

CAUSES OF THE FRAGILITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS BETWEEN 2001 TO 2021

Author's Name: Zorah Aminpoor

Affiliation: Student, Political Science & International relations at Istanbul Aydin University, Istanbul, Turkey

E-Mail: zohre.amini2013@gmail.com

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Abstract

In this study, an attempt has been made to explain the reasons for the fragility of the achievements of Afghan women from 2001 to 2021, which is based on a descriptive-analytical method. Addressing the socio-political activity of women in Afghanistan has been a fresh and up-to-date debate since the new political system came to power in 2001 that had been attracted the attention of the most political experts, researchers, countries and organizations supporting women. However, the issue of sustainability of women's achievements was forgotten and no special attention was paid to it. As the fragility of these achievements is clearly felt at this point in time, the present study is based on the history of women's activities, the laws of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on women, and the barriers to women's political, social and economic participation over the past two decades.

As a result, tougher struggles over a longer period of time, the design and implementation of real projects based on the Afghanistan's social structure, the weakening of gendered views, the change of discriminatory laws, the stability of security and democracy, and increasing the scientific capacity of women can bring lasting achievements to Afghan women.

Keywords: Taliban, politics, participation, parliament, women, Peace

INTRODUCTION

The equitable distribution of power in all social and political spheres between men and women not only guarantees the advancement of democracy, but also the natural right of citizenship for both sexes to have an equal share of influence in the political arena. The history of Afghanistan testifies to the fact that Afghan women have struggled for generations to defend their rights and have faced many obstacles and challenges in achieving their ideals.

After the fall of the Taliban regime, the new regime's constitution recognized equal rights for men and women in various fields, and women were able to appear in some fields. Despite the fact that violence against them was high and women were liberated and persecuted in various ways, they were still able to grow in various fields. Although the presence of women was symbolic, made it possible for women to understand women's problems and to develop and implement plans to solve that problem.

The studies of the last two decades shows that the presence and participation of women in the fields of political and social activities, civil society institutions and the media, the presence of girls in schools and universities, have been important achievements of Afghan women. However, women and women's rights activists believe that not only these achievements have not been enough, they are also very fragile. They claim that has not been done the serious and fundamental work that should have been done for the future and the participation of women. In fact, there is evidence that mistakes and shortcomings have been made over the years which after a period of twenty years,

these achievements are still fragile, and as in previous periods, we will soon see their destruction.

In this study, an attempt was made to look into the fragility of Afghan women's achievements over the past twenty years. This research also drew on the most authoritative papers and books, as well as the most recent reports and records from national and international institutions. It has also examined discrimination against women and has continued to address the many barriers that women face in entering politics, as well as the barriers that prevent women from participating in politics. This study is also linked to a study of women's political participation in Herat, Kabul, Mazare Sharif provinces, which was written after doing field research and interviewing political civic activists, members of parliament, and provincial councils in the region. It is believed that by conducting this research and providing an answer, it will be an incentive for women to attempt to maintain their achievements by more coherence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To the best of the author's knowledge, there are very few academic studies on the causes of the fragility of Afghan women's achievements over the past twenty years. Despite that, the author will critically review the existing literature in this section. Shah Gol Mirzaee, (2020), wrote in her article that the achievements of women in Afghanistan are fragile. No serious and fundamental work has been done for the future and participation of women. Over the past few years, unfortunately, the approach in Afghanistan has been to highlight some of the symbols. Jahangiri et al. (2010) have published a book entitled 4-5 Policies of Discrimination and Women's Political Participation, The Role of Education, which includes a total of 22 interviews with women's rights activists in three sections of education and its impact on women's political participation, eliminating discrimination against women and the experience and struggles of women rights activists have been compiled.

Sedigheh Jafari (2018) has tried to examine the barriers to women's political participation in security, education, and political culture, in her research entitled "Barriers to Women's Political Participation". The status and rights of women in society changed culturally, socially, economically and politically and hopes for a good future for women has destroyed, after the presence of the international community and the holding of several parliamentary and presidential elections and the formation of a new political system and the drafting of a new constitution in this country.

Mirwais Zamani, Human Rights Defenders in Afghanistan (2015), claims in his article that Afghanistan is going through a very bright period in the current situation, compared to the pre-democracy situation in this country. After a dark period, opportunities have been created in Afghanistan; even though, compared to the expectations and plans we had, we still face shortcomings. Statistics show that the international community has invested € 3.2 billion in the reconstruction of Afghanistan's education system between 2007 and 2009. Instead fundamental work is not being done for the advancement of women. Marzia Rahmani (2017) in her book entitled "Women and World Peace " wrote: Studies have shown that women have further damaged from acts of aggression, colonial and foreign conflicts, interference in any form, as well as violent behaviors. In the meantime, the responsibility for maintaining and promoting peace lies with women peacekeepers at the United Nations, and the United Nations must work to establish world peace and the participation of women in establishing and maintaining peace. United Nation Security Council Resolution 1325 can be considered a useful step for women towards political and

social progress.

All things considered, the situation of women in Afghanistan in various sectors is not favorable and requires more attention and presence of Afghan women and domestic and international institutions. It's worthy to be noted that the issue of the stability of women in the traditional Afghan society and the fragility of their achievements have been neglected.

METHODOLOGY

The study applied a qualitative approach exploring the causes of fragility of the Afghan women's achievements between 2001 and 2021 by examining and assessing some data on the level and challenges of women's political participation in Parliament, Provincial Councils and political parties and their performances. Literary survey and field research are the data collection techniques used in

the study, and the field study benefited of semistructured interview with certain women political activists and actors in the province of Herat. Accordingly, 30 women politicians from different provinces, 40 members of civil society and 4 members of parliament were interviewed. The data was analyzed using a method known as thematic analysis.

CAUSES OF FRAGILITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS

In developing and traditional societies such as Afghanistan, the need for continuous efforts to keep women and gender equality dialogue alive has particular importance because of the colorful role of culture, tradition, and most importantly, the influence and dominance of religion in various walks of life, society, and politics, it is possible for women and their aspirations to be easily and again marginalized or completely destroyed. In such societies, there has always been a fear of losing the achievements of women since, the conscious presence and full of women's ability to create national components has never addressed the role of women in the family and society, and this issue has always been raised symbolically and publicly. This study, by examining the situation of women in the last twenty years, has identified some of these reasons for fragility, including the following reasons:

IMPROPER PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN'S ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

After the fall of the Taliban government in 2001, large sums of money were paid to Afghanistan by the international community for the reconstruction of Afghanistan A number of women considered establishing NGOs, civic organizations, and women's empowerment organizations. Different activities were carried out in these organizations. The main goals of creating these institutions are as follows:

- a. Holding legal awareness programs and legal support and creating jobs and economic backgrounds for people, especially women and children heads of households
- b. Creating various training courses such as computer English and journalism and vocational courses such as carpentry, tailoring and... that would increase the capacity of people
- c. Efforts to obtain information about the basic problems of women in Afghanistan and to find appropriate solutions
- d. Efforts to create equality and justice among all sections of society
- e. Defending women's rights against domestic violence and harassment in the workplace

The Ministry of Women's Affairs was one of the ministries of the Government of Afghanistan, which was established in 2001 after the overthrow of the Taliban by the Provisional Government of Afghanistan to protect the rights of women in this country. At first, all the plans and programs for women and in order to empower women seemed very good and fruitful. However, the lack of a monitoring organization in the organizations supporting women and the Ministry of Women's Affairs and its affiliated departments caused those who were at the top of the institutions and the Ministry of Women's Affairs to forget their main mission, which is to defend women's rights and their values.

As a result, the issue of women and programs for women has changed from a human and humanitarian issue to a political issue, and as mentioned earlier, the government and the system have paved the way for the destruction of women's small achievements. No fundamental work was done to defend women's rights. Activities and struggles were symbolic and dramatic, and attempts were made to reflect those symbolic programs on important, productive, and influential social media. Thus, although Afghan women have made relative progress in the social and economic sectors over the past 20 years, it is believed that in these years most urban women have made progress and less attention has been paid to rural women, or that they have been forgotten, it can be explicitly claimed that the corrupt and incorrect performance of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, which was a ministry dedicated to women, and the so-called pro-women institutions and organizations have made the achievements of women in the last twenty years fragile.

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WOMEN'S LACK OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

If women have enough self-confidence and achieve complete self-belief, their power and capability will naturally increase and they will be able to plan and create a safe environment for other family members with better management.

Afghan women are also among those whose lack of self-confidence has prevented them from fulfilling their social responsibilities outside the home. Because in the past, from childhood to old age, women and girls have been taught that they are girls and should be made for housework and housework, and they grow up with the general and misogynistic belief that many should Avoid things and this will lead to self-disbelief.

In most cases, men easily prevent women from expressing themselves by referring to the existing laws, which are very unknown and vague. None of the laws mentions women's personality independence strongly and constructively, which completely destroys the traditional society's belief in women and makes women disbelieve in themselves. Deprivation of women's civil liberties is another reason for women's growing disbelief in themselves. In fact, there is a problem of isolating women from the family.

Women's lack of self-confidence and low morale cause them to put some obstacles in the way of their progress. In some cases, this lack of trust leads to many mistakes in the implementation of their projects and programs. Therefore, they will not be able to achieve the desired result, and the failure to implement the plans would cause men to blame them more than ever.

INCORRECT ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF GENDER

Gender as a concept and development has evolved over time. It started with the beginning of women's movements to defend women's rights and continued with the development of companies against oppression and marginalization of women. The struggle has led to the defense of women against discrimination.

Over the last twenty years, efforts have been made and changes have been made about women in various fields. Many laws, policies, and strategies, such as the Gender Strategy or the National Strategy for Combating Violence Against Women, have been developed to improve the situation of Afghan women and ensure equality. Improper implementation of gender strategy, at the policy level and at the level of civic activity, has not paid attention to the role of young men and boys in ensuring gender equality, and has identified Afghan men as mere perpetrators of patriarchy, misogynistic beings and perpetrators of violence.

As a result, it can be clearly stated that one of the main reasons why one of the great achievements of women, called "gender equality", is fragile today, is the neglect of the role of men in gender strategy. Which made men, in most cases, staunch opponents of preserving women's values and achievements. Incorrect analysis of the concept of gender has prevented the consolidation of one of the most important achievements of women, and gender is referred to as an alien concept that seems to provide women with unconditional freedoms, while its goal is equality between men and women, and in fact deals with the violated rights of both sexes.

LACK OF LASTING PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN AND NEGLECT OF WOMEN IN THE PEACE KEEPING PROCESS

Studies have shown that acts of aggression, military conflict, colonial policies and any foreign intervention, as well as terrorism and violent behavior, have further harmed women. Violations of the human rights of women and children during wars and military conflicts have clearly threatened the foundations of the health and security of human society.

Despite the consolidation of women's status in credible international instruments and the positive impact of their presence on achieving lasting peace, women still play a marginal role in many peace processes. Even in conflicts where women play an active role, they are not given a role or position in resolving conflicts or making major decisions.

"Negotiations without women's decisions fail sooner, and in groups in which only men participate, decisions are often aggressive and dangerous, and empathy and cooperation are less common than in mixed groups." says Valerie M. Hudson, author of Gender and World Peace. She also mentions in her book that; Evidence suggests that advancing women's security and women's stability will lead to the development and stability of a region. According to her, the most important example of this is Afghanistan, where the issue of gender is receding after the withdrawal of US troops, and US assistance has been ineffective to Afghan women.

BELIEVING PEOPLE TO CUSTOM AND HABIT

One of the topics that affects the social life of human beings in different societies in different ways every day is the issue of customs and habits. As we know, custom is the basic criterion for

determining the moral rules and educational standards of a society. That is why it is not possible to easily distinguish between the customs, habits and customs of a community. Customs and habits have had a serious presence in shaping the views of religious scholars.

Custom has always been one of the biggest challenges to women's progress and freedom. In many areas, custom is considered the law of reference. The culture and people of Afghanistan are traditional. Bad customs and traditions, which violate the human rights of women and girls, are widespread and pervasive throughout Afghanistan in all its communities. The high dependence of the people on old customs and traditions, especially in the villages, has made the life of women in Afghanistan face serious challenges over the years.

Since Afghanistan is a country with a traditional and customary historical background, it can be clearly said that women have been the main victims of false values and beliefs in this country. The work and activities done were not enough for women. The old, misogynistic and traditional ideas of Afghan men and even women needed more time to change.

People living in rural areas consider most of the women's support plans to be against religion and traditions and never allow their wives and daughters to change their lifestyles. Therefore, in these few years, most of the activities have been related to urban women, and the changes and achievements have been specific to urban women, whose number is very small compared to rural women. This shows the fragility of the achievements of Afghan women. Changes not only require more time but also need to focus more on the customs and traditions of rural and remote areas. Women's advocacy organizations need to pay close attention to this issue and devise serious programs to reduce the wrong customs and traditions that hinder women's progress.

CONCLUSION

A quick look at the history of Afghanistan shows that in addition to the fact that women's progress has been very slow and unstable, setbacks have always been rapid and continuous. If women and their progress were valued in one government, several other regimes and governments would even deprive them of their basic rights, which were education and employment. This study shows that the women's rights discourse was a foreign project and was not an Afghan project.

The problem with the women's rights discourse was that it was an urban and Western discourse, and the Afghan people believe that most of the projects being implemented are contrary to their Islamic and traditional values. For this reason, women's activities soon became theatrical and organizational activities. The findings of this study show that since there is no unity and solidarity among Afghan women, their movements will never become indigenous and autonomous movements in order to bring about general changes in the status of women. One of the important findings of this study is to identify the most basic barriers to women's activities that prevented them from achieving lasting and tangible achievements

According to research, the insecure atmosphere in Afghanistan forces Afghan women to be very cautious and conservative. Women continue to struggle and struggle in an insecure environment, with daily victims of domestic violence, harassment in the workplace, gender discrimination and inequality, and human rights abuses. The achievements of women over the last two decades cannot

be ignored. The findings of this study also show that the lack of solidarity and unity of Afghan women has made it impossible for them to have a united women's movement to protect their achievements as a social force.

Among the most important achievements of women are the girls' attendance at school, their entry into ministries, departments and institutions as employees, the empowerment of women in the social and political sectors, and the creation of protective laws for women. However, the issue of preserving their achievements was completely forgotten. This study found that women's rights organizations and the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan do not have a plan and action to preserve women's achievements and this has put women's achievements at risk.

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