



The Status of Women under the Taliban Ruling: A Comparative Research in Two Different Periods (1996-2001) to (2021- up to date)

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Abstract:

This research examines the status of women under the rule of the Taliban government in two different periods (1996–2001) and (2021–now) in a comparative manner, pointing out the similarities and differences between the Taliban's behaviour towards women in these two periods. Then the main reason for these differences is studied, and it focuses on testing the hypothesis that international pressures are the main factor for the changes in the Taliban's behaviour towards women.

Keywords: Women, Taliban and Gender inequality

Introduction

Gender inequalities are a historical and global reality. Although there have been many years of struggle against this phenomenon, it still exists extensively in many countries around the world, especially in Islamic countries, and is a major problem (Segal, A. 1996). This research aims to examine the status of women under the rule of the Taliban in two different periods of their governance in Afghanistan (1996-2001) and (2021-present) in order to highlight the similarities and differences between the two periods and to identify the reasons for the changes that have occurred. Accordingly, in this research, we first examine the status of women under the rule of the Taliban in their first period of governance, then we examine the status of women in their second period of governance, and then, by comparing the two mentioned periods, I will empirically examine the reason for this change, and based on the results obtained and identified factor It will be possible to provide suggestions for taking solutions and reducing gender inequality.

The Purpose and Research Question

The violation of women's rights throughout history is not hidden from anyone and is an undeniable fact, gender equality and criticism of anti-feminist structures began with the emergence of feminist movements, although these movements had great and significant achievements in this field, but they could not solve this issue globally, gender and women's rights are respected in many countries of the world today, but still many women around the world and in different fields such as international relations, domestic and national fields suffer from this discrimination and their rights are denied, a clear example of that is Afghanistan today, with the fall of the republican system and the destruction of relative democracy in 2021, the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban came on the scene for the second time and took control of the government, this extreme and strict group in the first period (1996-

2001) his government in Afghanistan had imposed severe restrictions against women (Emadi, H. 2015). after 20 years this group took control of the affairs of this country for the second time, the US special representative to negotiate with the Taliban claimed that the Taliban had changed and this time they will not have the strictures of the first period of his government, but what is in practice today We see that this group has imposed restrictions in general against the society and especially women, but we can see a little change in this period than first on Taliban behaviour regarding to women right and gender, the present research examines comparatively the status of women and gender under the rule of the Taliban in these two different periods (1996-2001) and (2021-till now) that there are some differences and similarities and answer to this question why are there differences between tow period of Taliban rule towards women and gender?

The significance of this research is that can help clarify the main nature of the Taliban and influence future decisions on whether the Taliban can cope with modern concepts such as human rights and properly women's rights, and draw the attention of the international community, or the Taliban are still the same group as they were 20 years ago that whose distinctive characteristics are assassination and killing. I think, having a clear picture from the nature of this group with their ideology can impact on the future of this country (Middleton, S. A. 2000). So, the main objective of this research is as following:

1. Evaluating the similarities and differences between two different period of the Taliban rule in the context of women statues and gender inequality and examining the main factor behind these changes and differences.
2. Provide a suggestion and solution considering the result and research achievements.

Literature Review

The Taliban's rule in Afghanistan is characterized by their harsh and oppressive treatment of women. Several studies have tried to document and analyse the situation of women under the Taliban regime in two different periods: 1996–2001 and 2021–date. A substantial body of literature has documented the impact of Taliban policies on women's lives during the previous period of their rule. The Taliban's interpretation of Islamic Sharia, which required gender segregation, wearing the burqa, and banning women from going to school or working outside the home, had a devastating effect on the social, economic, and political status of women (Maley, W. (1999). Studies have shown that women have been subjected to severe forms of violence and harassment, including flogging, stoning, and public executions.

With the Taliban coming to power for the second time in 2021, the women of this land are once again witnessing the repetition of their dark history, but with little difference. Schools for girls above the sixth grade are closed, and the gates of the universities have been closed and sometimes opened for a year and a half. Women are prohibited from working in non-governmental organizations, and they are not even allowed to work in international organizations. Kallini, S. X. (2021). However, there is a slight difference compared to the previous period: observing the hijab is mandatory, but wearing the burqa is not. They can work for the government, and they are also allowed to work in hospitals as doctors by observing Islamic rules. (Thomas, C. (2021).

The most relevant research and theories in this regard show that the changes in the Taliban's behaviour towards women. They gained experience from the first period of their rule, which

was recognized by only three countries (Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates). (Thomas, C. 2021). It seems that this time they have shown some flexibility for gaining legitimacy. The first goal of the Taliban is to gain legitimacy and recognition from the international community, which was also the first goal in the first period of their rule, but due to many problems, hard ideology, and inexperience in foreign policies, they were accused of doing things that were against the law and international norms. According to William, one of the most fundamental elements that prevented the Taliban from being recognized in the first round was the issue of gender and women's rights. In this period, the Taliban not only did not fulfil the demands of the international community but also acted contrary to them: violence against women, harbouring Osama bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda, increasing opium cultivation, breaking the idols of Bamiyan, etc all followed international reactions until they finally fell as a result of the American attack (Maley, W. (1999):

This issue shows that every country is required to comply with international laws and norms, and the issue of human rights is at the top of these values. The international community can influence the behaviour of governments, and in this period, the most important demands of the international community From the Taliban, the creation of an all-inclusive government consisting of all the ethnic groups of Afghanistan, women's freedom, and rights in all fields They have not yet been recognized by any country because they have not yet fully met these demands (Thomas, C. 2021).

There are relatively many studies on the status of women under Taliban rule properly in first period that show a clear picture of the gender situation and the changes that have occurred in relation to it, by comparing the statues of women in these two different periods of the Taliban ruling in Afghanistan, literature review shows a small change, it seems that the roots of this changes are for getting experience from the first period of their rule, international pressure or ideological. So, for understanding of this significant question it is required to be done an experimental and comparative research, which is not visible among the conducted researches. And this research is going to answer to this question that” what are the main factor behind of these differences? and is going to understand that the Taliban change regarding women rights is fundamental or it is just a penetration to get legitimacy, understanding of its are important and will effect on international community behaviour toward the Taliban states.

Research Methodology

According to the nature of the research (comparative research), this is an elite and specialized interview because conducting comparative and causal research requires experienced and expert interviewees. The interview is conducted in a semi-structured format that allows for open-ended questions and facilitates deeper exploration of the topic. The interviewees in this research were selected based on the snowball technique, which is a non-probability and appropriate technique in this field. In this research data also will be used from the different resources like library, digital (YouTube, valid and international news agencies, valid websites and etc).

Theoretical Framework

The Taliban's treatment of women during their previous rule in Afghanistan was notoriously brutal and oppressive. Women were deprived of education, employment, and basic rights such as freedom of movement and expression. However, since the Taliban

returned to power in August 2021, there have been signs that they may be willing to take a more moderate stance on women's rights (Maley, W. 1999). One of the possible explanations for this change of position is the international pressure and monitoring that the Taliban is now facing. After their takeover of Afghanistan, many countries, including the United States of America and its allies, have made it clear that they will only recognize the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan if they respect human rights, including women's rights (Faheem, M., & Khan, M. M. 2022).

In addition, the Taliban's desire for legitimacy has also played a role in their apparent willingness to change their approach to women's rights. The Taliban are aware that in order to be seen by the international community as a legitimate government, they must demonstrate that they are willing to respect the rights of all Afghan citizens, including women. Learning from the experiences of the Taliban during the first period of their rule also adds to their awareness and understanding of the seriousness of the international community towards the issue of human rights. Human rights have been a global and serious issue for the world community, especially in the last century.

Violation of human rights inside a country by the government itself or any other group is not only an internal matter; the United Nations and the international community also have the right to intervene in humanitarian cases in cases of serious violations. All kinds of sanctions, such as economic sanctions and sanctions against individuals and perpetrators of human rights violations, are tools of international pressure that the United Nations and the international community use to increase respect for human rights (Glanville, L. 2006). There is a relationship between international pressures and governments' decisions, especially in the field of human rights, but this relationship does not always have a direction that leads to increased respect for human rights; sometimes international pressures have the opposite result in different ways. but this may differ depending on the type of sanctions, the type of regime in the target country, and each country (Ingold, E. 2013).

In the research conducted by Emanuel Engold (1989–2009) on several cases of sanctions, they have shown the general result of reducing respect for human rights, but in the case of the Taliban, this issue can be different, and it seems that the pressures from the international community are moving in the right direction to increase respect for human rights. A big difference between the Taliban and other countries that are under international pressure is that the Taliban are not yet recognized as an official government in the international arena, and this issue forces them to retreat from their hard ideology and respect women's rights (Ingold, E. 2013). Although international pressures in the first round of their rule could not force the Taliban to respect human rights, especially the rights of women, this does not mean that there is no relationship between these two variables. In the competition between the hard ideology of the Taliban and strong international pressure, the Taliban finally fell, and this is a great lesson for them in this period of their rule: if they do not obey the demands of the international community, their rule will not last. According to William Malley, the issue of gender was the most important factor that prevented the recognition of the Taliban in the first round of their rule (Maley, W. 1999).

Freezing the money of the Taliban, sanctions, and UN resolutions were among the important tools that the United States of America and the international community used to put pressure on the Taliban (Thomas, C. 2021). International pressure these days is also applied to the Taliban through these tools. As soon as the Taliban came to power, all of Afghanistan's money in international banks was blocked by America. Referring to the repeated requests of

the Taliban to lift sanctions and release the assets of Afghanistan, the spokesperson of the US State Department said: "It is very clear that the Taliban wants to participate in wider economic activities with the international community; they want to be able to travel freely, but while the Taliban have systematically deprived half of the country's people of their basic rights, the sanctions will not be reduced (Price, 2022). In short, international pressures are imposed on target countries to increase respect for human rights, and the methods of applying these pressures are through sanctions. International pressures on countries' decisions in this regard are not without influence, but the intensity and direction of this influence may differ from one country to another, which depends on other factors that were mentioned earlier. Our expectation in carrying out this research is to prove the hypothesis that international pressures and the Taliban's need to gain legitimacy are two related factors that have been influential in changing the Taliban's behaviour towards women. According to the hard ideology that the Taliban have towards women, it seems that this will not be a lasting change that will ultimately lead the Taliban to the permanent acceptance of women in various fields and realize the dream of Afghan women, which is indeed freedom.

The Status of Women under the Taliban Ruling in the First Period (1996–2001)

The Taliban group first emerged in 1994, its main founder being Mullah Omar. After that, in 1996, they occupied almost 90% of Afghanistan's territory (Thomas, 2021). In this section, we examine the status of women under the rule of the Taliban during their first term (1996–2001). This section generally examines the status of women under the rule of the Taliban in the fields of education, performing official duties in government, private, and international institutions, as well as informal activities such as travel and wandering in the city and market.

The Taliban, known from its inception as a strict religious group, as soon as they took over the government in 1996, imposed harsh religious rules against society, especially against women in all fields, and restricted women's activities (Maley, W. 1999). They banned women from going to schools and universities, working outside the home, participating in social activities, and even walking on the roads, or imposed severe restrictions. The Taliban government during this period was characterized by a precise interpretation of Islamic laws, which led to severe restrictions on women's rights and freedoms (Franks, 2003).

The Taliban regulated their policies based on their interpretation of Sharia law and issued a large number of decrees, a significant portion of which specifically focused on the role of women in society. In the field of education, all schools were immediately closed after they took power. As Nancy Hatch Dupree (2001) said in 1996, "The Taliban closed all schools in Kabul and deprived 102,000 girls of education and 7,800 teachers of employment, meaning women were almost completely deprived of education, employment, and any social and recreational activities." (Fatima, Q. 2014) Girls' schools in Kabul were closed, and women were also sidelined from universities. They justified their actions in the face of international pressure and cited the lack of security in villages as the reason for banning girls from going to school, while on the other hand, they claimed to have complete security throughout the country (Maley, W. 1999). In some cases, they also cited economic problems as if they could not create a safe and secure environment for girls' education (Mujdeh, 2003). Girls were not allowed to go to school until the age of eight (Franks, 2003). The prohibition of women's employment, which also led to the dismissal of teachers, severely affected educational

institutions and girls' schools, and the lack of female teachers was a major problem for these schools. With the dismissal of female teachers, who made up the majority of the country's teachers, the modern education system in this country was essentially paralyzed (Mujdeh, 2003).

In the field of work, women were sidelined from most sectors of the labor force, politically deprived of participation in government and political life, and not allowed to work outside the home except in limited circumstances such as health care (Cole, 2003). These prohibitions limited their opportunities for economic and social advancement (Lacopino, 1998). Women under the Taliban regime did not have the right to participate in politics or hold government positions. This restriction deprived women of the right to express their opinions on decisions that affect their lives and communities (Middleton, 2000). In the first year that the Taliban took over Kabul, they issued a decree banning the employment of all women. All women in any sector they were working in lost their jobs, and the employment ban did not apply to health and human rights workers, but the severity of the restrictions was such that a number of female employees voluntarily abandoned their duties. The prohibition of women from performing external work led to widespread poverty, which in turn led to an increase in prostitution, and some were forced to marry the Taliban out of necessity (Fatima, Q. 2014).

As William puts it, the Taliban can be described as the least feminist group in the world. As soon as they arrived in Kabul and took over the government, they enacted laws against women that prohibited them from traveling without the accompaniment of a close male relative (Mahram) and made it mandatory to wear a suffocating full-body garment called a burqa. Women without a Mahram and wearing a burqa could not even get into a taxi, and with the slightest violation of these rules, women were beaten in the streets and markets with plastic hoses in front of everyone (Maley, W. 1999). The Taliban did not hesitate to impose any restrictions on women during their first term in power. From banning the wearing of high-heeled boots, lest men hear their footsteps and get excited, to their absence on the balconies of houses (Emadi, H. 2015), They could not speak loudly in public and were not allowed to leave the house without a Mahram (Franks, 2003). They were deprived of access to health services and emergency care in hospitals, which had fatal consequences. Treatment of a sick woman by a male doctor was forbidden, and girls were not allowed to be vaccinated (Cole, 2003). In cases of violations of the rules, they faced whipping and execution. The first Taliban regime became infamous nationally and internationally due to its backward gender policies, such as the prohibition of women leaving their homes, and the main reason the international community did not recognize them was this issue of women (Maley, W. 1999).

The European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs was arrested by the Taliban during a visit to a hospital designated by the Taliban as a women's hospital. This incident may have occurred due to the Taliban's unpredictability, but its consequences were devastating for the Taliban (Maley, W. 1999). The United Nations International Women's Conference in Beijing in September 1995 strongly endorsed an agenda that was in stark contrast to the Taliban's program, and a dense network of women's groups had been formed to implement that agenda.

The tension between the Taliban and the broader world over the issue of gender reflected a deeper tension, as the international community's definition of gender was completely different from the Taliban's thinking. From Mullah Omar's perspective, Westerners are deviating from Muslims under the pretext of human rights, and increasing women's rights means promoting adultery and the destruction of Islam. Mullah Omar continued, "We do not

accept anything that someone imposes on us under the name of human rights that is against the holy law of the Quran." He concluded that the Holy Quran "cannot adjust itself to the needs of others" and that people must adapt themselves to the requirements of the Quran. Based on the United States' assessments, the Taliban had "one of the worst human rights records in the world" during their previous rule (Thomas, 2021).

This well encapsulates the Taliban's philosophy of international relations: an uncompromising philosophy that rejected international laws, international thoughts, and international organizations. As a result, the United Nations, as an organization, found it extremely difficult to control the Taliban; the General Assembly refrained from giving a seat to the Taliban; and the international community also did not officially recognize them.

The Status of Women under the Taliban Ruling in the Second Period (2021 - now)

After the fall of the Taliban government in 2001 due to the US invasion of Afghanistan, with the advent of the republican and democratic systems, women gained their basic rights over the past 20 years. They gained the right to education, the right to vote, the right to work, the right to social and political activities, etc., in all fields. The new constitution banned violence against women, and progress in this area was underway (Samim, R. 2021). After the fall of the democratic system and the return of the Taliban to power in 2021, the constitution of the republican era was declared null and void, and the restrictions of the previous Taliban era were re-imposed on women (Samim, 2021).

Although this time there are relative differences in the Taliban's behavior compared to the previous period regarding the imposition of restrictions on women, their initial actions show at least some moderation from their highly oppressive government in 1996–2001. However, there are restrictions in various areas that may not be on the scale of the previous period (Thomas, 2021).

In the 1990s, the Taliban government deprived women and girls of all their basic rights, and this time around, women still lack significant freedom. Despite international pressures, women's movements, and the organization of protests both inside and outside the country (Thomas, 2021), the Taliban have imposed many restrictions on women, depriving them of many of their basic rights (Samim, 2021). At the beginning of their rule, they stated that women could benefit from the right to education, work, and perform duties in governmental and non-governmental institutions, but with the condition of observing Islamic laws and hijab. However, they later issued orders that contradicted these statements, and, like the previous time, they made excuses to justify their actions (Asian report, 2023).

Since coming to power in August 2021, Taliban officials have reiterated their commitment to supporting women's rights within the framework of Sharia law to dispel rumors about reported actions taken by this group before its takeover, such as forced marriages and targeted killings of women. However, these commitments have not taken on a practical aspect. The Taliban asked female government employees to return to their positions as long as they wore a hijab and granted "amnesty" to all men and women who had worked with foreign powers. The Taliban leader subsequently asked women to stay at home temporarily, citing concerns about new Taliban forces who "have not yet been well trained" and may mistreat, harm, or harass women (Thomas, 2021). However, orders and actions over time indicate that they do not seem sincere in this regard (Asian report, 2023). Reports indicate that some women were beaten by Taliban fighters during protests, and some reporters were arrested while covering the protests. The Taliban reinstated the Ministry of Promotion of

Virtue and Prevention of Vice, which imposed the Taliban's interpretation of Islam in the 1990s. The Taliban government does not include a Ministry of Women's Affairs, which was not present in the previous Taliban government but was part of the former Afghan government (Thomas, 2021).

When the Taliban came to power for the second time on September 18, 2021, the Taliban's Ministry of Education announced the reopening of state middle schools and invited all male teachers and students to return to schools. The lack of mention of female students and their teachers implied they were to stay at home. Although the Taliban spokesperson announced that they were arranging for the return of female students to schools, their goal was to create a safe environment for them (Thomas, 2021). Two years have passed since the Taliban's second term, but girls above the sixth grade are still at home. Many are worried that they may never be allowed to go to school, as the Taliban did not seriously announce in their first term that girls over the age of 8 could not go to school (Fatima, Q. 2014). But with diminishing justifications and a lack of a safe environment, they never got the chance to go to school during the Taliban era (Thomas, 2021).

On December 22, 2022, a decree was issued prohibiting women from working with non-governmental and international organizations (BBC Persian, 2023). On December 24, 2022, they suspended private and public universities for women and girls. On May 7, 2022, they made the full observance of the hijab mandatory throughout the country (Asian report, 2023). Sohail Shaheen, one of the Taliban leaders, considered the full observance of the hijab necessary but did not make wearing the burqa mandatory (Euronews, 2022). According to one of the interviewees, the Taliban emphasizes wearing the burqa as the best type of hijab, but if it is not observed, especially in large cities, no one is questioned. This means that they show a little flexibility, perhaps because their violence is more publicized in the cities, but they have a relatively more serious approach in this regard in the surrounding areas.

In summary, by comparing the status of women under the rule of the Taliban in these two periods of their governance, it can be said: Although severe restrictions have been imposed on women this (second period) as well, but slight differences are seen compared to the first period. For example, wearing a burqa is not mandatory, and they can walk in the city and market without a Mahram except for long and distant travels inside and outside. Girls up to the sixth grade can go to school, and universities have sometimes been open and sometimes closed (they are changing). The latest reports from interviewees indicate that women are allowed to work in government offices, educational institutions such as language courses are open to girls, and women are allowed to work in private and public clinics. There are signs that the Taliban may allow education, work, and some activities, albeit with rules and restrictions. For example, they allowed girls up to the sixth grade to return to school, and women can work in government institutions, although their number may be small (Thomas, 2021).

Although these changes are slight for now, they may increase in the future. The existence of differences between these two periods has been confirmed by information obtained from primary and secondary sources and now we are going to understand the main factor of these changes.

International Reactions and Pressures

To better understand the subject, it is necessary to pay attention to international reactions to restrictions imposed on women, the international community's demands from the Taliban, and the types of pressures exerted on them. The deprivation of women from work and education by the Taliban during their first period of governance also had widespread global reactions, followed by the imposition of sanctions; it is the same this time; even countries that have close relations with the Taliban, such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey, have also condemned the restrictions against women (Asian report, 2023). Western countries have each had reactions in this regard and have set conditions for the legitimacy of the Taliban government, the most important of which are the inclusiveness of the government, cutting ties with terrorist groups, women's freedom, and respect for human rights.

The issue of officially recognizing a group with a history of international terror and horror is not a simple matter for the world's countries, and most have set conditions for recognizing the Taliban government. A small number of major world politicians have said that the Taliban should never be recognized as a terrorist group. However, the majority considers the participation of other ethnic groups in the government structure and the freedom of women's and gender rights as two important elements that, if observed by the Taliban, the world will recognize (Tomas, 2021). But the reality may be beyond that, and each country and its allies have their own calculations. For China, Russia, Iran, regional countries, and some Middle Eastern countries, the security issue of Afghanistan is more worrying because they fear that if the Taliban does not sever ties with Al-Qaeda, this country may become a terrorist nest and disrupt regional security (Faheem, 2022:90).

Despite China's interest in having an economic relationship with Afghanistan, it emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive government composed of all Afghan ethnic groups. The White House spokesperson said on September 7, 2021, "There is no rush to recognize the Taliban; it really depends on what actions the Taliban take." A German official says we do not recognize the Taliban government's continuation of its current policies. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said at a press conference on September 25, 2021, "The issue of international recognition of the Taliban is not on the table at the moment," and Russia is cooperating with the United States, China, and Pakistan (Tomas, 2021). We must ensure that the Taliban are fulfilling their promises for a comprehensive government. We will take steps to recognize the Taliban if they form an inclusive government and respect women's rights. The Iranian Foreign Minister tells the Taliban Foreign Minister that we have been waiting for a comprehensive government announcement for a year and a half. Britain has said that we will take steps to recognize the Taliban when their words and actions are the same (Faheem, 2022:8). It is seen that the majority of countries have set the establishment of a comprehensive government, respect for women's rights, and severing ties with terrorism as important conditions for recognizing the Taliban (Faheem, 2022:8). But among them, there are individuals, groups, movements, and people at the national and international levels who are completely opposed to unconditionally recognizing the Taliban.

Michael McCaul, the deputy of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives, says that recognizing the Taliban by the United States would not be a prudent move because the Taliban have not changed and are still the same terror group (VOA Dari, 2022. YouTube). The Islamic Republic of Iran newspaper says: Recognizing the

Taliban by Iran would be a stain on the forehead of this country. Domestically, problems such as unemployment, poverty, heavy tax conditions, preventing women from studying, and forced migrations of ethnic minorities by the Taliban have caused severe dissatisfaction among the people with this group, and at the same time, there are fronts and groups that are practically engaged in guerrilla wars with the Taliban. The Resistance Front led by Ahmad Massoud, the Freedom Front led by Yasin Zia, the former Interior Minister of Afghanistan, the Afghan Women's Freedom Movement, and the Council of Afghan Political Figures are all opposed to recognizing the Taliban (Kiwani, 2021).

Alongside condemnations and setting conditions for recognizing the Taliban, which can put them under pressure, the United States and the international community have also put the Taliban under other pressures, such as sanctioning some of the Taliban leaders and keeping them on the blacklist, cutting off development aid, and blocking Afghanistan's assets in international banks (Asian report, 2023).

Analysing Data and Findings

Along with the information gathered from secondary sources, showed differences in the Taliban's behavior towards women in two different periods of their rule, with 83.3 percent of interviewees also confirming these differences. This means that the Taliban's behavior has improved compared to the previous period, but these changes do not seem very significant. 80 percent of them described these changes as slight and 20 percent as moderate.

In this study, 75 percent of our responses considered the main factor for the change in the Taliban's behavior towards women to be international pressures and the Taliban's dependence on the international community in the field of gaining international legitimacy for the Islamic Emirate. A small number of them also added economic dependencies to this factor, which is somehow related to the pressures of the international community, as pressure and dependence are related. If a country is independent in all respects, exerting pressure on it will be meaningless; in other words, no one can put pressure on it.

Meanwhile, 25 percent of the responses did not attribute these differences to international pressures but rather to the Taliban's familiarity with the new natural and social environment. This means that the Taliban, who have mostly lived in rural areas far from urban life and people, are now entering society and are learning and experiencing new life. However, if this is a factor in changing the Taliban's behaviour, according to the "Theory of Social Change and Institutionalization", it means that over time these changes will expand and become institutionalized. According to this theory, changes in beliefs and ideologies, when institutionalized in the form of structures, can be sustainable (Zietsma, C., & Lawrence, T. B. 2010). In this case, one can be relatively optimistic about the future of women in this country. Those who consider international pressures as a factor in changing the Taliban's behaviour towards women believe that increased pressures can lead to a reduction in violence against women, but these changes cannot be enduring and fundamental unless they eventually lead to an ideological change in the Taliban through repetition. They believe that without pressure, the situation will revert to its original state because the Taliban's religious ideology and beliefs are misogynistic, and they believe that women were created for housework. Therefore, these changes can be fundamental and hopeful when their beliefs in this regard change. They believe that as the Taliban's dependence on the international community decreases, restrictions against women will increase because the Taliban's beliefs are misogynistic.

Therefore, gaining legitimacy for the Taliban government from the international community will mean increasing restrictions against women because it reduces their dependence. In summary, changes resulting from pressure from the international community can reduce violence against women, but only temporarily. If the Taliban's rule continues, the future of women in this land does not seem bright unless there is a change in the Taliban's ideology.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis of the status of women under Taliban rule in two different periods shows that the behaviour of this group has slightly changed compared to their first rule in relation to women, but this is not a significant change but rather a slight one.

The main reason for this change is international pressures and the Taliban's dependence on the international community, which have set the stage for these pressures. Therefore, the hypothesis that international pressures can work towards reducing human rights abuses has been strongly confirmed. However, these changes cannot be fundamental unless they lead to an ideological change in the Taliban in the long run. A relatively small number of our responses refer to the ideological change in the Taliban, which has resulted from their interaction with society, the urban environment, and new issues. Confirming this hypothesis requires further research in the future. If this hypothesis is confirmed, according to the "theory of social change and institutionalization", it can bring about a fundamental and hopeful change for the future of this society, especially for the women of this land.

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