

The Negative Influence of Excluding Afghan Women from Employment on Afghanistan's Development Under the Taliban Leadership (2021-2024)

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Abstract. Under Taliban leadership, women lost their right to employment which negatively affected Afghanistan's economic stability as well as both its social structure and political system. This research examines how Taliban policies of exclusion negatively impact Afghanistan by reducing national GDP, producing poverty increases, creating educational setbacks, leading to international political estrangement, and causing harm to women's mental health. The research depends on global reports and statistical data to document the negative impact on sustainable development caused by blocking the economic and social participation of half the population. This paper demands better policies, as well as international support that would bring women back to work because female employment serves as a vital factor for national wealth creation.

Keywords: Employment Ban, Afghan Women, Taliban, Gender Equality.

1 Introduction

Employment was always one of the major key factors in developed and developing countries [1]. During the previous Republic government of Afghanistan, more than 800 national and international organizations were engaged in humanitarian, reconstruction, development, and peace-building programs. Female workers were a part of these associations and played crucial roles in delivering humanitarian services [2].

Women were actively involved in several ministries, organizations, institutions, and other national and international sectors before the Taliban took control of the nation. The former government encouraged Afghan women to participate in a variety of workplaces to help the nation's development. With the collapse of Afghanistan in 2021, everything changed drastically for Afghan women. The Taliban are acting in the same manner as when they took control of Afghanistan between the 1996-2001 years. The laws and prohibitions against women remain the same, and regrettably, the attitudes of Islamic extremists have not changed. During the initial Taliban governance from 1996 to 2001 total employment restrictions for women wiped out their professional participation in the market [2].

Afghan women were prohibited from pursuing their education, barred from working and the workplace, had their freedom of movement restricted, had their fundamental rights violated, and all of their rights were gradually taken away. The Taliban government's new laws and policies are detrimental to Afghanistan's political and socioeconomic progress. The backward movement affects women directly alongside creating institutional performance problems that count on their contributions.

Despite the vastness of international coverage highlighting women's rights abominations in Afghanistan, academic research interrogates the precise developmental ramifications of feminized exclusion from participating in the labor market to the economy, society, and politics under Taliban control. Most of the literature focuses on a humanitarian or legalistic perspective, while the long-term developmental costs are under-explored. The main questions this paper seeks to tackle are: how the Taliban government's new policies prohibiting women from employment will negatively impact the nation's development, and what are the long-term effects on Afghanistan's reliance on foreign assistance and economic expansion?

This research paper is structured into four sections. The "Introduction" provides the context and background, research questions, and structure of the paper. The "Research Method" shows the type of methodology used to find the information and data. The "Discussion" addresses the two questions with detail. Finally, the "Conclusion" synthesizes the findings and offers insights.

2 Method

This research method's strategy is normative. It uses secondary resources from books, Journal articles, UN agencies, the World Bank, and statistical records. By interpreting data on gender equality alongside the principles of sustainable development, the research evaluates contemporary Afghan policy on women. It advances best practice recommendations from national and international legal perspectives.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research uses the international conventions to support the arguments of the employment ban against of female. Also, this paper used two development theories that interact with each other. First, according to the Harrod-Domar Growth Theory, economic growth depends on the combination of investment productivity and saving levels [3]. The isolation of women in Afghanistan has inflicted serious damage to human capital while reducing productive workforce activities thus causing the economy to shrink while blocking economic growth. The economic stoppage resulting from minimal workforce engagement confirms the validity of Harrod-Domar's theory regarding decreased investment effectiveness. Secondly, W.W. Rostow describes development as a process through linear stages: from traditional society to high mass consumption [4]. Before 2021, Afghanistan demonstrated advancement toward "take-off" development but the Taliban imposed restrictions on women disrupting their educational and employment access thus sending the country back to "traditional

society" according to Rostow's model.

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3 Result and Discussion

3.1 The Decline of Women Employment from the Goal of (SDG 8)

By preventing of Afghan women from employment the economic growth has been decreased, but the poverty rate has increased during the past three years of the Taliban government. To begin with, during the Taliban regime, the lack of women and girls in the workforce had a significant negative influence on society. The executive orders implemented by the Taliban authorities undermine Article 10 of (CEDAW) by denying education equality, and Article 11 by limiting the right to work [5]. Female employees in public and private companies, institutions, and organizations lost their jobs and business. All women stepped back and were banned from working or to continue their businesses by the Taliban's new law and policies against Afghan women. Additionally, the equal enjoyment expressed by (ICCPR) Article 3 remains inaccessible to Afghan women because they are barred from both government positions and decision-making roles [6]. Afghanistan's political landscape has also evolved during the last three years, with the removal of all political parties. The Taliban's laws and rules forced out all women who worked as judges, lawyers, politicians, and in other political sectors, now they live in fear of the Taliban government. Furthermore, under Taliban rule, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) was dropped from the list of ministries [7]. To advocate for the freedom of Afghan female both domestically as well as globally, they don't even have a female representative.

According to a UNDP assessment in 2022, Afghanistan lost almost 30% of its GDP after the Taliban took control and women were barred from employment [8]. Since the Taliban leaders lack literacy and are unaware of the value of GDP to the nation, Afghanistan's GDP may worsen more as they are unable to recover or seek to raise the GDP % in the upcoming years. Other than this, 80 percent of the households in Afghanistan have faced income reduction during these 24 months [9]. Every department and industry have seen a decline in employee payments, expelling workers, as well as revenue and salary levels. Considering that families cannot subsist on one income, the removal of female from labor has resulted to financial distress, and a rise in the unemployment rate. As a result, the Taliban government is unable to pay the lowest wages to male employees due to the low economic status. The fact that the majority of businessmen and women have fled the country, and other international business organizations are unwilling to take the chance of investing in Afghanistan due to its unstable economic, political, and security conditions. In summary, considering the existing situation in Afghanistan and the international objectives, it is

unlikely that both genders in Afghanistan can attain the objective of decent work and economic growth for all (SDG 8) by 2030 [10].

3.2 Our Impact of Banning Afghan Female from Employment on Poverty Rate (SDG 1)

Gene To compare the current situation of poverty rate with the previous government, unluckily, it has gone up. Over the 18 months since the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan's economic collapse has plunged 97 percent of the country's population into poverty, leaving families to take on crushing debt or make impossible choices just to survive Afghanistan [11]. According to the most recent data, 80 percent of Afghan women live in poverty, and at least 1.4 million girls stay out of school and female labour force participation is but 4.8 percent [12]. The funds are moving abroad because they are not actively cycling within the nation. The government sectors are also reliant on outside assistance because none of the organizations and nations are making investments or hiring staff. Rich people are becoming poorer these days, and impoverished families are now living under poverty. The majority of people have sold their possessions in the last three years to survive in Afghanistan, receive medical care, or to relocate abroad legally and illegally in search of employment and a better quality of life.

The primary components of poverty are social safeguards, work, medical care, and literacy. It is vital and efficient to invest in these sectors to eliminate poverty [13]. Equal and high-quality rights to social protection, work, healthcare, and education would enable people and society to find a better way to live and to support one another in overcoming poverty. These cycles have been broken under Taliban leadership to work toward (SDG 1). In Afghanistan, as an example, every family consists of a minimum of seven people, and children must be able to access the necessities that parents should supply, like food, clothing, health care, and education. They are unable to provide for all these essential supplies for their child with just the father's wages. The removal of female from labor is one of the primary causes of poverty, and it has contributed to the rise in the poverty rate. Despite the obstacles that women face, some of the young Afghan girls are working online, managing their businesses virtually, and continuing their jobs through online shopping and from other ways to provide and support their families. To sum, Afghanistan will not be able to achieve the (SDG 1) objective of ending poverty by 2030 if the Taliban's policy of prohibiting women from working continues.

3.3 The Effect on Deprives of Female Employment on Social and Psychological Rate

In Women's mental health problems get worse by the harsh environment under Taliban control, which raises their risk of experiencing trauma, anxiety, and depression [14]. The restriction on involvement of females from employment has been impacted negatively on social and psychology as well as their lives. To elaborate, the prohibition of women and girls from continuing to study and work has a negative impact on their psychological and emotional well-being. They have a mental

breakdown because of remaining at home all day, doing the same housework, and daily routine. According to the UN Women data, a growing mental wellness issue brought on by the loss of freedoms is also evident, as 68% of women identify as having "bad" or "terrible" mental disorders, and 8% claim they know of a minimum a single more woman or girl who has attempted suicide [15]. Apart from Taliban restrictions, women and girls lost their well-being and became introverted, depressed, and lack of motivation to continue their life due to the poor state of their families and the lack of independence. Afghan women and girls have endured a profound level of isolation and loneliness. Tragically, the families also lack the funds for visits to a doctor or psychologist for treatment of their issues. Given to circumstances in Afghanistan and the prevalence of domestic violence against women, several of the young girls have attempted suicide at least once.

Moreover, families have been pressuring their daughters into marriages since women are not allowed to pursue their professional life, and the number of child marriages has risen from prior years because of the parents' limited income. The only choice left to disadvantaged families is to force their daughters into early marriage when the Taliban's policies isolate females, in still fear and uncertainty in communities, and prevent girls from completing secondary education [16]. Sadly, the number of forced and arranged marriages has been rising, which will put more pressure on young girls to abandon their aspirations of going to school or finding employment. Alongside stress and mental illness, they will also have to deal with a large family after marriage or how to manage in their young ages, which will worsen their feelings of loneliness and depression. On top of that, a woman who is physically and psychologically abnormal cannot give birth to a healthy child, and the likelihood that either the mother or the baby will die during delivery will also rise. Since their mothers neglected their mental health and well-being, their children will likewise have mental health issues even after they are given birth. Ultimately, preventing women from working will have a detrimental effect on their psychological and physical wellbeing, as well as the mindset of Afghanistan's future generation.

3.4 Theory Analysis

The economic development of Afghanistan suffered severe setbacks because of denying employment to women based on two foundational theories. The Taliban's discriminatory female exclusionary policies have caused Afghanistan to experience both economic decline and social backward movement which economists' study through the Harrod-Domar model and Rostow's stages of economic growth framework. To start, economic growth under the Harrod-Domar theory depends on savings and investments yet heavily depends on having sufficient productive worker [17]. The national economy suffers from economic stagnation in Afghanistan because women face exclusion which reduces savings rates along with productivity levels. Woman exclusion produces severe underutilization of workers which reduces Afghanistan's economic productivity and minimizes its GDP. The limited workforce due to gender exclusion leads to higher dependency ratios and smaller capital-output ratios which prevents sustainable development from taking place. The inability of numerous women and a high percentage of the population to work economically leads

to economic decline and poverty deepens despite insufficient labor force participation.

Furthermore, according to W.W. Rostow, the essential factor for modernization depends on having multiple sectors of social and economic involvement [3]. Afghanistan was moving ahead in its development path known as "preconditions for take-off" because it centered its strategy on investments to educate the population and create extensive infrastructure while promoting gender equality [18]. The employment bans implemented by the Taliban have eliminated all the progress made since restoring traditional social conditions in Afghanistan. The international economic isolation of the country blocks the path towards Rostow's "take-off" stage while demonstrating the essential role that women play in national modernization.

3.5 The Long-term Effects and Consequences of Preventing Women from Employment on Economic Growth

Women's employment restrictions under Taliban rule will have a detrimental impact on Afghanistan's economy and economic circumstances, making it more reliant on international aid. First, there is no doubt that the need for financial and humanitarian assistance will expand. As of now, Afghanistan is more dependent from previous years on its neighbors, and powerful nations. Due to the Taliban's violations of human rights in Afghanistan, international organizations have stopped providing financial aid to the country's borders. In the years to come, Afghan women will face further difficulties because of this move. International communities have consequently imposed economic sanctions on the Taliban administration for human rights violations by barring women from employment. Afghanistan's economic condition will likely worsen because of this measure, which appears to exclude the country from international trade groups and forums shortly.

However, limited reconstruction and development activities should create opportunities for this restoration of livelihoods (hope and dignity) thus reducing the need for aid in contexts where the emergency is the rule rather than an exception [19]. Previously, women have contributed significantly to society and the nation's progress in a variety of fields. At this period, Afghan women are unable to resist and oppose the Taliban government without outside support. This predicament cannot be resolved by isolating other countries diplomatically. To ensure that the Afghan people are not left behind in terms of development and sustainability, other nations must invest in and collaborate with them. Afghanistan will not be able to recoup its economic development without international assistance because its productivity has declined. International organizations, Islamic states, as well as powerful nations, must negotiate with Taliban members and sign an agreement. That would allow Afghan women to be part of society and provide space for females to work outside the home, and to pursue their education. The Taliban disregards all previous laws and policies, including the (CEDAW) [20]. Ultimately, women must be reintegrated into the workforce in all fields, industries, and regions of Afghanistan's development for the country to thrive sustainably. Since women are a part of the nation and society, it is hard to persuade the Taliban to provide them with the same professional prospects as male without the immediate support of the international community.

4 Conclusion

Perhaps Conclusively, the employment bans in Afghanistan are in direct violation of SDG 5. It is blocking many other goals including (SDG 1), (SDG 4), as well as (SDG 8). Since the Taliban government came to power in 2021, the number of women employed in Afghanistan has drastically decreased, according to recent ILO data [21]. The restrictive treatment of women's rights in Afghanistan generates severe diplomatic effects that extend past gender equality mandates. A nation's economic performance improves when gender equality reaches high levels, but Afghanistan's denial of women from public positions has triggered its sociolect-economy to decline sharply. The exclusion of female representation in governance systems creates obstacles to implementing gender-responsive policies because it reduces decision-making opportunities for women resulting in marginalization of their needs [22].

In the end, the Taliban's policies and the international community must change immediately to prevent further hardships and worsening conditions for Afghan women. Additionally, international organizations ought to resume providing financial and humanitarian assistance. The Taliban regime must restore Afghan women's employment and rights since international collaboration and sustainable development goals depend on women employing jointly.

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