

The Fate of Women's Rights in Afghanistan Under the Taliban Regime

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Before the Taliban, women had an active presence and key role in Afghan society. Afghanistan was a model of democracy among its neighbors, with women making up 21 percent of the country's workforce (ILO, 2022). However, with the rule of the Islamic Emirate, women now find themselves in a marginalized position within a patriarchal society governed by irrational and extremist laws. These have excluded women from any leadership positions in government, reflecting all the human rights violations and sub-human conditions that women have been left with.

Two years after the return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan, it can be said that respect for human rights, especially women's rights, has plummeted. Along with this violation of basic human rights, the country's security and economic and financial order are now in jeopardy.

Female officials and employees who worked in the government before the Taliban takeover are now housebound and suffering. Non-governmental organizations have insulted working Afghan women. Severe restrictions have also been imposed on this targeted group under the auspices of hijab. The unjust circumstances imposed by the Taliban have forced working women to feel extremely unprotected, unmotivated and helpless.

As a result of the regime's actions, poverty has skyrocketed, causing tremendous havoc in all aspects of Afghan society. Depression and psychological scars are now more common among women and girls as a result of increased domestic violence. As a result of this severe depression, suicide rates among the female population have also escalated.

The Taliban regime has also denied young girls the right to education after the sixth grade. Girls are no longer allowed to attend university. The lack of female professionals, especially doctors and nurses to treat sick and vulnerable women, is a direct result of the Taliban's discriminatory rules.

Women's access to health services has also been severely restricted. Gender-based violence (GBV) has exacerbated the need. Women are prevented from visiting hospitals due to the lack of female medical specialists. The lack of appropriate medicine, technology and facilities has made it impossible for women to enjoy their right to health and has contributed to the increasing number of deaths among women (WHO, 2022).

Women in Afghanistan no longer play a role in cultural activities. Their identity and contribution to Afghan culture has been completely erased from the history books. Independent female artists are currently imprisoned and trapped within the four walls of impoverished homes in dangerous zones of the country (UN Women, 2022). Women have

lost the cultural right, including the right to participate in music, theater, cinema and other artistic fields. International institutions that support women artists have been forcibly removed from Afghanistan. In fact, art among women has been restricted and society is deprived of female artists, a symbol of intimacy and humanity.

In addition, the regime and other extremist groups and individuals use derogatory literature against women in the media. Political domination, the hegemony of patriarchal thinking, radicalism and extremism have joined hands to punish women.

Gender persecution takes place in Afghanistan under the rule of the de facto authorities (HRW, 2023). Gender-based persecution is a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute, the report notes. In addition, the regime and other extremist groups and individuals use misogynistic literature in the media. Political domination, patriarchal hegemony, radicalism and extremism have joined hands to punish women.

In conclusion, the aftermath of the Taliban's resurgence has seen a tragic erosion of women's rights, with dire consequences for both individual lives and the nation as a whole. The sidelining of educated and skilled female officials has left an immense void in the country, as women are deprived of opportunities for personal growth and advancement. Victimized by the patriarchal culture fostered by the ideals of the Taliban, this is unfortunately the harsh reality of Afghan women in the 21st century.

