Introduction

The religion of Afghanistan is Islam, which makes the vast majority of the Afghan population Muslim. In Afghanistan, the directives set by the Koran are assimilated into contemporary law. According to the Koran, male supremacy and women's obedience are the will of Allah. Due to the fact that the contemporary law is influenced by the Koran's directives, the legal age to marry for women is set low, since in the Koran, one of Mohammed's wives was 6 years of age at their first encounter and the marriage was consummated when the girl reached 9 years of age. These factors, presented alone, limit what a female in a country like Afghanistan is allowed to do.

Afghanistan was under the rule of an extremist group called Taliban from 1996-2001, the Taliban extremist group claim to be followers of Islam, which causes controversy amongst Muslims, some claim what they do is not in the name of Allah. They currently have control over 4% of Afghanistan's territory and they are active in 66% of Afghanistan. Taliban has only one goal, to reform Afghanistan into the 'purest' Islamic country. Hereby the women's rights are further infringed upon, while the Taliban ruled they declared that women were prohibited to go to work, receive proper education, leave their house without being accompanied by a male figure as well as their veil. This extremist group no longer rules but they continue to attack inside of Afghanistan, for example by attacking schools. They undergo such violence so that the leader of the Taliban, Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhundzada, can rule over Afghanistan again and infringe their laws among the population.

Some might claim that as a woman living in Afghanistan is the worst fate yet, this although is understood and proven due to the facts stated above and further oppression that is conducted in the country. Women in Afghanistan live in fear of their lives and they live controlled by men, in every mean possible. Nearly 90% of Afghan women have experienced domestic abuse and when reported they generally receive no support from the government. 80% of all suicides in Afghanistan are Women, which is unusual due to the rates of male suicides normally being higher in countries.

Women in Afghanistan therefore are inferior to men and controlled by men. Many problematics lie with this society in which women are not viewed as equal to men by the vast majority, there is always a...
minority that will disagree. These various problems call to be addressed upon and need to be reformed so that Afghanistan can have a well balanced functioning society where women do not fear for their lives if they choose to lead a different one than the one Koran directs. This is important so that women and girls in Afghanistan can receive proper education as well as more say in the governmental proceedings.

Education is a key point to the development of any society. Due to the fact that the extremist group, Taliban, restrict women to proper education this is further delaying the development of the women in said society, which leads to the continuation of the inferiority lifestyle women have to live under.

Having rights is a human right so this is not just a threat to women's rights but also human rights.

Definition of Key Terms

Oppression

The exercise of authority or power in a burdensome, cruel, or unjust manner. An act or instance of oppressing or subjecting to cruel or unjust impositions or restraints. The state of being oppressed. the feeling of being heavily burdened, mentally or physically, by troubles, adverse conditions or anxiety. 2 Synonyms being persecution, abuse and maltreatment.

Infringe

When you infringe upon someone's e.g. rights this means you are getting involved in any matter that is unjust. in the context it refers to society in Afghanistan and men that both influence women's rights and freedom in an unjust manner which creates an imminent threat to women's rights in Afghanistan.

Islam

The religion of the Muslims, a monotheistic faith regarded as revealed through Muhammad as the Prophet of Allah. 3

Koran

The Islamic sacred book, believed to be the word of God as dictated to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel and written down in Arabic. The Koran consists of 114 units of varying lengths, known as suras ; the first sura is said as part of the ritual prayer. These touch upon all aspects of human existence, including matters of doctrine, social organization, and legislation. 4

Muslim

An individual who follows the religion islam is classified as a muslim.
Extremist group

A person or a group who holds extreme political or religious views, especially one who advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action. An example for such group would be the Talibvans who impose their strong religious beliefs violently amongst individuals.

Background Information

Taliban

The Taliban group ruled over Afghanistan from the mid 1990s until 2001, during their rule they enforced strict laws that strictly were coherent with the Koran, seeing as their goal was and still is to reform Afghanistan to the ‘purest’ Islam state. During this time women were not permitted to go to school, work or leave the house unaccompanied by a man, these factors and prohibitions have created a setback in the development of women. In the Koran a housewife view of the woman is depicted, the interpretation of the taliban took away the woman's right to choose whether she chooses to be a housewife or to work. They forced the strict interpretations upon them. Although the Taliban does not rule over Afghanistan it is still fighting to overthrow the government and take back power. They are fighting with violence.

Religion

The religion of Afghanistan is Islam, Islam believers (Muslims) follow the directives of the Koran. According to Islamic teachings the supremacy of man is the will of Allah and it has been predestined for women to live obedient and submissive. Allah also does not want to see any women unveiled, which technically is a choice. The Koran contains verses that indicate the equality of men and women, e.g. 4:124 ‘As for those who lead a righteous life, male or female. While believing they enter paradise; without the slightest injustice.’ (Koran) But such clearly are overlooked and or ignored due to the proceedings of the maltreatment and injustice toward women.

veiling and hijab

A woman is free to choose if she wants veiling or not in Muslim societies but shall they not choose according to what pleases the majority they will be pressured into doing what is expected, to veil themselves. Wearing the veil is a principle that was instituted by the prophet Mohammed. Islamic head

cover 33:59 is meant to separate man from woman. The hijab controls a woman's sexuality from men who prey. A quote from the prophet Mohammed ‘....therefore when a woman goes out Satan looks at her and desires to carry her from the road’. Such insinuations are an insult to both sexes, seeing as Mohammed is implicating that all Muslim men are sexually focused human beings.

child marriage

Mohamed married a nine year old girl when he himself was over 25-30 years of age. Such example has implemented itself into the society of Afghanistan regarding marriage age. Reasons for child marriage range from purity of the female to subjectiveness from when they are already children. This influences how they grow to be women and how they act. Bluntly, this is mere brainwashing of young girls, as they grow up in an environment and with a man that they have to submit themselves to. They do as he says follow his rules and they usually know no different because they have spent a vast amount of years in such an environment. First from the example of the girls own father and mother followed by the father giving her away to a man.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Afghanistan

Afghanistan works with the help of the USA to fight Taliban and other terrorist groups, which are the biggest threats to the society's safety as well as women's rights. Afghanistan is actively fighting the Taliban group who long to take over, they have yet been unsuccessful and continue to fight.

USA

From 2001-2010 the amount of U.S forces in Afghanistan increased from 1,300 to over 100,000 troops. This occurred due to the blame of Al Qaeda for the September 11th 2001 terrorist attack, the Taliban's rule was until 2001 and they had let Al Qaeda stay in Afghanistan. By 2017 the amount of troops had decreased then further increased to 14,000 in 2017. A peace meeting between President Trump and the Taliban was set up but canceled due to the death of a U.S service member in a Taliban attack. Future involvement of the United States of America is yet to be announced.

UN Women

This UN body dedicates itself to promoting gender equality as well as promoting women and girls in all aspects. In Afghanistan the UN women body has influenced the increase of midwives present during birth which has decreased the amount of maternal deaths. The rate went from 1,600 deaths for every 100,00 births in 2002 to 396 deaths in 2015. The efforts of the Afghan government as well as
organisations and the UN women have influenced the adaptation of women in various aspects of society. 27.7% of the seats in Parliament belong to women and there have been 3 women appointed as ambassadors to represent Afghanistan in different countries. Women's participation in the labour force has continued to increase since 2001 to 19% in 2016. The hope is that these rates continue to increase but the danger lies in the extremist group, Taliban which could create a complete halt to all such development and set it back.

Timeline of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Gender equality before the Constitution, article 13 is added to the Afghan Constitution</td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>women's right to vote in Afghanistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Soviet Education program, Afghanistan is occupied by soviet troops who enforce education of girls and women, women can now study and choose their profession freely</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>The taliban reach power and forbid women/girls from going to school, work and from leaving their homes without male company</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>the taliban rule ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>New constitution with conflicting provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>free elections and women in parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>elected president Ashraf Ghani appoints three women as ministers of his cabinet</td>
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Relevant UN Treaties and Events
Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The United States of America and the Afghan government have been working closely together to fight the Taliban, the involvement of the USA came about after the terrorist attack that led back to the Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden had refuge in Afghanistan due to the Taliban rule. Because of such the USA sent in troops over time to Afghanistan. A peace meeting had been scheduled between the USA and the Taliban group, this however was canceled due to the death of a U.S. service member in a Taliban attack.
The involvement of the UN organization, UN Women, has changed many rates for the better. The maternal death rates have decreased due to the increase of midwives present at birth. The UN women’s involvement influenced the adaptation of women into a wide range of aspects in society. Adding on the participation of women in the labour force has increased as well.

**Possible Solutions**

One solution that would be most difficult to implement would be to reform the state in a way that it is completely independent and separated from any form of religion, secularism. This would make the decision making and law making more prone to equality rather than it being influenced by the Koran which has a clear image of a woman's place in this world which leaves women at a vast disadvantage.

The biggest threat women are facing in Afghanistan at the moment is the extremist group, Taliban. Negotiation with such group is not possible due to violent implications on their part. A suggestion would be to start a war where not only Afghanistan is fighting off the Taliban but with the help of member nations the threat could be annihilated. Although the suggestion is violence this would be a fight for peace and equality.

Society's view on women in Afghanistan is distorted due to their lack of representation in important matters or decision making. Implementing a quota for women in the workforce would create gender diversity and allow many opportunities for women and girls. In order for women to have a job and to be considered in the workforce education is key. School should be mandatory until at least the age of 16 and thereafter if one chooses to stop education this decision should be up to one’s self entirely. Education reforms also ensures the financial independence of women and so forth to virtual independence.

A governmental reform requiring them to tend to women's necessities, physical and mental. A bigger fund should be set in place for gynecologists and obstetricians as well as mental health institutes for women who have suffered from violent physical and or mental abuse. These institutions are much needed due to the fact that Afghanistan has high death rates associated with childbirth and pregnancy. The health care system in Afghanistan needs to be improved and more widespread so that it reaches rural areas as well where there are mostly no clinics or in general health institutions.

Protest is how the minority who has yet spoken individually is heard as a whole, loud and clear. Women need to walk the streets and fight for their rights, in a country with a lot of violence this could be frightening. If there are 100 women protesting it is easier to capture and stop the protest rather than if it were 1000 000 women out in the streets fighting for their rights. Women need to stand up and go out and
fight together. Men who support equality and who are longing for the same peace and recognition of women are encouraged to join.

An end to child marriage in its entirety is crucial to the development of women as well as their right to choose who they marry. The legal age of marriage in Afghanistan for girls is 16 under the supervision of their father and 18 for men. LAw reforms are important to solving this issue so that the legal age of marriage for both sexes is 18 and such is done under no consent of the father but only the consent of oneself. If such consent is forced and or pressured legal punishment should be a consequence.

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Appendix or Appendices


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