who discuss the equal rights of men and women shall be executed.

(Insurgent Abuses Against Afghan Civilians, 2008) Under guiding principles such as these, insurgents have assaulted schools, instructors, and students with the goal of completely dismantling Afghanistan's educational system. Various attacks have been documented through UNICEF, including one that occurred on 9 July, 2007, when two rockets launched by militants targeted a primary school in the Kunar region, killing one child and wounding three others. In the province of Ghor, a school was set on fire that same night. Furthermore, a suicide bomber targeted a bazaar in the province of Uruzgan that was packed with students.

(Bachelet, 2019) Numerous occurrences that had an impact on education in Afghanistan in 2018 were documented by United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), notably around election time. The Taliban attacked schools that were employed as polling stations, resulting in deaths, property damage, and disruptions to instruction. Schools sustained damage even though the authorities called off classes to protect children from harm. Additionally, UNAMA drew attention to Daesh/ISKP's intensifying strikes which were aimed at schools, (particularly those for females) in eastern Afghanistan, killing civilians and obstructing education.

(Bachelet, 2019) Furthermore, the Taliban threatened education by shutting, destroying, or attacking schools in retaliation for military operations or official acts. For instance, Takhar province's schools were closed while Logar and Kunduz provinces' Kunduz schools were attacked during combined military operations. Additionally, in Ghazni province, the Taliban kidnapped educators. Threats against girls' schools in several provinces were reported by UNAMA, resulting in the suspension of courses for female instructors and pupils as well as attacks on high schools that included burning and explosive detonations. In general, these assaults

and threats greatly impeded Afghan education, especially for girls, leading to class cancellations and restricted availability of education in many places.

(Bachelet, 2019) With just two pages devoted to female education, the Taliban's educational strategy is unclear. The topic of one article is Islamic education for young girls in varied contexts whereas the prerequisites for the second article's discussion of women's education are uncertain and based on both Islamic principles and Taliban viewpoints. The Taliban must maintain control and uphold Islamic standards with demands for gender segregation, separate facilities, female teachers, covert travel, and wearing the hijab. Primary education for females is part of the Taliban and UNICEF deal, but implementation specifics are unclear. The Afghan government and the Taliban have quite different approaches to female education since the Afghan constitution recognizes education as a fundamental right for all people, in contrast to the Taliban's exclusive concentration on boys and young men and their inclusion of allowances for girls' education depending on social request.

(Bachelet, 2019) According to Article 95, the Taliban's strategy is now restricted to overseeing and managing institutions. However, as stated in Article 97, the Islamic Emirate intends to take further measures to fund and supervise universities after it has expanded and the proper conditions have been established. However, if circumstances and funds permit, the Taliban's education policy commits to establishing and running higher education institutions, mostly focused on religious themes.

(Akseer, et al. 2019) In 2019, the Taliban escalated its attacks on females' educational institutions. Between 1 January and 31 December, UNAMA documented 70 incidents that hindered education in Afghanistan, including attacks on schools, harm to education personnel, and damage to facilities. This resulted in the death of four education personnel, injuries to four others, and the loss of nine students' lives with 29 more injured. Additionally, 52 education personnel were abducted. Most of these incidents occurred in the eastern and central regions, with 18 incidents each.

(Bachelet, 2019) UNAMA also recorded 29 deliberate attacks on education by anti-government elements, such as burnings of schools, kidnappings of teachers, and direct assaults on students. Girls' schools were disproportionately affected, leading to parents being hesitant to send their daughters to school due to the violence. Furthermore, pro-government forces caused damage

to education facilities in 11 incidents, including airstrikes on a school. Election-related violence damaged schools in 21 incidents, impacting children's access to education.

(Osman, 2016) In addition, there were several strikes at both public and private campuses, including the American University of Afghanistan in Kabul (AUAF). On many levels, the attack on AUAF on August 24, 2016, was unusual. It was the first time a "complex attack" which is usually carried out against well-known and heavily defended targets has been directed at a school. Furthermore, it took place in the wake of an ideological campaign by Taliban movement groups that had demonized the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) as a center for hostile "Western" initiatives. Despite this, no group—not even the Taliban—has formally claimed responsibility for the event, leaving a great deal of confusion about it. The perpetrators of the act, according to eyewitnesses, did not appear to be targeting any particular people, offices, or specific buildings. Instead, they went for schools where pupils were trying to cover up or form barriers. For the first one to two hours of the assault, the gunmen randomly fired at the students. The terrorists appeared prepared to inflict as much damage as they could until Afghan commando troops joined the campus guards to repel them. They targeted the university as a whole and all those who were there.

(Osman, 2016) The assault on the institution and its students made it plain that the attackers intended to stop the AUAF's operations by seriously harming its members. This claim is supported by two facts. First off, the attack took place during a busy time at the institution. Second, the attack was a well-planned operation involving a vehicle bomb, maybe a suicide bomber, and attackers using hand grenades and small guns. These factors point to a planned, well-executed attack on the university to maximize the damage done. According to The Wall Street Journal, the university is in high danger of assault because of its association with foreigners, which has made it a target for Taliban insurgents. Whether specific threats existed prior to the incident is yet unknown. The incident has not yet been formally claimed by any organization.

(Osman, 2016) However, the Taliban is suspected by certain media outlets abroad and Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) connections with Afghan officials. The attack displayed the recognizable signs of a complicated strike and that kind of attack has been characteristic of the Taliban's method of operation, making the movement the leading suspect. No other group has

demonstrated the ability to carry out such an assault in Kabul. Not every strike is acknowledged by the Taliban. Its official response to attacks differs ranging from brash admissions of guilt to no response at all to denial to even criticism. The sort of conduct depends on several variables, namely how the attack would affect the Taliban's standing among the general populace, the Taliban supporter foundation, and across the entire political range.

(Cedoca, 2021) Kabul University was attacked on November 2, 2020, the most serious in terms of civilian deaths. Armed gunmen held some student's captive throughout the event as they attacked students and instructors. The attack effectively put an end to Afghan and US armed troops working together. The attack claimed at least 32 civilians and wounded many people. Although Afghan government officials blamed the Taliban for the attack, the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) claimed credit for it. The suspected "mastermind" of the attack was captured by the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) in the middle of November 2020. This person had been a previous university student who had been enlisted by the Taliban-affiliated Haqqani Network.

(Adkins, 2016) Due to the continuous fear of violence, many students - especially girls - perceive that going to school is too unsafe which has led to a substantial dropout rate. All students are concerned about security although assaults on girls' schools have been disproportionately high (40%) compared to 32% and 28% of attacks on mixed-gender schools and boys' schools, respectively. The gender prejudice inherently present in these attacks is further highlighted by the stark gap between the number of girls' schools and boys' schools in the nation. 17-year-old Tahira has trouble putting her suffering into words. Struggling to stop her tears, she says, "I lost my best friend in the bombing and the Taliban doesn't let me go to school. We are both dead. She is buried, but not me." (Faizi 2022).

5. Chapter III: Women's Rights under the Second Taliban Regime

5.1. Second Taliban Regime

According to, (Euractiv,2022) From its early leadership (1996 - 2001) to today, the Taliban's views on women's rights have been fundamental to its worldview and vision for society. Gender Alert has discovered that the Taliban's stance on women's rights has not materially altered, drawing on secondary data and observations from UN Women travels throughout regions

in 2022. The extreme version of Islam practiced has ignored worldwide protests and increased the limitations on all phases of women's lives despite pledging a milder regime when the US relinquished control in 202.

(UN Women, 2021) In addition to having limited access to education, humanitarian aid, work, justice, and healthcare, women are routinely barred from public and political life. In other words, women's and girls' opportunities and lifestyles are limited to the household (WOMEN 2022). According to Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in Afghanistan, the Taliban has destroyed many Departments of Women's Affairs by seizing their offices, equipment, and critical documents while also posing a threat to its staff. Women's civil society organizations have been charged with disseminating derogatory information about Islam and engaging in obscene behavior. Because Taliban forces were allegedly "not trained to deal with women," women have occasionally been told to stay inside their homes for their own safety.

(UN Women, 2022) These abrupt changes to women's rights have significant short- and long-term effects. According to reports, there has been an increase in the number of female suicides. Death rates, especially maternal mortality, are predicted to climb and the overall economic losses brought on by the decline in women's work are anticipated to be up to USD \$1 billion (5% of GDP). Requirements for gender segregation paired with the dearth of educated women will have far-reaching effects, excluding women from public life, services, and education.

(Asia Report, 2023) As soon as the Taliban took back control, the issue of women's rights became divisive among the group's top commanders. The movement quickly declared the reopening of schools, not girls' secondary classes, following the selection of a government in September 2021. If it had followed through on such pledges, it would have been a significant concession from Taliban supporters who still harbor nostalgia for the old government in the 1990s when females' education typically ended after the sixth grade.

Furthermore, (Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2022) on 7 May 2022, The Taliban ordered that all Afghan females must strictly follow the dress code instruction in which everything from head to toe is covered and only the eyes are visible.

(Gender Alert, 2022) In September 2021 and May 2022, respectively, the Ministry for Women's Affairs (MoWA) and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

(AIHRC) were disbanded, deactivating the nation's systems for promoting gender equality and women's rights. The de facto Ministry for Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (MPVPV), entrusted with upholding the decrees made to enforce adherence to the Taliban's interpretation of Islamic law, was restored. In being re-established in the former MoWA headquarters in Kabul and Departments of Women's Affairs offices around the nation, the message enforcing female subjugation became brutally clear. Since the Taliban retook power, women's civil society has been substantially damaged. Over the past year, several women's rights and women-led civil society organizations have folded. Following the fall of Kabul, the most prominent women's rights leaders from all areas of life left the nation, leaving a gap in leadership.

(General Country of Origin Information Report Afghanistan, 2022) Women's civil societies have decreased due to the Taliban's fear strategies, including taking the Women for Women's office and closing almost all shelters for female victims of abuse. Many female activists have gone into hiding due to fear of being punished.

According to (Gender Alert, 2022) reports, the Taliban has imposed several regulations intended to curtail media freedoms and completely exclude women from public broadcasting, including their faces, opinions, and needs. On May 21, 2022, a countrywide directive aimed at female journalists mandated that they conceal their faces when speaking on camera. About 43% of media outlets had shut down by the beginning of December 2021 and 84% of female journalists and media employees (compared to just 52% of males in the industry) had left their jobs due to harassment, assault, and censorship. Women's rights and gender equality are being methodically destroyed.

(Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2022) The Taliban has enforced updated restrictions on TV anchors, ordering that men and women cannot present programs together and only speakers who get approval from the Taliban can participate and appear on TV and in political debates. Media sources in Afghanistan confirmed that this new limitation has been verbally delivered by the MPVPV to TV hosts and media authorities. Other proclamations are that men and women cannot watch TV jointly, female TV cannot speak with men, women must wear all-black attire in TV workplaces, and men and women must sit in separate places in the media offices.

(Siddique, 2022) Access to healthcare for female citizens in Afghanistan got due to the diminishing industry; in December 2021, around 2,300 clinics closed. The hospitals which continue functioning are not able to provide proper care facilities. Also, mothers and children experience starvation. From the start of September 2021, four children have been passing away due to starvation and disease in Kabul Children's Hospital. The Taliban also announced that Afghan women are not allowed to solo travel if the distance is more than 72km and they must be escorted by a close male family associate. Drivers are to not give a ride to a woman who does not follow the dress code. Most of the working women are now forced to stay at home and secondary schools are closed and open only for male students and male teachers. The Taliban stated that these limitations are temporary and that they took such actions only to ensure and guarantee the safety and security of females in the educational and work environment.

(BBC News, 2021) At the same time, there is news about an increased number of forced and child marriages under the current Taliban regime according to Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty. Families fear forced marriages of their young daughters with Taliban members and for this reason, they believe that it is better to secure a husband for them rather than waiting for a forced Taliban marriage to occur.

(Country Report on Human Rights Practice, 2022) Around 500 previous government bureaucrats and military members were reportedly either killed or missing within the first six months of the takeover of Afghanistan. The Taliban imprisoned female activists and their families in Kabul due to taking part in the demonstrations. Tamana Zaryab Paryani and Parwana Ibrahimkhel were taken into custody and weeks later, Zahra Mohammadi and Murssal Ayar announced missing. According to the UNAMA, all these four activists got released in the middle of February, but the Taliban did not take responsibility and stated that they did not capture them. The Taliban additionally captured three female human rights advocates, Zarifa Yaqoubi, Farhar Popalzai, and Humaira Yusuf. Khaama Press, a local news source, reported in December that Yaqoubi had been released, but Popalzai and Yusuf were not mentioned.

5.2. Women's Right to Education

(Kaci, 2015) According to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), education is a right for everyone. A minimum of the primary and secondary levels of education must be free. It is also required that children complete elementary school. All people

should have equal access to higher education based on merit and technical and professional education should be made widely available.

(United Nations,1967) Furthermore, based on Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, education must be focused on fostering the full expression of human individuality. This results in a feeling that a person has an inherent worth and fosters respect for basic liberties and rights.

(The World Conference on Human Rights, 1993) Article 10 of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women orders "states parties to eliminate discrimination against women in education, in respect of access to studies at the pre-school, general, technical, professional, higher, technical, and vocational training levels." (The World Conference on Human Rights 1993). The same curriculum, tests, competent teaching personnel, facilities, and high-quality equipment should be made available to both men and women in both urban and rural areas (The World Conference on Human Rights,1993).

(Asia Report, 2023) notes that beginning with the early days of the Taliban takeover, girls and women began losing their liberties. Women's rights were a hot topic among the Taliban leadership as soon as it regained control of the country. The movement declared the reopening of schools shortly after choosing a cabinet in September 2021. Male and female elementary schools resumed operations around the end of August 2021, not long after the Taliban took control. Co-education was not allowed. However, in September 2021, girls above 12 were prohibited from attending school and at Kabul University, women were not allowed to enroll or teach (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, 2023). A new basic education strategy was presented by the Taliban's Ministry of Education in February 2022. In grades one through grade six, boys and girls were taught in separate classrooms, led by male teachers for the boys and female teachers for the girls, at various times (Hasan, 2022). In October 2022 to keep female students from joining in protests, dormitories at universities were sealed. Numerous female students were dismissed from primary schools because they appeared to be "too old" to enroll. On the basis that it is beneficial for females, women were not allowed to major in some specific departments such as journalism, veterinary medicine, mining, civil engineering, or agriculture. Male faculty members and students were also required to sign a statement pledging to uphold Sharia law at educational institutions. In September 2022, it became forbidden for female students to record

movies or take pictures on college campuses. (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, 2023).

(COI sector of EUAA, 2022) The Taliban stated that secondary education for males (grades six and beyond) would begin again in the middle of September 2021, but this declaration made no comment on females access to secondary education. Some publications saw this as a "de facto ban" on females pursuing secondary school. It was not, however, administered consistently all throughout the nation. Numerous provinces, including Balkh, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Samangan and Uruzgan, Zabul, Herat, Sar-e Pul, Ghazni, and Faryab, have reported exceptions. Several secondary schools for females were permitted to continue operating in certain areas, either with the help of local Taliban officials or due to intense community pressure from parents and teachers.

(COI sector of EUAA, 2022) The Taliban's Ministry of Education stated in mid-November 2021 that female students in grades 6 through 12 would not need to complete tests to graduate. Girl's grades 6 through 12 would also be exempt from exams. The Taliban's foreign minister told the Associated Press in mid-December 2021 that girls were enrolled in secondary education in 10 regions but did not say which ones.

(Gannon, 2022) Afghanistan continues to be the only country in the world where girls are prohibited from attending school, despite Taliban assertions that these limitations are just temporary and that their goal is to establish the ideal Islamic environment for girls to learn (Glinski,2022). During an interview with AP News on 15 January 2022, Taliban representative Zabiullah Mujahid, who also serves as the group's deputy minister of culture and information, stated that Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers aim to open all schools for girls across the nation after 21 March 2022 and that getting girls and women to go to school "is a question of capacity," He added that the biggest challenge was locating or establishing enough rooms, or residences, where females may remain while attending school since girls and boys must be entirely separated. It was necessary in his opinion to have separate school buildings in densely populated regions in addition to separate classrooms for boys and girls (Gannon,2022). He emphasized that "we are not against education." (Gannon, 2022).

Despite community pressure leading to reopening certain girls' senior schools in around nine regions, the Taliban implemented a de facto ban on girls' secondary education after seizing

control. After the Taliban broke their promise to reopen all schools in March, many of these schools were forced to close (Fetrat e Barr 2022). Girls' secondary and high schools in Afghanistan were shut down by the Islamic Emirate and female students in grades 7 through 12 in Herat who were permitted to attend classes were instructed to stay at home. (Tolo News 2022) On the first and second days of the school year, female students in grades 6 and up were the only ones who could attend class. However, on day three, the doors to the schools were closed to them.

Human Rights Watch discovered that several girls' schools, particularly in Balkh province, are still functioning despite the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's (IEA) decision to halt schooling for teenage females. But on the other hand, severe clothing regulations are in place, and if they don't follow the rules, they risk schools being shut down. One school in Balkh was shut down for many days after several students were seen with their faces exposed (Ariana News,2022). One of the students stated that she and her classmates are nevertheless committed to learning: "All the girls in my school believe the Taliban (IEA) authorities want to make it so harsh and strict on us that we give up on education on our own." (Ariana News, 2022).

(Ariana News, 2022) One of the teachers stated that they have informants who can record and report them. Without any debate, they dismiss instructors and expel children who violate their rigorous hijab policies.

The Taliban initially asserted that women would play a significant part in society and that their government would be "inclusive" even though there were still questions about whether these claims would be realized in practice or not. In early September 2021, the Taliban ordered that the female and male classrooms at Kabul University must be separated (Thomas 2021), that the number of female students be less than 15, and the class must be isolated with a thin gray curtain (Afghanistan Targeting of Individuals 2022). Female teachers were to teach female students and if there were not enough, good-character elderly male teachers could be hired instead. (Afghanistan Targeting of Individuals 2022) On 6 September 2021, the private universities were opened for both males and females who respected the law, but governmental universities stayed closed. Taliban authorities stated that the reasons behind closing the governmental universities were budgetary limitations and a lack of gender-specific classrooms and secure transportation options for female students.

(Afghanistan Targeting of Individuals, 2022) 40 public universities were to soon reopen to both male and female students based on an announcement made by the Taliban Ministry of Education in mid-January 2022. Shortly after, some universities reopened in warm-weather areas and others in southern areas followed a few weeks later. However, in Panjshir province, the universities have remained closed. Due to the Taliban taking over the country, it has been noted that there is a dearth of female university professors caused by a large exodus of educated professionals. At the same time, the female students from the countryside who chose to take part and attend the classes in Kabul suggested a shortage of suitable housing. On 15 June 2022, Taliban raids on Takhar University's girls' residences resulted in 30 female students being detained for leaving the campus without first obtaining consent.

(Afghanistan Targeting of Individuals, 2022) A fresh gender-separated calendar for college students was released by the Taliban Department of Higher Education at the end of April 2022 with distinct weekdays designated for male and female students (Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday).

(Afghanistan Human Rights Report, 2022) Additionally, regardless of whether female students were permitted to participate in universities, their failure to acquire secondary school would stop them from advancing to the college level, as stated by USAID in SIGAR's January 2022 Quarterly Report. In addition, it has been claimed that many female students have left university owing to financial strains considering the continuing economic downturn. Due to the mahram demand, female students who were first permitted to enroll at universities encountered extra constraints. They said that the rule drove their household members to prohibit them from pursuing their studies far away from their residences. To make the distance limitation easier for their family, the students said they wished to move to institutions that were nearer to home.

(United Nations,2022) On 21 December 2022, women were barred from enrolling in any higher education program, including universities and colleges. Hundreds of young women were prevented by armed guards from accessing university sites in Afghanistan. 19-year-old Wajiha Kazimi, who survived an attack on a capital city school maintains that the progression of women is a threat to the Taliban and its members are afraid of females raising educated in society. The United Nations High Commissioner states that it is a shocking and terrible disappointment to Afghan women's and girls' rights - as well as a terribly unfortunate obstacle for the whole nation -

that the Taliban authorities in Afghanistan have decided to forbid women from enrolling in universities.

5.3. Women's Right to Employment

According to Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work, and to protection against unemployment." (Kaci,2015, p.48) It also proclaims, "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work." (Kaci,2015, p.48).

(The World Conference on Human Rights,1993) Similarly, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women demands that all necessary steps be taken by state parties to end discrimination against women in the workplace. In addition to having the same employment prospects as males, women must also have the freedom to choose their professions and jobs, job stability, benefits, and access to apprenticeships and vocational training and retraining. To guarantee that women have the right to equal pay, inclusive advantages, equal consideration for labour of equal worth, and equality of treatment in the evaluation of the equality of work, actions must be made.

(Saragih, Women Journalist in the Middle of Taliban Power, 2021) Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban's spokesperson, promised that women would have access to higher education and the workforce under its regime, the pledges proved to be only temporary. Furthermore, the Taliban assured the people that it was working to make Afghanistan a peaceful land unconnected to terrorism and that it would protect women's rights to life. This was based on the notion that women are an integral component of Afghan society and are entitled to all their rights within the confines of Islamic law. Accordingly, the transfer of power that the Taliban oversaw is now resulting in societal changes in the way of life in Afghanistan. One example of these changes is the diminishing rights of women to work and pursue higher education.

(Mackintosh, 2021) The Taliban marginalized women from employment since their early takeover of the country. It made no official announcements on a unified policy for women's job opportunities, and it is still unclear what rights and job circumstances women will be able to access. A 20 year old university student named Muzhda claims that the Taliban simply wants women to remain at home. Its legislation prevented the employment of women and brought its

humanitarian values into question. This includes the requirement that men in the family come with women whenever they are working, thereby rendering their jobs challenging or occasionally impossible.

(Eslami & Safari, 2022) However, Mujahid claimed that the international community shouldn't be concerned about women's rights since they are entitled to employment within the parameters of Islam. In the Islamic Emirate, women often are denied many rights. As soon as the Islamic Emirate's cabinet was unveiled, no positions were reserved for women and one of the most significant ministries in the Islamic Emirate's government - the Ministry of Women - was disbanded. They were subjected to rights violations in Kabul using brutality, demonstrating the minimal role the Islamic Emirate's officials place on women.

(Sigar, 2022) The Taliban has not created a clear strategy or commitment since the takeover for women to engage in politics, society, or the economy in Afghanistan. In Afghan politics, women are neither welcome nor permitted to play a significant part. The Taliban appointed exclusively men to important administration positions at the national and provincial levels according to the March 2022 UN Human Rights Council report and created a "caretaker cabinet" on September 7, 2021. In addition to not including women, the government and cabinet mostly consist of Pashtun people which do not uphold the Taliban's supposed "representation of Afghanistan's diverse ethnic, religious, political, and geographic groups" (Sigar 2022). The Taliban ordered the female employees of Kabul's municipal administration not to report back to their jobs on October 21, 2021 and has not issued any more official statements approving the reinstatement of women in leadership roles in the administration.

(Afghanistan Country Focus, 2022) Approximately 250 female judges in Afghanistan are said to have expressed concern for their security, especially considering the Taliban's freeing of some of its detainees. On the twentieth of September in 2021, the International Association of Judges (IAJ) and International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) released an agreement in which they declared that members of the judiciary were at "extremely serious risk" and feared for their own security as well as the safety of their families. Because they are women, female judges were said to stand at "additional risk" since the Taliban does not believe that women are allowed to judge males. IAJ and IAWJ also stated that judges had their homes searched, received abusive texts, and were physically harassed in addition to having their bank accounts blocked. The

Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice announced media rules in November 2021, which forbade movies or television shows that were "in opposition to Islamic or Afghan principles" and urged the Afghan press to avoid airing "soap operas or series employing women actresses. The rule mandated also that female broadcasters cover their heads with a headscarf. Apparently, Taliban gunmen prevented female journalists from returning to their jobs.

(Nawabi & Andersen, 2022) People who were active in the human rights field have been targeted by the Taliban and home-to-home searches have been launched for them. People who were recruited to be employed by the old administration, the national defense and security services, members of the public sector, female activists, journalists, and reporters have all been the targets of executions, abductions, kidnappings, and abuse. The Taliban has implemented exceptionally harsh gender restrictions and justifies them by claiming that Islamic law and Afghan traditional norms justify these kinds of restrictions which this limitation includes restricting women to work outside the house.

(Kumar,2021) Furthermore, a journalist named Marzia has received several threats from rebels and fundamentalist organizations throughout her brief career as a journalist and TV host who disapproves of her work in the media as a female. Besides that, "Mariam," an athlete and a journalist, was on her way to work and received a phone call from an unknown number, stating, "We are coming for you." She says of the that afterwards, "I immediately hung up and put my phone on airplane mode." (Kumar, 2021) . Another female journalist from Afghanistan named "Fauzia" states, "Of course, there were challenges of being a journalist in Afghanistan; it was never easy. But I could deal with those because we had platforms and more importantly, we had the media to help us fight for our rights." (Kumar, 2021) Because of the threats that she received, Fauzia is presently in hiding. (Kumar, 2021)

(Eslami & Safari, 2022) The Pashtunwali tradition and the value of honor are said to be the foundations of the Taliban's limitations on women. Even the previous US envoy for peace to Afghanistan, Zalmi Khalilzad, claimed that the Taliban's treatment of women was influenced by Pashtunwali tradition. In its opinion, preventing women and girls from attending any public events is the greatest way to preserve their honor. As a result, it penalizes women who breach the law and forbids them from participating in many different public activities including employment in the absence of a mahram.

(Khullar,2022) In a September 2021 conversation with Reuters, a top Taliban official expressed an even more strident stance on the subject and said that women shouldn't be working with males. This was shortly after the Taliban came to power. The interim mayor of Kabul then issued another edict ordering female workers of the local administration to remain at home. Therefore, the current Taliban administration solely has male authorities, despite women making up more than 27% of the employees in the former civilian government.

(B.N & Chowdhury, 2022) Due to the Taliban's strong limitations on women's freedom of movement and engagement in public life, families have begun to stay out of public life which has caused a sharp fall in women's employment. In especially in houses headed by women, the necessity of a mahram has made it harder for females to leave for employment. Nearly all households with a woman as the main member of the family experienced a shortage of food in the month of January 2022. In contrast to male-headed family units which used sixty-two percent of the severe strategies for coping, 85% of women in these households stated lending food and restricting their own utilization.

(UN Women, 2021) According to United Nations Women (UNW) The majority of sectors have seen job losses, but women in certain professions - like the media and civic society - are experiencing more problems because of the Taliban's views on women's freedom to seek employment.

(The World Conference on Human Rights, 1993) Article 8 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women affirms that women must have an equal chance of serving their governments and taking part in the activities of international organizations including the UN and its affiliated organizations, specialized departments, funds, and programs. (UN Women,2023) But since the Taliban took control of Kabul in August 2021, widespread violations of women's basic rights have occurred.

(General Assembly Security,2023) On December 24, 2022, the Taliban released a letter prohibiting women from working in both foreign and domestic nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). It claimed that specific standards, including dress restrictions, were broken in many of them. Moreover, the Taliban threatened to suspend the licenses of any NGOs who violated the rules.

(Leclerc & Shreeves, 2023) The Taliban then expanded the prohibition to include Afghan women who were employed by the country's UN Mission in early April 2023. Prior to the prohibition, 50 to 55% of the personnel at national NGOs and 30 to 45% of the workforce at international NGOs were female. Notwithstanding conflicting views among the Taliban as well as outside forces, a tenuous exemption for women employed by NGOs in the healthcare and educational fields was reached within a short period of time. But even after several debates among the UN and Taliban administration, women were still not allowed to participate in different NGO operations.

(Women's Refugee Commission, 2022) There are 28.3 million Afghans in need of humanitarian aid, notably the 3.4 million people who have been displaced due to violence, and women associated with NGOs have been on the front lines giving this support. Up to one-third of the staff in humanitarian organizations are women. They are providing the services such as food, housing, and medical care, that frequently make the distinction between life and death at a time when two-thirds of the whole country is in desperate need of assistance. Along with offering services for gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health, female employees of NGOs also assist in addressing the requirements of Afghan females in a way that is culturally acceptable. The whole Afghan population would be denied access to critically needed humanitarian aid if women were prohibited from working for NGOs.

(General Assembly Security Council, 2023) According to the UN-Women survey, 94% of 127 national organizations led by women that work in the civil society sector have either completely or partially suspended operations since the decision to forbid women from working for NGOs. The humanitarian country team keeps a close eye on the effects of the embargo on certain industries. Accessing women in need has been getting harder, especially when it comes to monitoring and assessing humanitarian needs. (Afghanistan, 2023) On top of this, the prohibition on female NGO personnel has led over 30% of child protection NGOs to suspend operations, UNICEF and partners reached 627,500 children and caregivers with preventative child protection services and responses to child safety complaints.

(Umbrella of Afghan Women Leaders, 2023) According to the Taliban, these regulations regarding women's employment are necessary for religious observance. On 13 January 2023 this assertion was refuted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) which urged "the de

facto Afghan authorities to allow women and girls to exercise their rights and contribute to the social and economic development of the Afghan society in accordance with the rights and remit of women and girls," (Umbrella of Afghan Women Leaders 2023). Mujahid, the de facto spokesperson, assured media representatives on December 30 that the de facto government will decide on women's labour involvement based on "necessity." Later, a few restricted exceptions were allowed in the fields of primary schooling and medical care (Umbrella of Afghan Women Leaders 2023).

(Umbrella of Afghan Leaders, 2023) Moreover, between 16 November and 5 February, 494 cases that involve intervention in the carrying out of humanitarian work were recorded, up from 153 at the same time last year. In contrast to the 522 occurrences reported in 2021, only 30 attacks on medical staff and 362 episodes of violence and threats against humanitarian workers, property, and institutions were registered in 2022. In addition, 407 occurrences involving gender that were ascribed to the de facto authorities were noted, including 57 instances of limitations on the mobility of women aid workers and 39 acts of frightening or danger towards women.

(Sigar, 2022) According to a January 2022 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) analysis, women made up over 20% of Afghanistan's employment before the Taliban took power. As a result, limits on women's working might "immediately cost the Afghan economy \$1 billion," or an overall decrease in GDP of 5%. (Sigar, 2022)

(Afghanistan, 2023) According to UNICEF, in the most recent poll, 81% of firms reported that their female employees are unable to attend work (up from 65% in the previous study).

6. Chapter IV: What Can Be Done to Prevent What Happened After 1996?

(Efsas article,2022) After the re-taking of Afghanistan, there was a glimmer of optimism that the Taliban would repeal the draconian educational limitations it had once enforced since it proclaimed that young women and girls would be allowed to continue their education. But a year after it came to power, interest in the Afghan crisis has decreased globally, just like the Taliban's campaign promises. Afghanistan sits alone as the only nation in the world where women and girls are excluded from the benefit of education, as noted in an open letter by Nobel Peace Prize

laureate Malala Yousafzai in September 2021. What steps must be made now that the Taliban has gained power for the second time in order to prevent a repeat of the events that occurred after 1996? A comprehensive strategy is needed to address the complicated and multifaceted circumstances surrounding the violation of Afghan women's human rights. Two tactics that will be discussed in detail are international assistance and action taken by Afghan women inside the country.

6.1. International Intervention

According to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action which was approved by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna on June 25, 1993, ‘‘The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social, and cultural life, at the national, regional, and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community.’’ (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993, p.4). Beginning in the early 1900s, several foreign nations have entered Afghanistan, most notably the Soviet Union during the Cold War and the US after the 9/11 attacks (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, 1993).

(U.S Policy Advocates for Afghan Women and Girls Working Group,2022) Although the US and the international community have made several pledges to protect Afghan women's and girls' rights, their activities after the Taliban's takeover have had little impact. The US has a considerable capacity to affect how the Taliban mistreat women and girls and deal with dire humanitarian and human rights situations. Some ways through in the US could take action to prevent women’s human rights violations in Afghanistan. The urgency of changing the laws that restrict such rights should be emphasized in all discussions or contacts with the Taliban, making it a requirement for official recognition. In addition, the US needs to use its position in the UN Human Rights Council to push for the creation of a system that would assure responsibility for crimes against women and girls as well as for rights violations.

(U.S Policy Advocates for Afghan Women and Girls Working Group,2022) Also, to advance women's rights in Afghanistan requires diplomatic engagement. This must incorporate the following components: First, they should meet specified standards for women's rights and establish a quota for Afghan women's representation, including those from civil society, with full

and equal participation in Taliban delegations. Meaningful diplomatic engagement requires this to be present. Second, the issue of women's rights and gender equality must be made a priority in all diplomatic interactions with the Taliban. Third, Taliban officials who have clearly committed human rights violations should be reprimanded by the international community. These actions should be kept up until laws that violate the rights of women and girls are repealed.

(U.S Policy Advocates for Afghan Women and Girls Working Group,2022) If Afghan women's rights groups and Afghan women leaders are given the power that they need, particularly from outside sources they could be able to perform useful services such as utilizing diplomatic forums to reestablish women's freedom of movement and employment, enabling women to engage in economic activity and earn a living, promoting creative projects to improve Afghan women's job prospects and standard of living, and operating places of refuge for victims of gender-based violence. Therefore, direct subsidies should be established for Afghan women's groups to enable them to carry on with their work without interference from the Taliban. Resuming earlier financed projects that were halted is essential, especially with initiatives that supported Afghan women's and girls' rights and groups that provided aid to Afghan females and collaborated with reputable international bodies, women's funds, and female Afghan leaders in order to promote peace and development.

(Malala Fund,2022) The international community must act right away to support Afghan girls' rights to education including improving the educational system in the country and upholding the demand for females' education. Afghanistan's state-funded schools have been severely hampered in their capacity to function and provide education, because of the economic crisis and political changes. Teachers have also struggled because of inconsistent salaries. Parents with little resources are forced to pull their daughters out of school. A long-term solution is required and the international community must start allocating significant resources, supporting initiatives for secondary educators, and providing direct support to teenage girls. Monitoring and enhancing the educational system requires cooperation with teachers' unions and civil society groups. For Afghanistan to resume essential imports and sustain educational resources, measures to improve the country's economic situation and replenish foreign reserves are essential.

(Malala Fund,2022) It is compulsory to make sure females can go to school without fear. Girls' safety was a worry for families long before the Taliban took control, discouraging their

enrollment in secondary education. Taking advantage of these worries, the Taliban said it needed to postpone the reopening of secondary schools for girls to provide more time to assure safety. The Taliban's policies, however, have made it more threatening for women and girls to pursue an education. The lack of female educators has gotten worse and parents are less likely to send their daughters to public schools, because of restrictions on female instructors and the compelled enrollment of females in madrassahs. Violence, including kidnapping, incarceration, and killing of activists who oppose the Taliban, has been used in response to nationwide demonstrations calling for the restoration of women's and girls' rights. The worries of parents regarding the safety of girls in and around schools must be addressed. The international community should collaborate with regional groups, civil society organizations, and women's rights organizations to assist women's and girls' safety, provide Afghan education advocates resources, and closely monitor girls' safety through U.N. Human Rights institutions. Priority should be given to building new schools for girls and renovating secondary schools for females, including providing the required amenities and female instructors in sufficient numbers.

Furthermore, it is crucial to defend against reductions in the standard of education. With the assistance of donors, Afghanistan has made considerable expenditures over the past 20 years to raise educational standards and guarantee that students have access to a wide range of courses. The Taliban government will probably undo this advancement by altering the curricula in a way that lowers the standard of education for girls. There have already been rumors of ad hoc actions taken by the de facto authorities, such as banning the teaching of subjects like life skills, civic education, sports, and art in favor of more religious material. It is believed that attempts have been made to sway teaching and learning through the recruitment of clerics to important posts in the Ministry of Education and the replacement of female instructors with Taliban supporters. Although opinions on women's literacy vary, the Taliban has occasionally ordered the termination of women's literacy initiatives.

(Malala Fund,2022) The lack of participation by teachers' unions and representatives of civil society in decision-making processes, as well as the exclusion of women from the civil service, further erodes public support for improving girls' access to high-quality education. To stop this regression, the international community must hold the Taliban accountable for creating inclusive and research-based school curricula, ensure that the UNAMA and UN Special Rapporteur mandates are closely followed, and support the AESTF in its efforts to implement the

current curriculum, train teachers, and provide opportunities for students to catch up on missed learning. It is also important to make sure that girls and women are fully involved in discussions on political agreements. The above-mentioned steps are essential for successfully addressing Afghanistan's issue in education for females.

(Malala Fund,2022) However, finding a long-term solution to the nation's political predicament, including the development of a representative and inclusive government, is necessary for Afghan women and girls to realize their rights. Without such a solution, the possibility of a resurgence of civil conflict puts the education and prospects of girls in grave danger. The de facto cabinet, which presently lacks women in government rank or high positions, does not meet the UN's emphasis on the need for an inclusive administration that reflects the variety of the Afghan people. By adopting a procedure to create political structures in Afghanistan that emphasize the involvement and needs of women and girls, the international community can address this. The right to 12 years of free, secure, and high-quality secondary education must be enforced as well as a non-negotiable requirement for acknowledging any new regime in Afghanistan.

6.2. Afghan Women's Protests

Article 21 of The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states, “The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law, and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.” (General Assembly resolution, 1966).

(Maria, 2022) With this in mind, another useful tactic to eradicate the violation of women’s human rights is female demonstrations. Protests by Afghan women may be a powerful tool for spreading awareness, amplifying their voices, and highlighting the significance of defending women's rights. In addition to alerting the world community to the need for assistance and involvement, public demonstrations can exert pressure on the Taliban and other relevant players to respect and defend women's rights. Afghan women's protests might help prevent the Taliban from violating women's rights as they have in the past. Even if their protests do not immediately have a favorable outcome, they could in the long run. Using social media platforms

like their own cell phones to record the happenings during the demonstration and inform the world about it, these protests by women will aid the international community in learning about the abuses Afghan women endure under the Taliban dictatorship. Many Afghan women have rebelled against the Taliban's rule and have been at the forefront of the struggle against Taliban rule in the face of growing limitations on their rights and despite dangers to their safety.

(Amnesty International 2023) Since the Taliban took control of the country, women have frequently overseen the nonviolent demonstrations that are routinely held throughout Afghanistan, notably in Kabul, Faizabad, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, and other cities.

(Amnesty International 2022) Afghan women quickly took to the streets to protest the Taliban's restrictions. On August 17, 2021, two days after the Taliban took control, some women came together in front of the presidential palace dressed in black abayas and hijabs. They urged the preservation of the gains made for women's rights over the past twenty years, particularly the right to political involvement, the right to an education, and the right to employment. In the few days that followed, several further demonstrations urged the Taliban to defend the rights of women and girls to employment and education.

(Abbasi 2021) This was done by waving banners and yelling pro-equal society anthems. (Gul 2021) On 28 December 2021, a group of Afghan females walked across the Kabul streets in the direction of the Taliban-enforced Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. They carried banners that said, "We are tired of discrimination" and "We are the voice of the hungry people." (Gul 2021).

(Gul 2021) According to Human Rights Watch, Arezo, a young Afghan girl who took to the streets when the Taliban declared that women would not be permitted to take important positions in the country's new administration stated, "We decided to protest to demand our basic rights: the right to education, to work, and political participation. We want the Taliban to know that they cannot eliminate us from society." (Abbasi 2021) "The Taliban have told women that they have no place in the new order," another protester said. "We told them that we want to continue working, but they say only female nurses and teachers are allowed to work. We are engineers and lawyers and we want to work in our professions, but they say we cannot and should stay at home instead." (Abbasi 2021).

(Abbasi 2021) In response to these protests, Taliban security forces resorted to violence. In Kabul, the women were stopped and at least ten of them were beaten. Among those beaten was Nargis. She said, “When I saw that they are badly beating one of the participants, I went to help, but the Taliban soldier hit me with a metal object and I fainted. All I remember is that there were two other women on the ground and they were still being beaten.” (Abbasi 2021). Four of the Taliban's fighters who attacked the protestors were imprisoned, according to Taliban authorities:

(George 2022) Besides from these acts, Ramzia Abdekhil and her companions created a group that they named the group "Powerful Women" to express their opposition and protest the Taliban takeover in 2021. In those first few days of September, they felt powerful. Abdekhil can still recall the torrent of WhatsApp messages she received from both friends and complete strangers: “Thank you, my sisters!”, “God bless you!”, “We can do this, and we won’t stop!” (George 2022) Emoticons of hearts, clapping hands, and the Afghan flag were used by the women as they wrote. With optimism and adrenaline flowing, they scheduled their first protest for 3 September. Taliban fighters dispersed the protest, but they soon came back together. Abdekhil remarks, “Afterwards we were just telling each other, look at how brave we are.” (George 2022). The majority of the young Afghan women in charge of demonstrations were inexperienced activists who feared losing their liberties under Taliban control. Women in Kabul lost their employment after the Taliban gained power and had to work in offices where only men were allowed. Utilizing social media at first to coordinate their protests, several organizations finally came together to establish "Consensus of the Women Protesters." By utilizing violence and detentions, the Taliban retaliated vehemently and to safeguard their identities and avoid capture, protesters used safety measures. Protests were suppressed in more conservative areas due to social shame, the threat of arrest, and reports of sexual assault. Participants began to dwindle with time, and it appeared that the world was unconcerned with their cause (George 2022).

(George 2022) The Taliban implemented repressive laws against women and girls, which fueled the movement's momentum, and their country's economy continued to deteriorate, yet the remaining Afghan demonstrators persevered in their cause. Millions of girls were prohibited from attending school in March and women were forced to wear full body coverings and were only permitted to travel with male guardians in May. On International Women's Day, Munisa Mubariz, a former employee of the Finance Ministry and activist, planned minor demonstrations, but the Taliban interfered right away. Mubariz was concerned about the impact of the

demonstrations since they were shorter and had fewer participants. She organized a protest that required full body covering in May and other women started planning indoor rallies out of fear for their safety. By making placards, taking photos, and posting them on social media, they were able to continue their activities. Some women refrained from taking part in public demonstrations out of fear of being humiliated and insulted by the Taliban who made remarks about them.

(Amnesty International 2023) In reaction to growing demonstrations, the Taliban Ministry of Interior said on 8 September 2021 that any rally would require special approval from the Taliban Ministry of Justice - a violation of international law guaranteeing the freedom of peaceful assembly. The measures taken by women to establish their rights were not stopped by these restrictions. Women's demonstrations in Kabul and the northern regions increased because of the limits placed on their freedom of movement in December 2021.

(Amnesty International 2023) Taliban leaders and soldiers violently suppressed these demonstrations with disproportionate force and engaged in other human rights abuses such as forcible disappearances of protestors, arbitrary detentions, and the outlawing of any demonstration whose slogans did not satisfy their mandates. The Taliban occasionally erected barricades to detain anyone traveling to these rallies. Regardless of these limitations, women reportedly went to considerable efforts to attempt to arrange them.

(First Channel News 2021) Tamna Siddiqui, one of the protestors, told RFE/RL that Taliban forces had used brutality to break up the demonstrators, injuring many women while they yelled, "Work, bread, and freedom." (First Channel News 2021).

(Amnesty International 2022) In addition to shooting tear gas canisters straight at protestors, activists claimed that they were assaulted throughout the demonstrations, sometimes with chains or the stocks of guns. At demonstrations, Taliban police threatened journalists and seized the phones and cameras of anybody they suspected of capturing the scene. Others were held captive and subjected to torture. More than 30 female demonstrators have been unjustly detained by or vanished under the Taliban by February 2022. Although certain demonstrations are still occurring, the number of protestors has decreased since 2022 and activists claim they are afraid to communicate with colleagues due to being concerned about endangering themselves. Instead, women turned to inventive inside protests or relied on social media.

(Abbasi 2021) The freedom of everyone to peacefully demonstrate is guaranteed by international human rights legislation and the Taliban is required to preserve that right. Governments that are concerned should demand that the Taliban defends peaceful assembly and speech rights.

(Barr & Fetrst, 2022) The use of needless or disproportionate force against demonstrators is forbidden under international law. Electrical weapons and chemical irritants should not be employed in cases of entirely passive defiance of authority figures, according to the UN's Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement. (George 2022) Abdekhil adds that if the world hears the voices of Afghan women, people would be compelled to act.

(George 2022) After Munisa Mubariz had to go into hiding during a rally in May, activist organizations turned to more intimate channels of contact. Activists assembled for a large rally ahead of the anniversary of Kabul's fall, but they discussed whether to engage the media. Most of the protesting women had not spoken out in months. They marched as a group in August, despite their trepidation, to demand their rights. Taliban militants, however, swiftly put an end to the protest by encircling and frightening the demonstrators. The Taliban staged its own public meeting a few days later to commemorate its first year in power. On social media, several activists believed their work was in vain, doubting the results of a year of activity and looking for concrete ways to better the lives of Afghan women. Some criticized the international community for the lack of progress, but they also admitted that their efforts had highlighted the Taliban's flaws and violence which had helped to isolate them internationally.

6.3. Afghan Girls Continue Studying Underground

(Lucia Fry 2022) Afghan girls are adamant about continuing their education despite threats from the Taliban government. As one anonymous Afghan student states, "Afghan girls don't ever want to go back to how things were. We don't want to receive lashes or remain at home. We want the freedom to dream of becoming psychologists, engineers, and journalists and the opportunity to achieve those dreams." (Lucia Fry,2022, p.2).

(Zaman 2023) Afghan girls are educated at underground schools despite the Taliban's ban. (Afghanistan Targeting of Individuals 2022) There are some regional and global programs offering females alternate types of education after the sixth grade. (Zaman 2023) Numerous girls

and women are still learning today, either through covert internet education or in secret improvised classrooms. For instance, the first all-female coding academy in Afghanistan, Code to Inspire, provided computers and internet access to its pupils in Herat so they could take online courses in secure online learning environments.

(Sirat & Hakimi, 2021) Additionally, a group of 14 Afghan girls study together every day in an underground location in Kabul. An older student serves as their instructor and leads them in math. With its doors and windows closed to maintain seclusion, the school is kept hidden from the outside world. The classroom has a chalkboard in the corner where a student by the name of Nooria teaches her classmates about Logarithms.

(Perria 2022) Freshta, who completed a midwifery program at Bamiyan University, is the sole university graduate in her cave community in Bamiyan Province. She made plans to volunteer in a temporary cave school in Afghanistan's Bamiyan region. The informal school enrolls up to 50 kids, the majority of whom are girls. The school is open for two hours every morning, giving the underprivileged neighborhood a chance at a time when the nation is dealing with an extraordinary humanitarian catastrophe. She said that most of the 50-family cave village's students, who range in age from 4 to 17, came from there. She also adds that, following the Taliban's return to power in August, she was terrified. When it last held control, between 1996 through 2001, it forbade women from working and attending school.

(Zaman 2023) Afghanistan's official and private girls' schools are largely still vacant, although secret schools are growing. Many Afghan girls assemble in secrecy to receive an education in one of Kabul's poorest areas, even though millions of girls worldwide have unfettered access to this privilege. In 5 different locations, including Kabul, a group named SRAK is funding underground schools. SRAK is run by six people. Its name comes from a Pashto term that means "ray of morning light" according to the organization's website. One of its founding members is Parasto.

(Zaman 2023) She states that, immediately after the Taliban seized power in the nation, she started receiving phone calls from instructors requesting assistance in establishing covert schools. She acted quickly since she had expertise working in the education sector under the previous government of President Ashraf Ghani. According to her, establishing the schools is not

challenging since women and the kids themselves are approaching them and seeking assistance. Through her connections, Parasto assisted in converting bedrooms, living rooms, and basements into classrooms for instructors and students who were prepared to sacrifice everything for education.

(Zaman 2023) Rahila, a former math teacher, went through bad despair after the Taliban closed the girls' schools, but she became aware of her value when her neighbors sought her out for assistance with arithmetic. Together, they discovered a source of optimism. Rahila had to find more space for pupils who needed her help as her house became too crowded. After coming into contact with Parasto, she was able to get a big room in Kabul. Rahila, together with two other teachers, spends three hours each day instructing approximately 100 girls in math, English, science, and other topics at this new facility. These covert schools also teach reading and writing to about 250 women who were impacted by the Taliban's prohibition on education in the 1990s. Since most families are unable to pay tuition, education is free at secret schools. Rent and other expenses, including stationery and pens, are covered by the SRAK organization and supporters.

(Akbarian 2021) Furthermore, the Online Herat School, which has approximately 1,000 female students enrolled, was formed in Herat by Angela Ghayour who is originally from Herat, but moved with her family to Iran in 1992 due to the Afghan civil war. She offered more than 170 online courses in subjects including arithmetic, music, cookery, and painting. A group of about 400 volunteer teachers, primarily from Iran, taught the lectures using the messaging apps Telegram or Skype.

(Zaman 2023) Rahila underlined the value of enrolling in clandestine schools to protect one's soul and emotions, despite the dangers of arrest and death. Taliban guards may be skillfully sidestepped by the homeowners who sponsor these classes. Girls are told to come and go in pairs without books to reduce attention. They carry a pen and paper with their homework in the privacy of their pockets.

(Faizi 2022) Every Saturday, reading sessions are organized by a book club which was created by a group of eight civil activists, some of whom were students. To protect themselves from Taliban retaliation, they are being housed at a secret location in western Kabul. According to a girl named Qasemi Afghanistan is a dead narrative, but the Afghan people must take

responsibility. He considers that, because females represent the nation's future, they should tell their own tales. In fact, one of the first novels the girls read was Gabriel Garca Márquez's first volume of his autobiography, "Living to Tell the Tale." (Faizi 2022) Even if done covertly, Qasemi emphasized the value of narrative. These girls are the smartest of the Afghan age; they require polishing. He says, "We light the way for them and they find their way. " (Faizi 2022).

(Faizi 2022) The girls' desire for education gives the book club members courage, even if they are aware of the hazards. Furthermore, regardless of the obstacles, committed parents are operating covert schools to make sure their girls obtain an education, even at the risk of consequences. To go to lessons covertly while not being seen by the Taliban, the students take several routes and go at different times. The girls sit in a circle on the floor in the absence of regular furniture in the classroom. Interviews with anonymous students show that they are unwilling to submit to limitations and are determined to get an education.

6.4. Theoretical Framework

This study uses the Islamic feminism theory as an analytical tool. The reason behind selecting this theory is that it explains well how the Taliban misuses religious interpretation to oppress Afghan women and maintain power in the country. Besides from that, the Islamic feminism theory helps to understand how the conception of gender in Afghanistan causes discrimination and violence against women. Another reason behind choosing this theory as compared to other feminist theories is that with its Islamic foundation, it can help Afghan women to understand their rights and how to fight for them. The theoretical part of this paper is divided into three sections. In the first section, Islamic feminism historiography is defined as well as Islamic feminism. The second section explores the application of tafsir as well as the traditional association of women with tafsir. Feminist readings of the Qur'an are covered in the third part.

According to (Margot,2009) the Islamic feminism theory is a feminist way of life that is built around an Islamic framework. Islamic feminism, whose mandates are derived from the Qur'an, wants fairness and rights for both men and women in the entirety of their being. Both fiercely opposed and strongly accepted, Islamic feminism has been the subject of a great deal of misinformation, confusion, and malice. As a result of this new feminism, both hopes and concerns have emerged.

Furthermore, (Tonnessen,2014) Asma Barlas, a Pakistani-American, states that she learned that women and men are equal after perusing the Quran rather than feminist literature. The phrase Islamic feminism has been the subject of intense discussion and it has been denied by both feminists and Muslims as representing two essentially irreconcilable ideologies. Secular feminists disagree with it because they contend that all religions, including Islam, subjugate women. Many Muslim women also disagree with it because they believe "feminism" is a creation of the West that has been forced upon them. Although it is hotly debated, advocates and academics alike have accepted Islamic feminism.

(Margot, 2009) states that the phrase "Islamic feminism" started to appear in a variety of international contexts in the 1990s. In her work, "Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences," she claims that the word was first used in Muslim literature. Writing in the Tehran women's magazine "Zanan," which Shahla Sherkat established in 1992, Iranian academics Afsaneh Najmabadi and Ziba Mir-Hosseini describe the emergence and use of the word "Islamic Feminism" in Iran by some women as well as men. The phrase was used by Saudi Arabian academic Mai Yamani in her work, "Feminism and Islam" in 1996. "Islamic Feminism" was also used in the 1990s by Turkish academics Yesim Arat and Feride Acar in their writings and Nilufer Goli in her book, "Forbidden Modern" (published in Turkish in 1991 and in English in 1996) to characterize a new paradigm they saw developing in Turkey. In the 1990s, Shamima Shaikh, a South African campaigner, and her male and female colleagues both used the phrase "Islamic Feminism." By the middle of the 1990s, there was mounting proof that Muslims in distant regions of the globe had been using this term.

(Margot,2009) As is evident from the statements above, some Muslim women refer to the articulation and promotion of social justice and gender equity as Islamic feminism. Others, on the other hand, refer to this as a re-reading of the Quran and other sacred writings by scholar-activists that places a focus on women. Islamic feminist rhetoric is created and consumed by people who may or may not identify as Islamic feminists. They also include non-Muslims, religiously-observant Muslims, and secular Muslims whose practices may be less overt. Badran also says that while many Muslims use the words "Islamic" and "secular" to describe themselves or others, some Muslims are uncomfortable with these terms. The use of the words must be historical or contextualized because they have distinct connotations in various scenarios. Lastly, it is

important to keep in mind that the distinctions between religion and secularism are not fixed classifications.

(Bogaert, 2022) Also, gender equity is fundamental to Islam, according to the Global Muslim Women's Shura Council members. They hold that Muslim women have an equitable right to use their skills and abilities in all spheres of human endeavor, including moral agents, spiritual beings, social beings, responsible agents, autonomous citizens, and attendants of God. The council stresses that these rights are enshrined in the Quran and the six pillars of Sharia which include defending and upholding faith, life, intellect, family, wealth, and dignity. The council oversees the creation of a Muslim women's organization that empowers them to reach their best potential in every facet of life and is motivated by compassion and justice.

(Breanna,2014) Women's encounters and uneven treatment in patriarchal societies are the main topics of feminism. To support women's rights and criticize men's governmental dominance, the phrase was first used in France in the late nineteenth century. The places where feminism originate have unique characteristics. Feminism involves being conscious of the limitations imposed on women, rejecting those limitations, and working to create a system that is more gender equitable. The arts and social sciences now have a fresh viewpoint thanks to feminism in academics, which has also shed light on the pervasive androcentric biases in these fields. How we perceive the social, economic, and political dynamics between men and women is to be changed by feminist theory. Thus, it is essential to apply this analytical paradigm to religion to comprehend how religion restricts women's freedom of movement, thought, and speech based on gender, both within religion and in the larger society. Because religious organizations affect people's temporal attitudes and behaviors while also influencing how they articulate transcendental views (whether privately or collectively) it is critical that feminist theories and methodologies be applied to religion. Beyond the societal realm, religion has an impact on how reality is created, including how gender is defined. Islamic feminists, also known as Muslim scholar-activists, practice feminism within an Islamic context and theoretical paradigm to promote gender equality and fairness within the community of believers. To accomplish this, they engage in a battle known as the gender war.

7. Research Design and Data Collection

This chapter will describe the data-collecting process, data analysis, and research findings of this thesis. In addition, the idea of Islamic Feminism theory will be used to evaluate and analyze the status of Afghan women under the current Taliban administration. Survey and interview questions have been used to gather information from women in the country to better understand the present state of women's rights under Taliban control. The survey form has 15 multiple-choice questions while the questionnaire form has 12 descriptive questionnaires.

This research is critical in addressing the questions of how will the future of Afghan women will be under the current Taliban government and what can be done to prevent the extreme levels of control that it has demonstrated in the past? The hypothesis of the study is that the Taliban will not have a reconsider its policies and that women in Afghanistan will lose their fundamental rights, just as they did lose under the first regime. Without international help or acts of defiance from within the country, they won't be allowed to exercise their right to an education, freedom of movement, right to employment, and all other fundamental human women's rights that other people enjoy in other countries. The main reason is patriarchal religious interpretation and culture - Afghanistan is a patriarchal society and to have control over women, the patriarchs use Islam and culture to justify and maintain their control over women.

This research uses both a survey form and questionnaire form to collect as much data as possible and properly analyze Afghan women's human rights under the current Taliban regime. This will help to better understand what will happen to their future under its rule. The reason why the Islamic Feminism theory is being used is to analyze the situation of Muslim women and how they could defend their rights in a Muslim and male-dominant country. A key part of this is how they could use the power which Islam has given as women them to fight against the Taliban regime which is violating basic concepts of Islam, particularly the right to education and employment. To better analyze the interview questionnaires, a thematic analysis method was used for qualitative data.

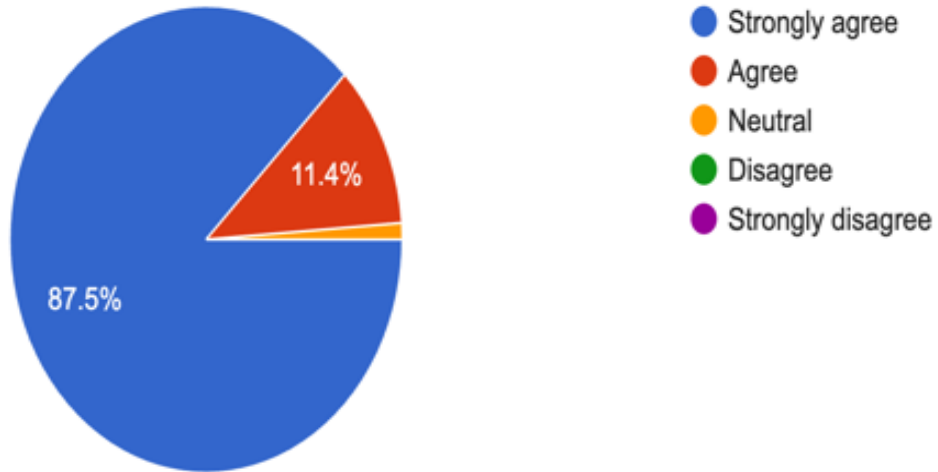
7.1. Research Findings of the Survey Form

In conducting the survey, 88 responses were collected from Afghan women inside the country. According to the responses, most believe that the Taliban's rise to power has

a highly negative impact on their education, academic plans, careers, and hobbies. Besides from this, they do not feel safe in their daily life activities especially since men have taken a more disrespectful attitude towards women since the takeover. Also, since the Taliban took over Afghanistan, there has been an increase in violence against women. They hold the view that patriarchal societies and other aspects of Middle Eastern culture and history are to blame for the way women are treated in Afghanistan. According to the survey, more than 50% of Afghan women blame Islam for the way women are treated in Afghanistan and they believe that the Taliban now has greater control over them than before which means that the situation has gotten even worse compared to the first regime in the 1990s. Most did not trust the Taliban when it gave a public declaration that it would respect women's rights and to reclaim their human rights, some form of foreign involvement is required. These findings indicate the significant problems and challenges that the Taliban's influence has left for the female respondents.

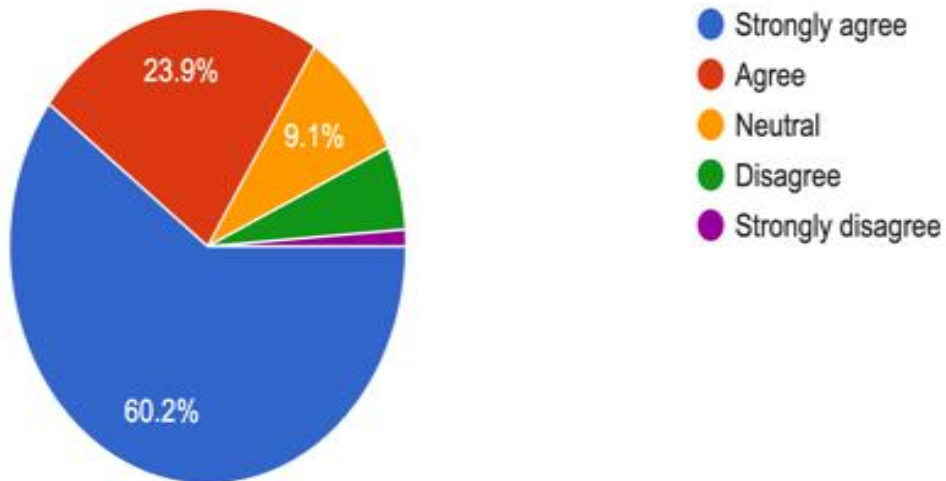
1. The Taliban's rise to power has negatively impacted my career/education or future career/academic plans.

88 responses



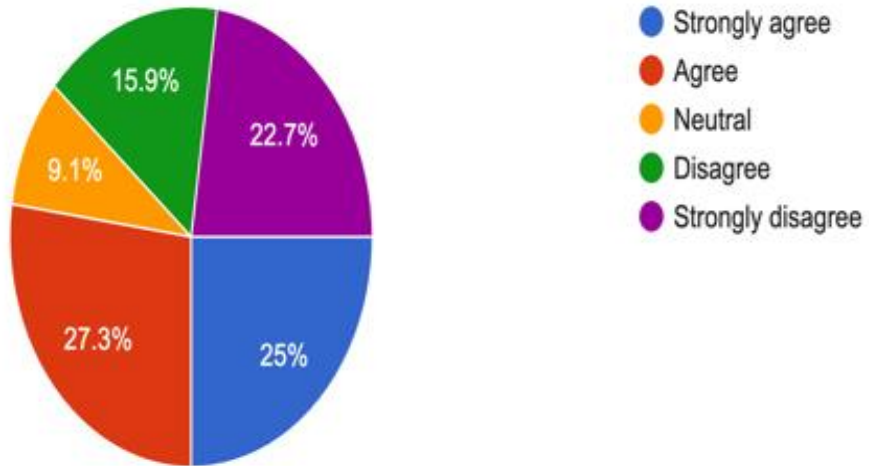
6. I believe the Taliban now have more power over women than ever before.

88 responses



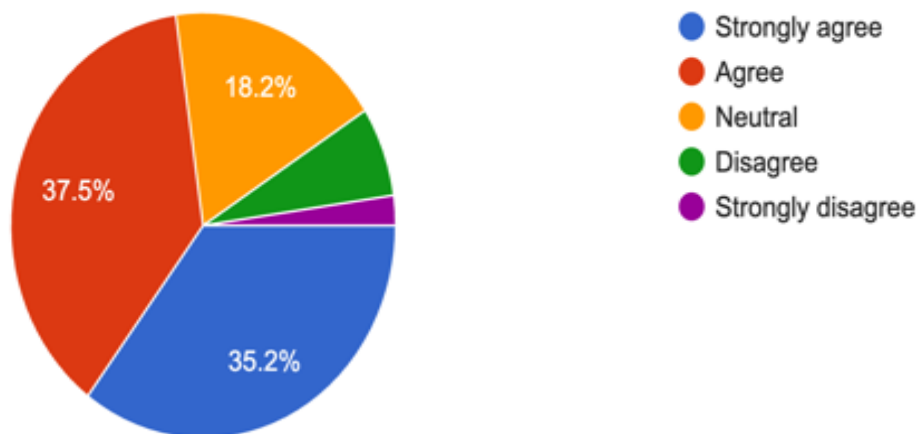
7. I believe Islam is to blame for Afghanistan's treatment of women.

88 responses



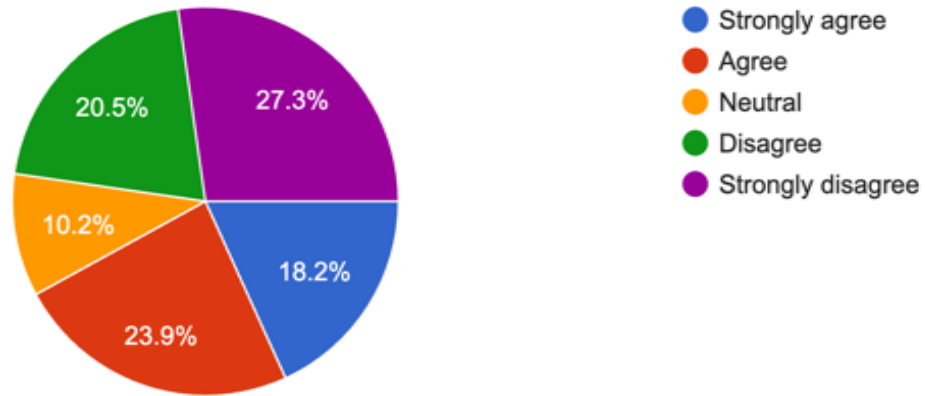
8. I believe Middle Eastern culture and history (such as patriarchal society) are to blame for Afghanistan's treatment of women.

88 responses



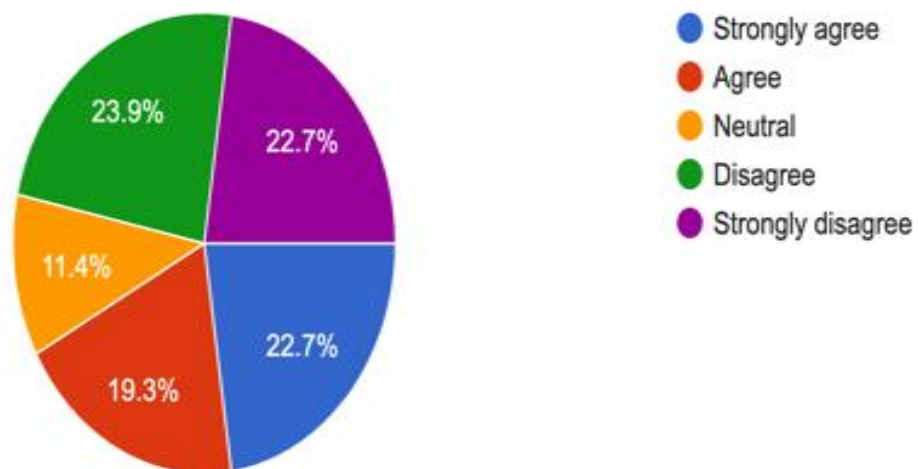
9. When the Taliban took power again, I believed its public proclamations that it would honor women's rights.

88 responses



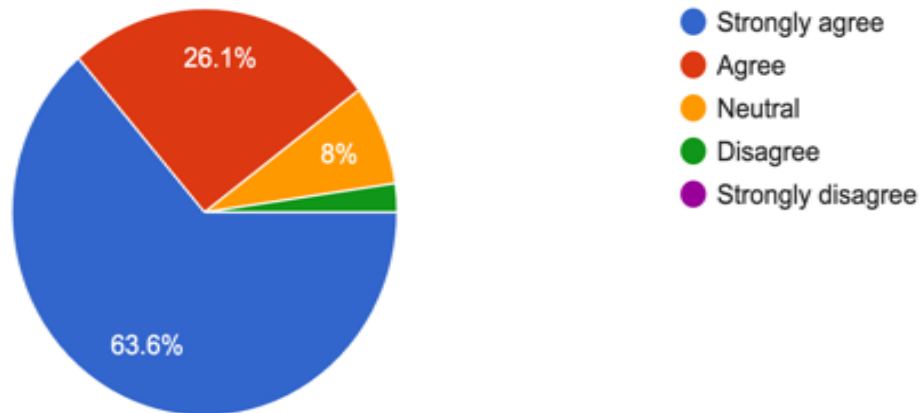
10. The Taliban has occasionally surprised me with the freedoms it allows women.

88 responses



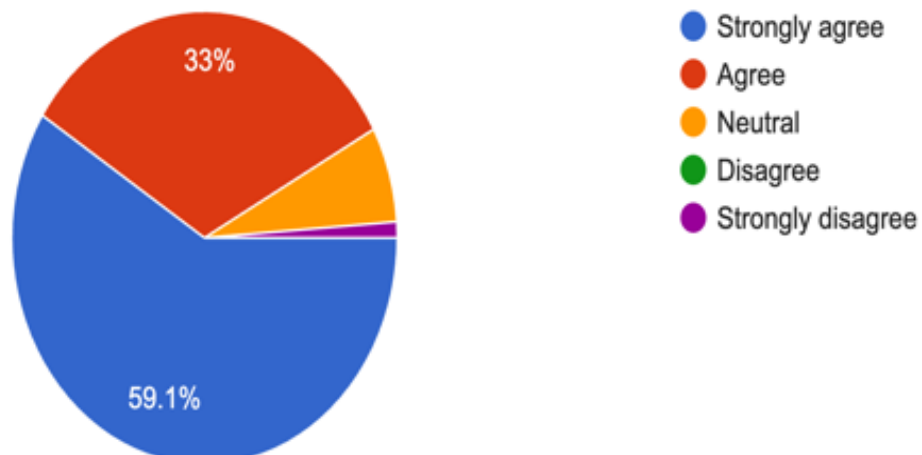
11. I have noticed a rise in violence against women since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan or have been personally affected by violence.

88 responses



15. I believe that for Afghanistan's women to regain their human rights, it is necessary to have foreign intervention of some kind.

88 responses



7.2. Data Analysis and Findings

To obtain first-hand information about the violation of women's human rights in Afghanistan, a total of 30 interviews have been conducted online by distributing a link via a Google form. 12 questions made up the interview which was conducted anonymously for security concerns. Due to receiving more responses than anticipated, a thematic analysis method was used to analyze the data that had been gathered. This process of analysis is called thematic analysis.

(Dawadi 2020) Researchers utilize thematic analysis, a qualitative research technique, to methodically arrange and examine large, complicated data sets. Finding themes that can include the narratives present in the account of data sets is the goal. It includes carefully reviewing and re-reading the transcribed material to search for themes.

(Delahunt 2017) But in this research, since the interview was collected online via a Google form, transcriptions are not needed. Furthermore, the purpose of a thematic analysis is to find themes (significant or intriguing patterns in the data) and then use those themes to discuss the study or make a point. A strong thematic analysis does more than just summarize the data; it explains and clarifies it. Using the primary interview questions as the themes is a typical error. This often indicates that the data has been organized and summarized rather than analyzed. This kind of analysis separate's themes into two categories: latent and semantic. Semantic themes are found in the data's clear or surface meanings; the analyst is not searching for anything outside of what participants have said or written. This highlights semantically-level themes and is typical of many learning and teaching activities. Analysis focuses on analyzing and explaining what is stated rather than merely describing it. Contrarily, the latent level begins to identify or investigate the underlying concepts, ideologies, and concepts that are stated to have shaped or informed the semantic content of the data. It goes beyond what has already been mentioned.

(Majumdar s.d.) There are two categories in which to place the qualitative research. The first category includes analytical strategies that are connected to a particular theoretical framework such as grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, etc. In contrast, the second category's analytical methodology is far more autonomous and experiential since it is not constrained by a theoretical framework. This second kind of analytical method includes thematic analysis. Thus, in contrast to other qualitative methodologies, theme analysis is divergent,

compatible, and considerably more adaptable due to its independence from a theoretical framework. As a result, thematic analysis aids in the creation of a comprehensive, rich, and complete explanation of the data set.

(Braun & Clarke, 2016) offer a roadmap to help through the six stages of analysis. It can be seen in Table 1 below.

Stage one: Get acquainted with the data.	Stage four: Review the themes.
Stage two: Make the initial codes.	Stage five: Identify and name the themes.
Stage three: Look for themes.	Stage six: Generate the report.

Table 1

Stage One: Get Acquainted with the Data

(Dawadi 2020) Reading the material carefully and being comfortable with it are the first steps in qualitative analysis. The depth and breadth of the data must be fully grasped by repeated readings and active pattern detection, regardless of whether the data is supplied or self-collected. Prior to coding, it is advised to read the complete data set because this promotes the creation of concepts and patterns. Different reading strategies will be used depending on the sort of analysis being done and criteria like the emphasis on latent or semantic themes, theoretical or empirical justifications, and the depth or breadth of the analysis. Even though this step takes a lot of time, it is important to finish since it lays the groundwork for the remaining research. For later stages, making notes and underlining key coding principles might be helpful. Throughout the course of the inquiry, the coding procedure is regularly changed and improved.

In Table 2, the major goal of sorting through the data in this manner was thorough immersion in the information and to gather early points of interest. As a result, this stage gave good idea of the depth and breadth of the material.

Research Questions	Codes	Initial points of interest
How will the future of Afghani women be under the current Taliban Government?	No Right to education, no right to employment, no financial independence.	20
What can be done to prevent what happened after 1996?	International intervention, the Taliban must be eliminated, and the international community must not recognize the Taliban	20
<i>Uncertain points of interest</i>		10
	Total	30

Table 2

Stage Two: Make the Initial Codes

(Braun & Clarke, 2016) Stage two occurs after being familiar with the data and coming up with some early thoughts on its substance and intriguing features. The first codes that are created during this stage serve as the fundamental segments or components of the data, identifying relevant aspects. Coding puts the data into useful categories, but it varies from the more general analytical constructs, or themes, that are created in the following stage. The coding procedure varies depending on whether it is theory- or data-driven and whether the full data set or only a few selected features are being coded. Manual coding techniques include taking notes,

underlining, and using post-it notes, while computer software enables text choices to be tagged and given names. Coding and collating all pertinent data extracts into distinct codes is crucial. It is suggested to thoroughly code for probable themes and patterns at this phase and to maintain context by providing supplementary information. If certain data extracts fall into distinct themes, they can be coded more than once. It is important to include contradictions and tensions in the data as they help to conceptualize patterns and relationships in the data in a thorough way.

There were many codes (n=82), some of which just had one phrase, while others contained a full sentence. Table 3 gives a few instances of how codes were applied to brief data segments.

Data extract	Coded for
Since the Taliban took over, women have been confined at home. Their basic human rights have been taken away from them; they no longer are able to work, learn, travel, or simply decide who to marry. A male should accompany them everywhere they go, and they should cover from head to toe.	No right to education, no freedom of expression and speech, women need a male chaperon when they go out
I personally strongly believe that a mixture of traditional-tribal principal such as Pashtunwali with religious coverage is one of the main causes of their current approach to governance.	Pashtunwali tradition and culture, Religion
It seems that this is one of their policies. And they want to show their authority by oppressing women. The Taliban want to show their power with this.	Using women as a weapon to show their power
Their wrong interpretation of Islam, and tribal mentality	The wrong interpretation of Islam, Pashtunwali tradition and culture, lack of logical viewpoint
I have no hope for future and I'm not even trying. Cause we all know Taliban won't open educational academic centers for women. They don't know women as human being. After all Protests and asking for help from other countries and not receiving a single hope we just live until we die. I'm personally depressed and can't think of my future.	Hopeless

When women were prevented from working and studying, of course, there is no difference between the Taliban of yesterday and today, the only difference is that they did not whip women openly and clearly in front of the people, but in secret, they commit the worst cruelty. I personally witnessed the scene when the Taliban arrested two women for not wearing hijab and put them in jail, while there was no problem with women's clothing according to Islamic law.	They are still the same, they got worsen
Yes, New Year's Day was the day that I really understood that our rights were violated, and it was the first time that I felt that I am a woman, a woman who has no power in this country.	My rights are being violated
They many times verbally harassed me because of the way I dress up, and why I am outside without my father, brother, husband. They didn't even allow me to get a taxi. I haven't been harassed physically by them, but my friends and relatives have been beaten many times by the Taliban.	Verbally harassed, physically harassed
The Islam that I know, and I learned is not what Taliban talking about. They are using Islam's name to hide their own crimes, and actions. Islam says education is mandatory to men and women,	Misusing Islam
Most of men and all of women hate Taliban and their policies. But they can't do anything. Because as soon as Taliban see a small protest from someone, put him/her in jail and because they don't follow any official criminal law, their families don't even know what will happen to him/her. In many cases, the person completely disappears and there is no news about him or her alive or dead.	Fear
In my opinion, the world did not take serious steps for the situation of women. In the past and for now, the world has chosen the option of neutrality and silence. This issue is clear and obvious to every Afghan person, whether male or female, that the world has not stood by the people since the past, even though the civil people are far from political games, but they were always the most vulnerable	No strong act from international community

class during many wars.	
Afghan women are very strong, although everyone is banned and no right for work. But everyone has group in their team and plan to go and talk with their supervisor, make plan for demonstration. Nothing works but we never give up. We'll try and try.	Demonstration, Afghan women are strong
I am learning a new language through the internet, and it has helped me a lot. In my spare time, I listen to different podcasts, and I am trying to learn different skills, and most of the time, the only guide I have is the Internet. I can spend hours researching on the Internet about anything that is going to happen and complete my information. Despite the Internet, I feel there is still a way to progress.	Improving
International community could do something to prevent Afghanistan's collapse. However, now it probably can: 1. Stop countries from sending money weekly 2. It can punish countries and individuals who whitewash Taliban and their members 3. It can impose harsh sanctions 4. It can find ways for a complete regime change or facilitate an internal dialogue between Taliban and various factions (women presence a must) to find a common ground and agree on a government where women and other social groups can actively participate.	International community must intervene to change the regime, prevent countries to support Taliban

Table 3

Stage Four: Review the Themes

(Delahunt 2017) A proposed theme's coherence and distinctiveness are evaluated in phase four of thematic analysis to refine it. 2 stages of evaluation are involved in the procedure: the first level looks at the coherence of coded data extracts, and the second level evaluates the relevance of themes considering the full data set. Themes that are inappropriate or need more improvement are changed. A themed map that appropriately depicts the data is what we want to make. It could be required to redo the recording, but only for significant improvements. At the end of this stage, the themes, their connections, and the overarching narrative they talk about the data should all be well understood.



Figure 2

Stage Five: Identify and Name the Themes

(Braun & Clarke, 2016) Determining and improving the topics based on a suitable thematic map is phase five of thematic analysis. The collected extracts are organized into a cogent and internally consistent report by the researcher once he or she has determined the core of each subject and its element of the material. Each topic is given a thorough study, considering both its unique tale and how it relates to the data's broader narrative. To offer structure and organization, sub-themes can be found within complicated themes. It is crucial to be able to define the topics precisely and succinctly express their scope and content. The themes' catchy and evocative titles are also taken into consideration.

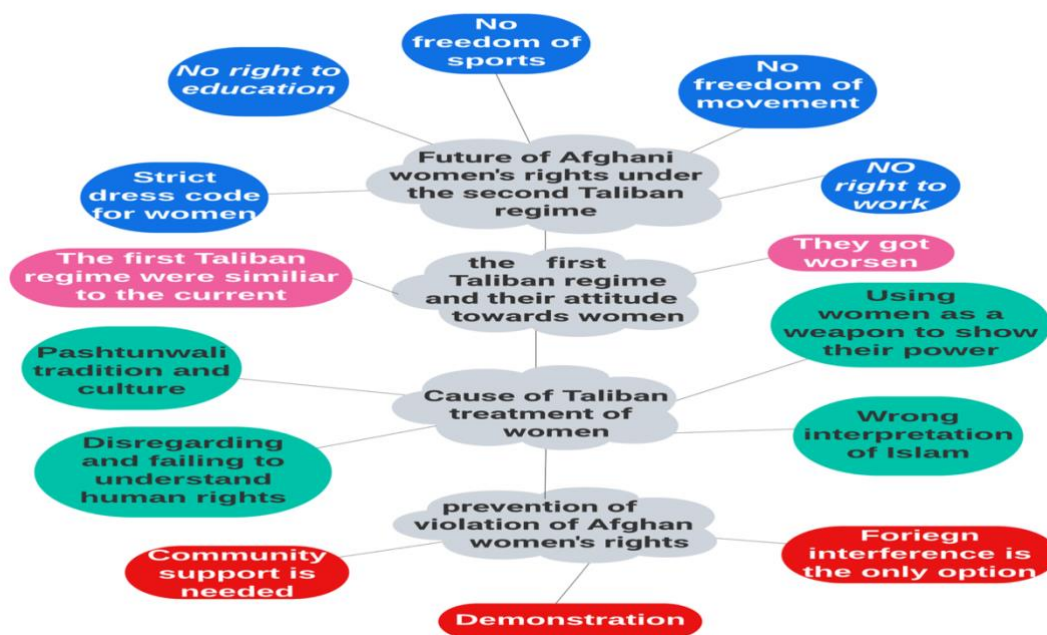


Figure 3

Stage Six: Generate the Report

(Delahunty 2017) The final assessment and report writing are tasks for the sixth and the last phase of theme analysis. The report of a theme analysis must persuade the readers of the analysis' worth and validity. Therefore, a great deal of effort was taken to produce a succinct, cohesive, and logical description of the tale that the data represented within and across themes by giving enough evidence and specific instances and/or excerpts that could capture the core of the argument the author was showing. The instances and excerpts were incorporated into the analytical narrative so that they might support the study goals in addition to serving as narrative illustrations.

Conclusively, the final report based on following all the required stages in thematic analysis discovered that since the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan for the second time, women have lost all their rights, including their fundamental rights to education, employment, dress, movement, and sports. It was seen that through thematic analysis of the interview data, there is no difference between the Taliban in power today and those who originally took over Afghanistan in the 1990s. In fact, the situation has worsened in regard to the violation of women's human rights. Besides that, while analyzing the interview responses in the 5 different phases, it was also found that the main reason behind the Taliban's violation of women's rights is the wrong interpretation of Islam which is used as a weapon to display power over the nation. Other factors are the Pashtunwali tradition and culture as well as the Taliban's disregarding of and failing to understand human rights. Finally, demonstration, community support, and foreign influence are the only options to avoid the violation of women's rights experienced by Afghani women during the first Taliban regime. Thus, the hypothesis of the research was confirmed by the data collected.

In addition to the interview questionnaires and surveys, the Islamic feminism theory greatly helped in understanding how Islam has been misused to dominate women. Since Afghanistan is an Islamic country, the Taliban could easily misuse Islam to have full control of women and violate their rights. By using the Islamic feminism theory and increasing their knowledge of Islam, women could defend their rights by raising their voices and bringing up arguments in their favor. With this theory in mind, some of these ideas will be discussed in

greater detail using Islamic texts such as hadith and the Quran to argue that Islam has been misinterpreted.

(Wadud 1999) In reality, both men and women have equal rights to education, and work in the Quran and there is no law for a specific dress code in which Muslim women must be fully covered. Also, there is no ban on women leaving the house alone. It is essential to mention that the Quran does not class women as inferior or their lives constrained to a specific, biologically defined role. It views the potential and worth of men and women as being equal with no fundamental distinctions between them. Both are encouraged to pursue their views and activities by giving them equal benefits, because they are both seen as categories of the human species. Men and women are equally valued in the creation, purpose, and promised benefits of the Quran.

(Tonnessen, 2014, p. 7) This is a specific illustration of how Islamic feminists are opposing popular Islamist ideas. Verse 4:34 of Surah An-Nisa is frequently cited to support wife-beating.

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ
وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ اللَّهِ وَارْجِعِي إِلَى اللَّهِ
حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ
فَعُظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ فَإِن
أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا
كَبِيرًا

Figure 4 (Tonnessen, 2014, p. 7)

Those who seek to defend wife-beating frequently use a portion of verse 4:34 as follows

“Good women are qanitat (have qunut) guarding in secret that which Allah has guarded. As for those from whom you fear nushuz, admonish them, then banish them to beds apart and strike them. But if they obey you seek not a way against them” (Tonnessen, 2014, p. 7) However, women are not mandated to submit to their husbands by the Quran. In actuality, both men and

women are referred to be qanitat, or excellent individuals. A wife's obedience to her husband or that of any other person to another is not referred to by the term "qunut." A state of humility prior to Allah is meant by this. The Quran utilizes the term ta'a which refers to one person following the instructions of another when the passage continues, "if they obey you," implying that not only do men have to obey their wives but also that wives must obey their husbands. The Quran instead issues a strong warning to the men, saying, "If they (the women) obey you (the men), do not seek a way against (them)." Ta'a is not used in the command form here for women. The phrase "if they obey you" (Tonnessen, 2014) does not imply that women must submit to males. Additionally, it does not imply that a husband can physically abuse a wife for disobeying. The emphasis is on men's obligation to treat women equally, particularly when they offer advice to women.

(Google form, 2023) Based on the findings from our interview questionnaires for this paper, women are not allowed to go outside the home without a male chaperone based on the Taliban's interpretation that women must always be accompanied by a Maharam. (Tonnessen, 2014) The Quran does not state in any specific passage that women must only leave the house with this person. The Taliban uses the 53rd and 59th verses of Surah al Ahzab as proof that females are required to have a Maharam: "Settle in your homes and do not display yourselves as women did in the days of pre-Islamic ignorance. Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah only intends to keep the causes of evil away from you and purify you completely, O members of the Prophet's family!" (Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security s.d.). Another relevant passage is, "O Prophet! Say to your wives, your daughters, and the women of believers that, (whilst going out,) they should draw their veils as coverings over them. It is more likely that this way they may be recognized (as pious, free women), and may not be hurt (considered by mistake as roving slave girls). And Allah is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful." (Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security s.d.).

(Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security s.d.) These passages warn the wives of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) against acting like pagan women by walking the streets, but do not apply to all Muslim women. Women are not forbidden from leaving their houses or traveling without a Maharam as is commonly believed. The passages instead underline how important it is for women to wear the veil outside. The purpose of these directives is to encourage women to leave their homes and engage in society. When Islamic scholars investigated the motivations for these prohibitions during the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), they

concluded that the main purpose for them was to protect women. Nothing prevents a woman from traveling without a male if her safety fears are allayed.

(Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security s.d.) As evidence for their position, scholars refer to the hadith related by Adiy bin Hatim, citing the following statement spoken by the Prophet, (صلى الله عليه وسلم) “If you live a long life you will see a woman traveling from Hirah (Iraq) to perform tawaf (in Mecca) fearing no one except Allah.” (Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security s.d.). The Prophet anticipated that in the future, women will travel independently from their husbands or Maharams. Travel by women was formerly prohibited owing to security concerns. Many Muslim scholars, like Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, and organizations like the European Fatwa Council and Al-Azhar, disagree, saying that women can travel without a mahram if security is guaranteed.

(Salleh, Ali & Muda,2017) The other reason that the Prophet’s wives were prohibited from traveling alone was because there were only a few options for transportation available at the time, such as utilizing animals to get from one location to another. Throughout history, transportation has undergone a tremendous shift. Donkeys, camels, horses, and cattle were frequently used in transportation in the past. The transportation industries on land and at sea have, however, made enormous strides since then. Today, huge distances may be covered in a single day. This has sparked debate over women's travel in the absence of male chaperone.

(Khan, Gul & Naz, 2020) Furthermore, since women are not allowed an education under the Taliban, it is important to note that the Quran's opening verses start with the phrase, “Read in the name of your Lord who created, created man from a clinging form. Read! Your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by means of the pen; taught man what he did not know.” (Khan, Gul & Naz, 2020, p.19). First, a line beginning with the word "read" was displayed. The appeal to knowledge-seeking is made to humanity. Islam forbids girls from attending school, but the texts go beyond that (Khan, Gul & Naz, 2020).

(Khan, Gul & Naz, 2020, p.19) Besides that, in Quran Surah 38 Aya 29 Allah stated that “(This is) a Book (the Quran) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses, and that men of understanding may remember” (Khan, Gul & Naz, 2020, p.20). “Men” is the term used in the verse to refer to humanity. In the Quran, Allah addresses all

people on several occasions. According to the text above, critical thinking is a necessary skill for both men and women. The Quran continually encourages individuals to reflect and reason. Males and females think and analyze in parallel ways during this process of knowledge. Obtaining an education is regarded as an obligation for every Muslim. It is not only something that one should provide to others. Rather, it is something that one should pursue as a duty. The education of women and slaves is emphasized in the second hadith. The third hadith further emphasizes the value of education by stating that someone with knowledge and education is better than someone without either.

(Sechzer 2004) Regarding the hijab, The Quran specifically instructs the segregation and veiling of the Prophet's wives, but does not impose the same requirements on all women or their seclusion within their homes. The term "hijab" originally meant a "curtain" and symbolized a screen used to address the Prophet's wives. When they went out in public, they wore a veil covering their faces. Initially, veiling was exclusive to the Prophet's wives and not practiced by other Muslim women. However, these customs gradually spread after his death and eventually encompassed all women in Arab lands. Additionally, in some communities, "hijab" may also refer to the head covering.

(Maseeh 2015) Even though the Quran's teachings call for a safe and equal living for men and women, an examination of Muslim women's lives reveals a stark contrast between theory and action. Muslim women have historically endured systematic social subordination at the hands of men who take advantage of customs like polygamy. Unfortunately, many Muslim women are afraid of offending their faith and feel powerless to criticize these behaviors. They frequently do not recognize the rights that Allah has bestowed upon them via the Quran. He does not discriminate based on gender, as made clear in Al-i-Imran, Chapter 3, Verse 195, "I never let go waste the labor of anyone that works among you, whether male or female, for in My sight all of you are alike." (Maseeh, 2015, p. 31)

(Waraich, Halima & Sadia, 2023) Moreover, Islam acknowledges the special role played by women and the challenges they face, especially during pregnancy. According to the Quran and the Prophet's teachings, men are responsible for earning a living and supporting their families. Women are excluded from this obligation and have the right to get all dietary requirements. Additionally, they are excluded from performing religious duties like congregational prayers and

jihad, even though they have the option to take part if they have the desire to do. The Prophet's daughter, Syeda Fimah, and her husband, Ali, shared duties for running the family and rearing the children, which is an illustration of how important women's roles are in the Quran. Islam allows women to seek employment in a variety of fields, including the field of nursing, education (particularly for young children), medicine, social work, and charity work. Taking advantage of women's skills in any sector is not generally prohibited. Although it is not required, most academics agree that it is acceptable to take jobs and earn money.

The Quran states that women are permitted to work in whatever area they choose if they so want. However, Islamic feminism theorists contend that by misinterpreting Islam and misapplying some of its teachings, they are attempting to restrict the rights of women to work, pursue an education, choose the type of clothing they wish to wear, travel, and a host of other freedoms. Based on the results of the interviews, surveys, secondary sources, and conceptual framework, it can be concluded that the Taliban is only ready to utilize this distortion of Islam as a means of defending the patriarchal viewpoint and preserving the Pashtunwali heritage in society.

8. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to examine the future of Afghan women under the current Taliban government and propose measures to prevent a repeat of the oppression experienced during the previous regime. The hypothesis suggested that Afghan women would face a loss of fundamental rights, including education and employment opportunities due to the patriarchal ideology and misinterpretation of Islam. The research findings confirmed the dominance of a patriarchal society in Afghanistan, where the control over women is maintained and justified through the misinterpretation of religious principles and Pashtunwali culture. The study provided a comprehensive analysis of the current state of women's rights in Afghanistan and examined the historical policies of the Taliban towards women. Additionally, it investigated the responses and behaviors of the Taliban towards educational institutions after their loss of control in 2001, serving as a case study. The data collection methods involved online interview questionnaires and survey forms and the mentioned collected data analyzed by using thematic analysis method and Islamic feminism theory. The findings revealed that Afghanistan remains a male-dominated country, with cultural Pashtunwali cultural mindset where women's rights are systematically

undermined. The misinterpretation of Islam contributes to the perpetuation of gender-based oppression. Therefore, it can be inferred that the future of Afghan women under the current Taliban regime is at risk of worsening conditions.

To prevent a repetition of the atrocities experienced after 1996, it is crucial to address the patriarchal mindset and challenge the misinterpretation of Islam used to justify women's oppression. Recommendations for action include promoting education and awareness about women's rights within Afghan society, advocating for international support and pressure, empowering Afghan women through economic opportunities and leadership roles, and engaging religious scholars to promote an accurate understanding of Islamic principles that uphold gender equality. By implementing these measures, it is possible to foster an environment where Afghan women can exercise their fundamental human rights and contribute actively to the development and progress of their society. Efforts to create a more equitable and inclusive Afghanistan must be pursued by both national and international stakeholders to ensure a brighter and more secure future for Afghan women. It also highlights the challenges and violations faced by Afghan women in terms of their rights, particularly under the Taliban regime.

The research emphasizes the role of the Taliban's misinterpretation of Islam and patriarchal norms in suppressing women's rights and examines historical periods of progress and setbacks, the impact of influential figures, the importance of education, and the need for international support. It calls for action to challenge patriarchal norms, promote an accurate understanding of Islam, protect women's rights, and ensure their equal participation and empowerment. Additionally, it explores the use of qualitative research approaches, the limitations of data collection, the significance of Islamic feminist theory, and the importance of addressing gender disparities within religious contexts. Overall, the findings underscore the urgent need to protect and promote women's rights in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, the thematic analysis of the interview data reveal several key themes related to the violation of women's human rights in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. The first theme identified was the restriction of women's freedom and mobility with interviewees expressing concerns about limitations on their movement and the requirement of male chaperones. The second theme was the denial of education and employment opportunities, as many women reported being barred from attending schools or working in certain sectors. The

third theme highlighted the prevalence of violence and insecurity, with interviewees sharing their experiences of domestic violence, forced marriages, and physical threats. The analysis also revealed a strong sense of fear and anxiety among Afghan women as they expressed worries about the future and the potential for further deterioration of their rights. The participants emphasized the need for international support and intervention to protect and promote women's rights in Afghanistan.

Overall, the research findings underscore the urgent need for action to address the ongoing violation of women's rights in Afghanistan. It is crucial for the international community to advocate for gender equality, support local women's organizations, and provide resources and assistance to empower Afghan women. Additionally, efforts should be made to challenge patriarchal norms and promote an accurate understanding of Islam, as the misinterpretation of religious texts has been a significant factor contributing to the violation of women's rights. By taking these steps, it is possible to create a more inclusive and equitable society in Afghanistan where women can fully participate and enjoy their fundamental rights. The violation of women's rights in Afghanistan under Taliban rule is a grave human rights issue that demands urgent attention and action. By standing in solidarity with Afghan women, supporting local initiatives, and advocating for their rights, we can strive to create a future where Afghan women are empowered, protected, and able to exercise their rights freely.

Further Recommendations for Future Research:

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are put forth to protect and promote the rights of Afghan women under the current Taliban regime:

1. International Diplomacy and Engagement:
 - Engage in diplomatic efforts to ensure the Taliban respects and upholds international human rights standards.
 - Establish robust monitoring mechanisms to hold the Taliban accountable for its actions towards women.
2. Sustainable Investment in Education:
 - Allocate resources to ensure access to quality education for girls and women.

- Support scholarships, vocational training, and literacy programs tailored to meet the specific needs of Afghan women.
3. Economic Empowerment:
 - Foster entrepreneurship opportunities for women through microfinance initiatives and business development support.
 - Encourage partnerships between international organizations, local businesses, and women-led enterprises.
 4. Legal and Judicial Reforms:
 - Advocate for legal reforms that protect women's rights, including legislation against gender-based violence, forced marriages, and discriminatory practices.
 - Support the establishment of accessible and gender-sensitive judicial systems.
 5. Women's Political Participation:
 - Encourage the inclusion of Afghan women in political processes and decision-making bodies at all levels.
 - Support the formation and capacity-building of women's advocacy groups to amplify their voices and concerns.
 6. International Aid and Assistance:
 - Ensure that international aid and assistance prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment.
 - Strengthen partnerships with local civil society organizations to deliver targeted support to Afghan women.

Appendix 1 List of Interview Questionnaires:

1. What changes have you noticed in your life and the lives of other women since the Taliban reclaimed power in Afghanistan?
2. What do you think is the cause of the Taliban's treatment of women?
3. How have your attitudes toward the future changed since the Taliban took control?
4. Based on your own experiences or the experiences of people you know, how does the Taliban treat women differently from the first time they had power, particularly regarding work, education, and human rights?
5. Have Taliban militants or authorities ever physically or verbally harassed you or threatened you because you are a woman? Do you feel your rights have been violated as a woman?
6. How do you feel about the Taliban's use of Islam to justify their actions? How has the Taliban takeover impacted your views on Islam?
7. How do most people feel about the Taliban's policies towards women? Is there any way to find support from the community?
8. How do you feel about the international community's reaction to the Taliban's treatment of women? If you can remember life during previous Taliban rule, or have heard about it from your family and friends you know, has the international community done better, worse, or the same at helping Afghan women?
9. What tactics have Afghan women employed to unite and fight for their rights against Taliban rule?
10. What effects have the internet, social media, TV, email, and other channels of communication had on Afghan women's capacity to communicate with one another and the outside world?
11. Have you employed any methods to improve your personal situation such as reading, learning new skills, or listening to online lectures? If yes, how does this make you feel about yourself?
12. What message would you like to convey to the world about the position of Afghan women under the Taliban and what kind of help you think is needed from the international community to help the situation

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